



**NIAGARA COUNTY
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD**

Joel Feuerman, Chairperson
Bonnie Rice, Executive Director

Trott Career Center
1001 Eleventh Street
Niagara Falls, NY 14301-1201
Phone: (716) 278-8251
Fax: (716) 278-8149

Meeting Minutes – November 14, 2023
Niagara County Center for Economic Development/IDA
6311 Inducon Corporate Drive in Sanborn, NY

Members Present: Maureen Bartlett, William Carroll, Michael Casale, Lindsay Collins, Joel Feuerman, Tom Grzebinski, David Haylett, Cathy Lattanzio, Michael Martin, Dennis Martinez, David Miller, John Scherrer, Kory Schuler, Jim Scordato, Suzanne Shears, Michele Taylor, Katie Thompson.

Members Excused: Nasreen Akhtar, Kathleen Granchelli, John Lang, Bill Robbins, Tom Seaman, Divya Tandon, Todd Zyra.

Members Absent: Jeanne Battaglia, Tim Lederhaus, Shawn Williams.

WDB Staff: Helen Dennis, Joanne Klemer, Bonnie Rice.

Guests/Staff Present: Donald Jablonski – Niagara County Employment and Training

Guests/Staff Excused: Jeannine Brown Miller – JBM Consulting, OSSO

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by J. Feuerman at 8:04 a.m. J. Feuerman welcomed members and thanked them for their attendance. J. Feuerman noted that quorum was established. He then turned the floor over to B. Rice. B. Rice shared with the Board that advertisements for the meeting were placed in local newspapers and online so that the public would be able to attend.

II. Old Business

B. Rice reviewed the agenda items section by section. All information regarding each item was distributed to the Board members through email prior to the meeting.

- A. Meeting Minutes for September 12, 2023: Board Members received the meeting minutes in the information materials emailed prior to the meeting. B. Rice asked the Board for a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Motion made by S. Shears. Second by L Collins.

Unanimous vote in favor of the approval of the September 12, 2023 Meeting Minutes.

III. New Business

All updates to items listed below were noted in the Agenda Packet sent to Board member prior to the meeting.

- A. B. Rice informed the Board that after asking Members through email for their nominations for WDB Chair and Vice Chair, all nominations were for Joel Feuerman to continue as WDB Chair and Kory Schuler to continue as WDB Vice Chair. B. Rice asked for a motion to elect Joel Feuerman as WDB Chair. Motioned made by M. Bartlett. Second by C. Lattanzio. All in favor. J. Feuerman abstains. **Unanimous vote for the approval of J. Feuerman as the WDB Chair.** J. Feuerman thanked the Board for the opportunity to continue to chair the WDB. B. Rice asked for a motion to elect Kory Schuler as WDB Vice Chair. Motion made by S. Shears.



NIAGARA COUNTY
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

Joel Feuerman, Chairperson
Bonnie Rice, Executive Director

Trott Career Center
1001 Eleventh Street
Niagara Falls, NY 14301-1201
Phone: (716) 278-8251
Fax: (716) 278-8149

Second by B. Carroll. All in favor. K. Schuler abstains. **Unanimous vote for the approval of K. Schuler as the WDB Vice Chair.** K. Schuler also thanked the Board for the opportunity to further chair the WDB. B. Rice thanked J. Feuerman and K. Schuler for their many years of service to the Board.

