

**ROCKLAND COUNTY
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD
Board Meeting Minutes**

Date: Thursday, March 14, 2019
Time: 8:30 to 10:00 AM
Location: Rockland BOCES
65 Grasslands Road
West Nyack, NY 10994

WDB Board Attendees: Elena Hansen Lynne Allan (AC) Tom Ossa
Julien Renold Howard Hellman Gregory Parseghian
Robert Woodill Gerald Zukowski Nichole Anderson
Anne Byne Matthew Shelley Mary Shinick
Gerald Zubowsky Jill Warner
Eileen Guzzo Don Lucarello
Michele Green
Jeremy Schulman

Excused: Kathy Canter Craig Jacobs

Absent Ramon Soto Joe Allan
Bob Dutra Sr. Kathleen Sullivan
Brian Levy Pat Rajala

Guests Daniel Tauken Chris D’Ambrese Egbert Shillingford
Guillermo Rosa

WDB Staff Members: Debra J. Thomas

8:06 AM Welcome & Opening Discussion – Lynn Allan, Chair

- Lynne Allan opened the meeting and made introductions welcomed everyone to the board meeting.

Motion to send a card to David Diaz

- Lynne Allan - motion
- Kathleen Sullivan - second
- Motion passed

Debi Thomas provided a summary of the board’s activities in the last year for the new business members. The County of Rockland did not want the board to be a County Government entity. We activated our non-profit status 501- C4 which allows for advocacy/lobbying, obtained ins., Workman’s Compensation, cyber security and we did not want to open a checking account. We worked with RCC via PayServ and funds reserve there. DOL recommended that the WDB Board have its home at The Rockland Teachers Center. We are currently working on a website. The Career Center contract will have to be reissued. The board must decide how we want to organize this next agreement. We want to align workforce with economic development. Priority areas for workforce development are the sectors that REDC is focusing on: Healthcare, Manufacturing, Hospitality, IT. The board also wants to work with individuals with barriers to employment and veterans. We want to focus our training and our youth services to encompass training in these sectors. We trained our new staff. We hired legal counsel to resolve issues with our Youth Services contract and replaced the WDB Secretary, Debi Thomas, who became Executive Director, with Michele Green. Debi wanted to applaud the board for their hard work and now we must prepare for the coming months of work.

Guillermo Rosa
Deputy CE – Update

This board is one of many that provides an advisory role to the County Executive. When CE Day took office, the finance dept. said that there was 42,000 left after payroll was paid. There was a \$138 million-dollar debt. Six million dollars was in the bank for \$709 million-dollar budget. The Comptroller recommends that the County have 10% in the bank. The County is hoping to get there over the next five years and they are planning conservatively. There are 22% less employees due to reorganizations within depts, more automation and the nursing home was closed. Some executive directors of not for profits said we can align core services with the County's billing services. The County could then bill for those services. The County obtained almost one million dollars by aligning the core services of the not for profits with Dept of Social Services. When additional needs are expressed, The County can now properly fund it so there is no degradation of service provision.

Repurposing of the Pomona Complex: The Nursing Home and Hospital was closed. The County hired an architectural company for the entire complex. The County is relocating departments which will include not for profit entities. The plan is that services can be near their funding source to allow for one stop shopping for individuals who need the services. The complex will be the center for government services. The County seat will remain in New City by law. There will be an educational component at Pomona which will include art which will be related to the history of Rockland County as well as displays of not for profits. ROCA and the Historical Society who can do murals about ethnic groups who came to the county. Michele Green recommended Paul Tappenden be contacted as a potential contributor for the art. The WDB would like to know how we can make the biggest impact. Matt Shelly pointed out that there will be construction opportunities. RCC is also tailoring their curriculum to meet employer's needs. Greg Parseghian asked if there will there will be a tourism feature to the complex project? The Historical Society is now doing tours and we have some vendors doing tours in Nyack. The Director of Economic Development, Lucy Redzeposki, has gone to Ireland, Scotland, and Florida marketing the County.

A question was brought up regarding the rent for RCC. DOL pays a portion of the rent. The County of Rockland took over the lease and the DOL needs to repay the college. The CE went to the state. The agreement was executed in March 2019 for the rent but Deputy Commissioner Rosa will confirm shortly.

