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**Workforce Development Board of Oswego County  
Business Development Committee Meeting Minutes  
Wednesday, January 10, 2024  
Oswego County Workforce New York Career Center**

*“The Business Development Committee shall identify and monitor the business services provided through the system, oversee public relations about business services, convene focus groups and community roundtables for identifying future workforce needs as related to economic development, identify available funding and assist in grant writing for employer training needs, and produce the State of the Workforce Annual Report.”*

*“Creating pathways to better careers and economic growth.”*

**Present:** Greg Hilton, Marq Brown, Kelley Burkett, David Goodness, Louise Hand, Brian Heffron, Tim McKernan, Zach Menter, Rachel Pierce, Amanda Quaile, Kim Sizemore, Kelley Thurlow, Heather Vashaw, Abby Weaver, Austin Wheelock, Alexis Cummins

The meeting was called to order at 9:00 a.m.

**1) Approval of Meeting Minutes from October 11, 2023**

Greg asked for a motion to approve the October 11, 2023 meeting minutes. Dave Goodness made a motion to approve, and Marq Brown seconded the motion. All in favor, the motion was carried.

**2) Business News/Training Update (PY '23 Q1 & Q2)- Amanda Quaile**

In PY '23 Q1 we had a total of 12 OJT placements (most placements were at Pathfinder Bank and 1 was at Majestic Mold). We are continuing to provide Metrix to all registered customers and continuing due diligence daily. We hosted 7 Job Fairs/Hiring Events for various businesses including our Fall Job Fair. We continue to provide prescreening assessments for Menter Ambulance, First Choice Staffing and Novelis, and we shared 36 jobs for 18 employers on the NYS Job Bank and our Social Media sites. We completed outreach with 6 new businesses and served 38 total Oswego County Businesses this quarter with various services. We also started hosting Mini Job Fairs on the 1<sup>st</sup> Tuesday of each month where we are inviting 5-8 employers at a time. So far, we have seen anywhere from 8-14 customers per job fair. We are also still offering the Business Highlight Project but are not seeing businesses taking advantage of that service.

In PY '23 Q2 we had a total of 11 OJT placements for various companies. Most OJT placements are successfully completing their training and being retained. We are continuing to provide Metrix to all registered customers and continuing due diligence daily. We hosted/attended 6 Job Fairs/Hiring Events for various businesses. We continue to provide prescreening assessments for Menter Ambulance, First Choice Staffing and Novelis, and have recently started to offer prescreening sessions again for Huhtamaki. We shared 35 jobs for 17 employers on the NYS Job Bank and our Social Media sites. We completed outreach with 19 new businesses and served 35 total Oswego County Businesses this quarter with various services. We are continuing to host the Mini Job Fairs monthly and the next one will be 2/6/24 from 11:00-1:00. We are also starting a Community Outreach event where we invite businesses to come in and promote their services to customers in the center. These will be held on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of the month from 11:00-1:00. We are also still offering the Business

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Highlight Project but are not seeing businesses taking advantage of that service. It was mentioned that with the new businesses we are contacting it might be beneficial to them to do the highlight week, but as there is a lot of work on their end to complete the process many businesses are hesitant.

### **3) Customer Feedback- Businesses PY '23 Q1-** Amanda Quaile

98 surveys were sent out in Q1 and 12 were returned. Overall businesses were satisfied with the services provided to them. This survey is sent out to all businesses that we worked with during that quarter. Dave mentioned that one of the businesses commented that jobs fairs on the weekends might be beneficial, which is something that we can look into for our bigger job fairs, but we aren't sure how this would affect business participation. Abby mentioned that potentially using a different type of survey would produce better results.