- B.** B. Rice shared with the Board the revisions needed for the Youth Eligibility policy. B. Rice explained that within the policy are two exceptions for youth who do not meet all of the requirements for enrollment. Should they meet one of the exceptions, Niagara County Employment and Training (NCET) is able to enroll up to five percent of the population of youth that they serve during that program year. B. Rice explained the first exception allows up to five percent of youth who do not meet the income qualifiers to join the program. The second allows up to five percent of youth who meet the need additional assistance exception to qualify for the program. The NCET Youth team created and is asking to have an additional form included with the Youth Eligibility form. This additional form includes a Supervisor sign off for the two exceptions. It will also help them to keep organized and make assisting the youth easier. B. Rice asked the Board for a motion to approve the updates to the Youth Eligibility policy as outlined. Motion by D. Miller. Second by M. Taylor. All in favor. No abstentions. **Unanimous vote in favor of approval of the updates to the Youth Eligibility policy.**
- C.** B. Rice shared with the Board the revisions to the Youth Supportive Services policy. B. Rice explained that the supportive services are best thought of as wrap-around services. The update to the policy would allow NCET counselors to give Youth a portfolio, pen and paper when they start college or postsecondary education programs. The need for these supplies is arising more often as Youth have a need for this additional assistance. B. Rice opened the floor for questions, none brought forward. B. Rice asked the Board for a motion to approve the update to the Youth Supportive Services policy. Motion by T. Grzebinski. Second by L. Collins. All in favor. No abstentions. **Unanimous vote in favor of approval of the updates to the Youth Supportive Services policy.**
- D.** B. Rice shared with the Board the revisions to the Adult and Dislocated Worker Individual Training Account (ITA) policy. B. Rice explained to the Board that a section of the policy regarding prior training needed to be updated to clarify that training encompasses On-the-Job Training or Classroom Training programs. B. Rice explained that this clarification is needed to ensure fairness in funding allocations to individuals seeking funding. B. Rice opened the floor for questions, none brought forward. B. Rice asked the Board for a motion to approve the updates to the Adult and Dislocated Worker ITA policy. Motion by M. Bartlett. Second by K. Schuler. All in favor. No abstentions. **Unanimous vote in favor of approval of the updates to the Adult and Dislocated Worker ITA policy.**
- E.** B. Rice shared with the Board the revisions to the WIOA Oversight and Monitoring policy for Niagara. B. Rice explained that H. Dennis's title had been updated to Account Clerical III. H. Dennis has also been trained to do internal fiscal monitoring in addition to the internal program monitoring for Niagara as required by New York State Department of Labor. B. Rice opened the floor for questions, none brought forward. B. Rice asked the Board for a motion to approve the updates to the WIOA Oversight and Monitoring policy for Niagara. Motion by C. Lattanzio. Second by J. Scordato. All in favor. No abstentions. **Unanimous vote in favor of approval of the updates to the WIOA Oversight and Monitoring policy for Niagara.**



NIAGARA COUNTY
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

Joel Feuerman, Chairperson
Bonnie Rice, Executive Director

Trott Career Center
1001 Eleventh Street
Niagara Falls, NY 14301-1201
Phone: (716) 278-8251
Fax: (716) 278-8149