Lynne Allan put forward a motion to approve the minutes:

- Tom Ossa – motion
- Renold Julien – second
- Unanimously approved

Lynne Allan put forward a motion to bring Robert Woodill from HMS Host and Nichole Anderson from Crystal Run on the board

- Ann Byne -motion
- Jeremy Shulman -second
- Unanimously approved

Debi Thomas announced that the Rockland County WDB was recertified for two years. The RCC Youth Contract was also extended now after the board retained legal counsel per Lynne Allan. We are happy that we have our youth program extended. Regarding the new Operator contract: There are different models pertaining to running the Career Center. We might come up with a different model. Debi Thomas has been doing research with colleagues around the state. One option is to form a consortium which includes a group of dedicated partners in a shared mission rather than one partner who will run the career center. We want to create a model that is sustainable, so if any one of the directors' leave, then the client services can continue.

The County procurement director Paul Brennan can be of assistance. He will put the contract out nationally, agencies will receive it, we will know who opened it and who responded to it. After all the qualified applicants come

back, we will rate their proposals and a decision is made. The County can assist with that. Some board members will be the evaluators of the RFP results.

Michele Green provided summary on Working Together the Regional Conference that we hosted with Cornell University to Meet Business Needs in the Hudson Valley. 50 professionals from not for profits, business, DOL, Workforce and Economic Development, Career Centers and ACCES-VR gathered to discuss utilizing individuals with disabilities to meet the needs of area businesses. A full day of training was provided.

- ✓ Hudson Valley Economic Development has incorporated VR materials on financial incentives at their events.
- ✓ Michele Green and Diane Woodward of ACCES-VR presented to all the WDB Directors across NYS in March 2019.
- ✓ The Westchester and Rockland Career Centers will have another half day of training to work directly with individuals with disabilities in August 2019.
- ✓ NYATEP State of the Workforce Presentation was altered to include individuals with disabilities as a potential resource for businesses to consider.

Guillermo Rosa announced that the county received 140 resumes for the Rockland County Director of Office for People with Disabilities. 68% of employees are eligible for retirement. They may be looking for people to replace those who are leaving the workforce.

Chris D'Ambrese announced that Rockland BOCES will be presenting at the NYATEP Youth Academy. This is the 3rd year that they will present. Debi Thomas and Michele Green will also be going to the Youth Academy. The Rockland County Youth Bureau is aligning their work with WDB work and focusing on the same sectors as the WDB and creating the pipeline earlier.

Matt Shelley described working with Leadership Rockland. This is a leadership development program that meets once a month. Members learn about working with emergency services, culinary arts, and govt services. Applications are due 4/1/19. It's a \$1200.00 program with excellent networking opportunities. REDC planned the first day of the series with several businesses. Ann Byrne led the arts and media panel. Debi Thomas is the coordinator for Education Day. Rockland BOCES is the Business Leader of the Year. Leadership Rockland is at the Fire Training Center in March

Lynne Allan announced the news about our new website. Tom Ossa has started working on it. Ed Day gave a picture and a comment about the board. Debi Thomas indicated that we are gathering all our policies, and we are linking workforce development and economic development. Anyone who wants to apply for the RFP will see what we want for our youth and adults and align that to the RFP. We will have our meetings out in advance. Tom has volunteered much of his time. Tom Ossa: **RocklandWork.org** will be our domain. A basic test site has been constructed – Lorraine Katz provided content links and its mobile friendly. We must increase the size of the logo and development is ongoing.

Monitoring Announcement from Debi Thomas:

Kimmy will monitor our Youth Program on 4/10.

Technology Grant:

Received a grant for 50K – Bert has spent much of the money per Dan Tauken. 12 ITA's and one OJT for IT Support. The clients all chose RCC for the training. 48K has been spent.

Don Lucarello from the DOL's Report:

Commissioner of Labor – DOL staff Karon Coleman was being promoted to the Governor's Office of Workforce Development. The Governor had proposed a new Office of Workforce Development and the office will open this year. Emerging businesses were having difficulty recruiting skilled workers. The strategy is to create an umbrella agency that will coordinate all workforce activities -training funds for graduates via the CFA process. The CFAs will next open in May per Jeremy Shulman. The office will support strategic regional efforts, expand apprenticeships, focus on emerging fields like clean energy, health, and technology. The skills gap is in the area

where higher skills are required. We can't address skill gaps at such a high level via DOL programming and short-term training. Debi has a meeting this afternoon regarding the strategies to train the workforce.

