

# COUNTY OF ULSTER

## Workforce Development Board

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Sharon Williams, Director

### Ulster County Workforce Development Board Meeting March 20, 2024 Minutes

MEMBERS PRESENT – Jim Ferraro, John Eickman, Ashima Butler, Jana Kantor, Peter Harris, Tony Marmo, Mike Iapoce, Dan Whalen, Maura McMahan, Craig Hightower, Tina Buono, Sean Brix, Don Mapes, Chris Marx, Alejandro Cordova, Tiziana Rinaldi, Frank Falatyn

MEMBERS ABSENT – Michael Berg, Jess Davis, Tamika Dunkley, Jeanne Lipscomb, Desiree Lyle, LaQuesha Matthews-Reed, Joe McDole, Anthony Mignone, Angela Patella

ALSO PRESENT - Sharon Williams, OET Director/WDB Director, Faith Golden, OET Deputy Director, Renee Pugliese, OET

The meeting was called to order at 8:06 am by Jim Ferraro, WDB Chair. There was a quorum.

#### 1. OPENING – JIM FERRARO, BOARD CHAIR:

Jim welcomed and thanked everyone for attending today.

#### 2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – JIM FERRARO

Jim asked for a motion to approve minutes from January 2024. Motion made by Tony Marmo, seconded by Frank Falatyn. All in Favor, none opposed. Minutes approved.

#### 3. WELCOME NEW MEMBERS – JIM FERRARO

Jim introduced Craig Hightower, Regional Sales Director of SunCommon. Craig gave a brief overview of what he does. He is also part of the Ulster County Renewal Energy Implementation Task Group.

Introductions were made around the room.

#### 4. SUSTAINABLE ULSTER COUNTY WORKFORCE INNOVATION CENTER UPDATES – SHARON WILLIAMS, WDB DIRECTOR

Sharon spoke about our new space – the idea is a one-stop-shop. The major partners that will make this happen are starting to form an advisory board which will become the decision makers for how things operate (mission-vision-values). The group has met twice and there is a third meeting planned for April 15<sup>th</sup>. We will invite certain members of the WDB to select meetings during formation and then how we move forward will be up to the Advisory Board. What we know now is that Ulster County departments will be on the first floor and training/education partners will be on the second floor. There will be plenty of meeting space for meetings and gatherings; future Summits can be held there. More to come.

Sharon spoke about the summary of the recent childcare study that was done for Pattern for Progress. Childcare is number 2 in need for potential employees (behind housing which is #1. Transportation is #3). Currently the report is an interactive report on their website – everyone is encouraged to visit their website to see all the information. There will be childcare available on-site at iPark87.

There was discussion on family-based childcare versus center-based. We are working with SUNY Ulster and Family of Woodstock to have a program that we can support through OET for individuals, who are eligible to convert their homes into childcare centers, to be trained for that.

It would be great to invite Adam Bosch or Yasmine (from Pattern) to one of our WDB meetings to go over ideas. It would be helpful if we could co-promote with Pattern.

Brief discussion followed regarding legally exempt providers that don't have to meet licensing requirements (grandparents, relatives) – this data point is not necessarily captured in the data report. However, it is an important point even though it might not be reflected in the data.

Also mentioned were the restrictions/regulatory issues for providers that limit options.

Family of Woodstock and Ulster BOCES are going to host a full day event on November 8<sup>th</sup>: Mid-Hudson Valley Leadership Day for childcare businesses, owners, directors and assistant directors to be held at Ulster BOCES New Paltz conference center.

#### **5. FINANCIAL REPORT – FAITH GOLDEN, OET DEPUTY DIRECTOR**

Faith reviewed the financial reports. This data is as of the end of February (two-thirds of the way through the program year). Youth is pretty close to our goal, Dislocated Worker is behind due to the increase in funds we received at the beginning of the year and Adult spending is a little ahead.

In the last Board meeting, we changed the ITA policy to increase the amount we can fund to \$10,000 in training (from \$3,500). We have three people that we will be funding for the April class at the Lineman Institute. There is still quite a bit of funds left to spend in DW.

#### **6. REQUEST TO TRANSFER FUNDS: Dislocated Worker to Adult – FAITH GOLDEN, OET DEPUTY DIRECTOR**

Faith requested to transfer \$100,000 funds from DW to Adult. Motion made by Tony Marmo, seconded by John Eickman. All in favor, none opposed. Motion passed.

Sharon mentioned that there is a struggle in terms of providing training opportunities and the ability to support them in the hospitality and tourism industries. The issue is mainly around credentialing/ the State needs to recognize. We need to try to get more things offered in order to get things industry-recognized. Our goal is to use all the money allocated to us.

Reminder to the Board: if we find a training that is outside Ulster County, as long as the customer is an Ulster County resident, we can still pay for the training.

Sharon gave an update on the Grant – We submitted for our Grant on December 31, 2023. It takes the State about 3-4 months for the initial review process, then there is a negotiation period of 6-8 weeks, then the announcement of the award, whether fully or partially funded which takes another 6-8 weeks. The crucial time discrepancy is the actual execution of the contract between the State and the grantee (Ulster County). We are still in the waiting period.

#### **7. MOTION TO ADJOURN – JIM FERRARO**

Jim asked for a Motion to Adjourn – Motion made by Tony Marmo seconded by John Eickman. Meeting adjourned at 8:55 am.

**ULSTER COUNTY WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD  
NEXT MEETING:**

**Wednesday, May 15, 2024  
8:00 AM**