F. B. Rice explained to the Board that this item is to approve the recommendation of the Review Committee for the Request for Proposal (RFP) for Payroll services. B. Rice explained that the reviewers met and reviewed the submission from bidders to provide payroll services and serve as the employer of record for NCET's youth programs. Based on the Review Committee findings, they recommend approving TES Staffing as the vendor for payroll services. TES Staffing is the current contracted provider of these payroll services. She explained that this would be for a one-year contract in an amount of up to one million dollars. She explained that the dollar amount has increased because Niagara has several grants to serve youth: the federal WIOA grant, the Gun Violence Prevention (GVP) grant, the annual Summer youth grant, and she shared that there may be additional funding coming to serve youth through an extension to the summer program, into a year-round program. This new grant will cover the time periods that the summer youth employment doesn't cover. B. Rice then gave the Board some background information regarding the bids and Review Committee process. She noted that there were some extraordinary circumstances that happened during the review. After aggregating the data from the Reviewers' individual scoring sheets, it was found that TES Staffing was collectively regarded as the lowest responsible bidder. B. Rice shared that she sought guidance from New York State Department of Labor (NYSDOL) program and fiscal team, to ensure appropriate selection of the lowest responsible bidder, as opposed to the lowest bidder based on price alone. When meeting with the Review Committee, B. Rice shared the NYSDOL guidance. Based on discussion and aggregate comments of the Reviewer's scoring sheets, the Reviewers collectively felt that the lowest bidder did not accurately or adequately provide the services requested in the RFP, they did not meet the requirements of the RFP, they did not offer certain features that will be needed as part of being the employer of record for the payroll services, and the lowest bid did not reflect all of the additional costs that would be incurred for the required services. D. Martinez (who served on the Review Committee) shared that TES Staffing was the best choice based on their proposal. He shared that a lot of the others, including the lowest bidder, did not seem to understand the scope of the project, especially regarding being the employer of record. B. Rice added that next time there will be adjustments to the questions in the RFP. The very first question will be "Are you able to be the employer of record, meaning that these individuals will be your employees?" The next question will be, "Are you able to be the employer of record for youth down to age 14?" She noted that many of the bidders seemed to have skimmed over the RFP. B. Rice also shared that the Reviewers noted some bidders seemed to have reused old bids. In one instance, a bidder submitted a bid for a California School District. She also shared that in some bids it was very evident that the bidder assumed they would only be processing paychecks rather than being the employer of record. K. Thompson (who served on the Review Committee) added that TES Staffing has assumed the role for a few years now and has proven track record at this point. She added that the cost differential was marginal and TES Staffing focused on all elements of the RFP. W. Carroll asked if the one million dollar amount was significantly higher than previous years. J. Klemer explained that it is \$400,000 higher. The current contract with TES Staffing is for \$600,000. The additional \$400,000 represents additional grant monies that B. Rice was speaking of for the youth employment program. W. Carroll asked if the youth program is continually expanding. B. Rice explained that the youth served during summer have wider, more open parameters for eligibility than the youth that are served under WIOA



NIAGARA COUNTY
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

Joel Feuerman, Chairperson
Bonnie Rice, Executive Director

Trott Career Center
1001 Eleventh Street
Niagara Falls, NY 14301-1201
Phone: (716) 278-8251
Fax: (716) 278-8149

(federal). She added that during the summer, NCET can serve anywhere from 100 to 150 youth, but only about five of them will be able to be served under WIOA. W. Carroll asked what the next irresponsible bidder's bid was in terms of the dollar amount. B. Rice clarified that bids were not based on a dollar amount but percentages of payroll. The RFP had asked bidders what their markups would be for payroll services, bonuses and stipends, and the cost of the physical examinations, drug screens, and PPD tests that are required for certain employers. S. Shears asked if TES Staffing is a local company. B. Rice answered TES Staffing is located in Rochester, NY. B. Rice added that TES Staffing does handle the payroll services for other areas similar to Niagara. T. Grzebinski noted that B. Rice that she had alluded to a history with TES Staffing, and asked if there had been any challenges that had occurred. B. Rice shared that the first year was the very first time Niagara WDB and NCET had worked with a payroll servicer, in the past Niagara County provided payroll services. B. Rice shared that within the first year TES Staffing was amenable to making changes and working with NCET to understand responsibilities and to solidify the contract. She added that overall, it was a good experience. J. Scordato asked if there would be any renewals attached to this RFP. B. Rice shared that as with the previous contract pattern, there is the possibility of a one year contract extension after the first year, and a second extension after the second year. The Board will vote on these extension as they occur. J. Scordato asked if there were any other viable bidders other than TES Staffing reviewed by the Review Committee. B. Rice shared that there were seven proposals received, only two were viable bids, one of which was higher in cost compared to TES Staffing. J. Feuerman thanked the reviewers for being very thorough in their review process, and added that he appreciated having such great information before voting on the matter. B. Rice opened the floor to further questions. None brought forward. B. Rice asked the Board for a motion to approve the RFP for Payroll Services Review Committee's recommendation to fund TES Staffing for a one-year contract from 1/1/24 to 12/31/24 in an amount of up to \$1,000,000. Motion by J. Feuerman. Second K. Thompson. All in favor. No abstentions. **Unanimous vote in favor of approval the RFP for Payroll Services Review Committee recommendation to fund TES Staffing for a one-year contract from 1/1/24 to 12/31/24 in an amount of up to \$1,000,000.**