DOL Operations – we are now calling people into the office to meet the requirements of the grants as early as possible during their unemployment and addressing holes in their skill sets. DOL helps with resume prep, provide counselors to provide labor market information to them, puts them in job zone and the NYS Talent Bank. DOL schedules about 200 people per week and eight staff see the customers. Jeremy Shulman indicated that as of Jan 2019 – Rockland had the lowest unemployment at 3.7%. Don has reminded us that unemployment rate goes down, resources *also* go down. We need to restructure ourselves to be sustainable with more resources. We think about this next RFP so we can be there to serve the community and the image we want to present on the worksite.

Finance Report – Dan Tauken

It took a long time to learn all the finance items after RCC took over for Tomorrow's Workplace. If RCC doesn't win the bid for the RFP, Dan will have to teach the new finance person. If RCC doesn't win again, there must be a long transition period. He is cut off 6/30/20. The RFP's must be rated and graded appropriately. JOYS reviews all of this at the DOL.

Year 3 is over on June 30th. Joys will pick two months of review. Every check that was written and all labor distribution reports. Legers must match all the expenditures. The process takes several weeks. We are seven months in. We are fully spent and that's what the auditor wants.

Year 4 The expenditures are good. We are at 62% for adults, 52% dislocated workers and 46% for youth which is close. We have admin budget organized. The board is into year four's money. Youth invoices have been coming in. We are currently paying second quarter of invoices at BOCES. JOYS has reviewed and there are no concerns. When you get funding, you have two years to spend it. Year one 80% of the money must be spent. By June 30th, 80% must be obligated. If you see expenses, there are purchase orders in place for 80% of the money. The other 20% is rolled to the second year.

Motion to accept finance report:

- Matt Shelley - motion
- Gregory Parseghian - second
- Unanimously approved

Career Center Report

The Career Center continues to place the unemployed. They have placed 24 individuals. They are holding a lot of workshops and having a lot of job fairs for businesses such as: ARC, Kolb Subaru, DOL, ARAMARK. There is an upcoming job fair at the Palisades Mall which is scheduled for May 30th. Management Co for Mall and outside vendors who are interested in participating.

Activities Listed:

5/9 Job Fair in Spring Valley

3/28 Camp Venture Job Fair

Community Outreach – SV Collaborative, REN, Haverstraw Collaborative.

They are holding a Boot Camp to retrain dislocated workers – Camp Venture hired an admin assistant from this boot camp which provides extensive retraining and they felt she had excellent training. Thom Kleiner sent out a boot camp announcement. Debi indicated we are working together with Thom.

Youth Program Report – Chris D'Ambrese

82 youth were served in total.

WestCop, Nyack Library and New City Library for contacted for outreach

The Youth Program is partnering with Reynold at Konbit Neg Lakay in Spring Valley to provide a Regents Prep Program. They are also partnering with North Rockland Extension to provide a summer program called Bridge to College.

If students have an interest in healthcare, the Youth Connections Program will provide an internship.

Youth Connections is also partnering with DSS with a Raise the Age grant. The purpose of this grant is to divert young people who would have been incarcerated into productive programming. Youth Connections staff has worked with DSS to provide work readiness curriculum as well as providing a bootcamp in Customer Service and Sales.

Recently graduated students have taken coursework in medical careers, office work, as well as Phlebotomy. A number of job candidates have been hired at Crystal Run.

PY 18 Q 2 Employment or Training Placement rate was 100%

Employment/Education/Training Placement rate (Q4) 57.5 % Have to reach 80% of benchmark. Credential attainment rate 11.4%. There is a discrepancy with OSOS. They are looking into it. Real percentage is 60%

Youth Connections Newsletters has developed two new fliers.