IV. Informational Items

- A.** B. Rice noted the Board Meeting dates for 2024. She asked Board members to place them on their calendars. Prior to the meeting date, WDB Staff would send further details, reminders and calendar invites.
- B.** B. Rice turned the floor over to J. Klemer to provide a budget update. J. Klemer reviewed the budget information that was sent to Board Members in the agenda packet. J. Klemer reviewed the Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth, and Administration budgets as presented for the first quarter of Program Year 2024. J. Klemer reviewed each funding stream. Adult: The total budget is approximately \$1,000,000, we've spent or accrued to date for our expenditures \$267,000. This represents about 25% of our budget spent within our first quarter. She explained that the Adult program is on track and compared to last year, for trending purposes, during quarter one Adult program spending was at 23.5%. She shared that at this time there are no spending concerns. Further analysis will happen in the third quarter or as concerns arise.



NIAGARA COUNTY
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

Joel Feuerman, Chairperson
Bonnie Rice, Executive Director

Trott Career Center
1001 Eleventh Street
Niagara Falls, NY 14301-1201
Phone: (716) 278-8251
Fax: (716) 278-8149

Dislocated Worker: The total budget is approximately \$463,000. She shared that in the first quarter approximately \$92,000, or around 20% of the budget has been spent. J. Klemer explained that last year through the first quarter, we were only about 14% spent. We are spending better than last year's first quarter, within the 20 to 25 % range of expenditure.

Youth: J. Klemer reviewed the total budget for the Youth program, \$775,000.

Approximately \$140,000, or 18% has been spent. Last year at this time, spending was at about 20%. J. Klemer explained that NCET is spending money from the youth Gun Violence Prevention grant. With this other available funding, our spending shows a little bit of a decrease for this first quarter as compared to last year's first quarter.

Administration: The total budget is approximately \$197,000. After the first quarter we're at approximately \$28,000 or about 15% spent. The first quarter is usually a little bit lower than the typical 20-25% spending goal as we have money from the summer youth TANF program, which does absorb a lot of our administration costs. This is anticipated and not a concern.

J. Klemer opened the floor for questions regarding the budget pages. None brought forward. B. Rice thanked J. Klemer for keeping the WDB on track and D. Jablonski and his team (NCET) for doing such an incredible job with the various programs.

- C. B. Rice shared an update regarding the Youth program with the Board. There are currently 64 youth being served with 75 planned enrollments. She noted that with it being the second quarter the Youth program is on track of meeting their goal.
- D. B. Rice shared an update regarding the New York State Gun Violence Prevention (NYSGVP) program. The goal was to have 50 youth hired. 51 youth have been hired to date. The NYSGVP grant ends March 31st, 2024. She noted the NCET Youth team are doing well with spending down the grant.
- E. B. Rice shared the One-Stop Operator Report for JBM Consulting. Unfortunately, Jeannine Brown Miller was not able to join today's meeting due to an extenuating circumstance. B. Rice noted that JBM continues to meet all of their contractual obligations and has been wonderful to work with. B. Rice referenced the One Stop System Operator report, which was given to the Board Members as they signed in. B. Rice reviewed the information on the report for the end of the first quarter. At the end of the first quarter, the Youth program had 70 enrollments, 54 are carry in from the previous program year and 16 are newly enrolled. The On-the-Job Training (OJT) program has 21 participants enrolled. Ten have completed successfully. The report lists the companies that have taken advantage of OJT program as well as the positions that have been filled by participants. B. Rice reviewed the Classroom training (CRT) program. 82 participants have enrolled in CRT at the end of the first quarter. 24 participants have completed training successfully. The report lists the training providers and courses chosen by participants.
- F. B. Rice turned the floor over the D. Martinez for an update on the Inclusion Committee. D. Martinez shared that in September the Inclusion Committee hosted a Zoom presentation with Katherine Jones from Kelly International. He shared that the presentation offered a lot of statistical information that they have collected regarding the advantages to hiring and veterans and ex-offenders. D. Martinez shared that the presentation was well received and that the Inclusion committee is hoping to offer another online presentation in the spring. B. Rice thanked D. Martinez for the update.