Direct Service Professional is a need in many agencies which serve individuals with disabilities. Rockland BOCES developed a program for adults with Autism and partnered with ACCES VR, Jawonio and Jewish Family Services. Internships at Jewish Family Services M-F will lead to internships and employment. Jill Warner indicated that word of that program has gotten around. If all goes well, it could be repeated. It's a lengthy program.

Changes in Personnel

Debi Thomas announced that Lucy Redzeposki resigned from Rockland County as the Director of Economic Development for Rockland County. She is here through April/May. Candidates are currently being interviewed. Jon Kupperman from NicePAK resigned from the board due to multiple commitments. We were recertified and we have a third business who will be joining us.

Motion to accept Jon from NicePAK's resignation

Motion

- Jill Warner - motion
- Julien Reynold second
- Unanimously approved

Action Items - Debi Thomas

We have options for the next contract. We can issue an RFP for an operator OR have a consortia operate the Career Center in collaboration with the WDB. We need to discuss our options with legal counsel and identify who would be the partners, who would be appropriate and how all constortia members would contribute.

In 2015, we put the RFP together with RCC/Rockland BOCES and opened a second site. Don Lucarello feels it's not a good idea to have the staff split. Discussion amongst the board indicated:

There would be a cost savings with one center.

We got an increase in our youth money because more youth in poverty, but this is a more difficult population to serve.

We have 140K to run the WDB. We don't maintain an office. We rent space and services. As a Non profit organization we must pay for services that for other WDB's are paid by county government(s). We had to hire an attorney. We need to have an accountant manage our finances and the Exec director feels we need a treasurer. The bylaws are outdated, and they must be updated. We must examine our budget.

Questions came up: Exec committee of the board, will there be a work group for the RFP? Are we proposing who would like to look at the fiscal aspects and who would like programmatic? We must examine these issues.

Tom brought up the phone system to see if we could explore having a more flexible phone system that is more cost effective. That's RCC's expense.

Currently, The Career Center serves 60% in Haverstraw and walk-ins are 40% in Suffern. Currently staff is asked to go back and forth between locations. Don feels it would be better for them to be together.

The program must be based in the community. One Stop must be accessible with transportation and DOL has to be with them. The Haverstraw building is rented. The landlord does not shovel during the day which makes it a dangerous condition in heavy snow. Plowing takes place after the lot is empty! Staff need to be in a place where they are secure. Transportation must be available to get there.

We need to efficiently use our WIOA resources and staff need to be cross trained and the budget is to be considered. The Palisades Center Mall could be an outreach center for the program. Debi Thomas indicated that the County of Rockland has 2000 employees, 1200 full time and 800 if they will be eligible for retirement in the next 2 years. There will be a strong need for retraining.

Motion for a letter of support for retraining of Rockland County staff from the Rockland WDB.

Motion –

- Michele Green - motion
- Jill Warner – second
- Unanimously approved

National Disability Employment Awareness Month Funding \$1875.00

Contingent on the budget being funded

Motion

- Matt Shelley
- Julian Renold
- Unanimously approved

Michele Green abstained from the vote

Debi Thomas indicated that the governor will be releasing \$175 million for Workforce Development. Karen Coleman has been moved over from the DOL to become Deputy Commissioner for Workforce Development. No announcement has been made regarding of the Director of that office. There is a team of five to help shepherd the dissemination of these funds through the process. There will be rolling applications for funding. Community Colleges will also have Workforce Development funding from this \$175 million. There will be money left for workforce as well. WDB Directors will meet regionally and define regional priorities and projects. Grant writers will be interviewed and hired to work on grant with regional teams.

Jawonio has gotten brick and mortar CFA awards as an example of funds returning to our area. The Governor wants to put money into Workforce Dev. Jawonio has received 100,000 toward Workforce Development. The new building to be completed in Jan of 2020 will host a Jawonio training center and all of the newest technology.

Chris D’Ambrese of Rockland BOCES – Thanked the board for their advocacy with regard to the Youth contract.

Matt Shelley is hoping we will be able to utilize some of the new money from the governor’s initiative to obtain money to train in the sectors we are focused on developing.

Adjournment Motion at 10:13

- Jill Warner - motion
- Michele Green – second

The next meeting is on June 6th, 2019 at 8:00 am.

Respectfully Submitted,

Michele Green
Rockland County WDB Secretary