NIAGARA COUNTY
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

Joel Feuerman, Chairperson
Bonnie Rice, Executive Director

Trott Career Center
1001 Eleventh Street
Niagara Falls, NY 14301-1201
Phone: (716) 278-8251
Fax: (716) 278-8149

- G.** B. Rice shared that Todd Trantum of the Manufacturing Association of the Southern Tier had planned to be in attendance for a presentation, but was unable to make the meeting. She shared that Todd was going to talk about “Dream It, Do It” (DIDI) for advance manufacturing. She noted that Board members can visit DIDIWNY.com to learn more. B. Rice gave some background information on DIDI. Since 2009, DIDI has been going into local junior and senior high schools to get students excited about the advanced manufacturing field. She shared the different ways they have engaged students through STEM wars and Go-Kart races, as well as conversations specific to girls in manufacturing. An online application is used that directly links the students with local employers. DIDI encourages conversations about the jobs, job shadowing and mentoring. The goal is to engage students into the manufacturing field. Todd has already begun engaging with local Niagara County high schools, Orleans Niagara BOCES, Niagara County Community College, local employers and some of the community partners as there are plans to bring DIDI to Niagara County. B. Rice shared that the first advisory council meeting had taken place with local employers, with about 16 attendees representing employers and school representatives. Any Board Members interested in being a part of DIDI should contact B. Rice.
- H.** B. Rice opened the floor to Board members and guests for announcements.
- a. M. Bartlett shared that Orleans Niagara BOCES (ONBOCES) is looking to expand their Niagara Falls location. She had previously asked if any Board Members would be willing to write a letter of support for the project. She shared that she had received several letters and thanked Board Members for their help. The application to ESD Office of Strategic Workforce Development Capital Grant was submitted at the end of September and ONBOCES is hoping to hear back by the end of December. She again thanked those who provided letters of support. M. Bartlett also noted that as listed on the OSSO Report, ONBOCES is currently training 32 adults in a number of trainings. She added that 85% of those students are being funded under WIOA classroom training. She shared that a student was trained to do welding over the summer, they have gained full-time employment since training. She also shared that two HVAC students have already been hired into HVAC jobs as they are about to complete training. M. Bartlett shared how exciting it is to see the students succeed and progress, that in some cases it is due to the assistance of funding from WIOA. B. Rice thanked M. Bartlett for sharing and added that the WDB impacts a lot of people’s lives and we don’t always get to see it.
 - b. S. Shears shared that Niagara Community Action Program (NiaCAP) had recently received a grant from New York State for over a million dollars, to weatherize houses throughout Niagara County. This grant will provide low income families an energy audit of their home, provide insulation into attics, replace furnaces and hot water tanks where needed, as well as other weatherization services. She added that they are looking for employees and offer great benefits.
 - c. C. Lattanzio shared news regarding her company Chameleon Color Cards. The company will become a distribution center and will no longer produce product. She added that she plans to retire in March of 2024.



NIAGARA COUNTY
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

Joel Feuerman, Chairperson
Bonnie Rice, Executive Director

Trott Career Center
1001 Eleventh Street
Niagara Falls, NY 14301-1201
Phone: (716) 278-8251
Fax: (716) 278-8149

- d. J. Feuerman spoke about Retiring Board Member Kathleen Granchelli. Although Kathy was unable to attend the meeting, J. Feuerman reflected on her time as a Board Member and all the things she's accomplished and the many people she's helped while leading the YWCA of Niagara. J. Feuerman thanked her for her service and wished her the best.

No further announcements from Board Members were brought forward.

V. Motion to adjourn.

B. Rice thanked the members in attendance for their time and requested a motion to adjourn. Motion by W. Carroll. Second by K. Schuler. All in favor. **Unanimous vote in favor of adjournment.** The WDB Meeting adjourned at 8:40 a.m.

The next WDB Meeting is scheduled for March 5, 2024 at 8:00 a.m. at the Niagara County Center for Economic Development.

Respectfully submitted,

Helen Dennis