### **4) Director's Report-** Rachel Pierce

We submitted an ESD Grant Application on 12/29/23 to the Office of Strategic Workforce Development for funding for Oswego Build and Pathways to Apprenticeship and are hoping to hear back shortly with a decision. This week we will be submitting our WDB Recertification as we had asked for an extension to wait and see if the Chairman of the Legislature was going to stay the same and we had voted on a new member at the last Full Board for a start date of 1/1/24. We are now officially the Department of Workforce Development, and we have over an \$800,000 investment of ARPA funds for the year from the County. We are working on budget modifications for the next Full Board Meeting. We will be attending the kickoff meeting for the planning of the 2024 Youth Career Summit, and the kickoff meeting for the Youth Systems Build Academy. We applied for the Academy and were selected to participate. It is a 6-month training commitment with 2 trips to DC to meet with DOL reps to gain insight on how to reach the youth population and what services to offer them. In response to this Greg Hilton asked the group for feedback from Micron going into the school districts. Brian Heffron shared that CiTi has launched a few initiatives based on promoting/inspiring kids about STEM. They are making sure that all students are getting opportunities to learn about the programs. They have collaborated with the Oswego Children's Museum for a STEM mobile unit that will be open to all school districts. There are also STEM community outreach events geared towards middle schools. Micron has been supporting these initiatives with financial support. Brian also shared that they will be working on a "Education Hour" which will bring in Oswego County teachers to go to non-profits, education entities, etc. to learn about their facilities to see how they can bring ideas into their classrooms. Micron will also be doing some outreach events where they go into the school districts or community entities to teach the public about the industry, answer questions, and build awareness. Everything they are doing will also benefit many different industries and businesses currently in the county. Kim and Rachel shared that now that we have less restrictions on funding due to the county funding, we may be able to reach the younger ages and start promoting services available. There will be a Partner & Staff Forum focusing on Generational differences in the Workforce on 1/16/24 from 9:00-10:30. Rachel also shared some information regarding Governor Hochul's State of the State address. She shared that Centerstate CEO will be leading an ON-RAMP Center project modeled after a facility in Buffalo that does outreach, screening, and training all in one facility. The main hub will likely be in Syracuse with spokes around the region. There will be more information to come on this as it becomes available.

### **5) Roundtable- All**

**Heather Vashaw-** Shared that Pathfinder is looking at how the financial industry is evolving, and technology has become a larger aspect of what they do daily, which is getting them to look at future recruitment efforts.

**Brian Heffron-** CiTi also submitted an ESD workforce grant on 12/29/23 for the renovations and purchase of equipment for a manufacturing automation lab on their Mexico campus. He shared that they had great support from the county and partners for this project. There are 3 more events scheduled for their Career Connection Series (Health Careers Expo 4/12/24, Armed Forces and Public Safety Expo 5/10/24, and they are trying to push drone technology to the schools to try and get an Oswego County drone soccer team.) CTE is setting up internship interviews on 4/4/24. Workkeys will be coming back to the county under CiTi's leadership. They will be pushing it out to districts and Brian will be promoting it to industries to get them to understand and utilize it in which a way a participant going into an interview will benefit. (Greg shared that Huhtamaki recognizes the credential, and if a

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candidate has that credential, they will move up on the list as opposed to someone without it. He did mention that candidates need to be able to promote the credential better on their resumes).

**Zach Menter-** They are just finishing up their EMT academy and are staying on track with them as call volumes continue to go up. They are looking to potentially do another academy in spring. Paramedic training is going okay but they could always use more. There is a potential for the kids enrolled in the Early College High School Health Science program to do a ride along, and Zach will be in contact with Sean Broderick more about that.

**Dave Goodness-** Working with business industries and educational institutes trying to tie into businesses. MVCC is trying to streamline their pre-apprentice program. He also shared that they have legislative sessions now open for about 5-6 weeks and will be working with counties to promote but to also listen to their needs.

**Kelly Burkett-** ACCES-VR is continuing to try and connect their clients to the workforce. She shared that if your businesses have any hiring needs to let her know and she can share the information with counselors to try and help fill those vacancies. They offer work tryouts, paid internships and more. She also shared that they have a new trainee working in Oswego County.

**Austin Wheelock-** Empire State Development has a 1/31/24 deadline for their ESD Grant Programs. There is money available for renovations, expansions, etc. and it tends to go more towards manufacturing. (If you have an applicable project let Austin know). They are putting together a survey for manufacturing companies in the county and are looking to develop a manufacturing summit based on the responses. They are making their way towards the industrial park expansion which will include 185 acres and 10 new pad sites. They are still working with Daldrop to build their facility in the industrial park and are looking at a spring groundbreaking. They are working with N.E.T & Die as they try to expand and acquire the former Kmart facility. Fabsite Industries is looking to relocate to the Industrial Park as well. Tim mentioned that there may be issues with wastewater treatment at the industrial park, and Austin shared that they are trying to find a way to fix those issues.

**Abby Weaver-** Little Lukes is involved in the "Help me Grow" program that is a grant program that identifies children under age 5 who need services. They are continuing to raise their pay rates to compete with other teacher and early childhood staff positions. They are also looking for funding for an additional site in Oswego County and a larger site in Onondaga County and they are looking to do OJT's for entry level positions. She also shared that there are bids in for construction on Old City Hall. She will also follow up with Sean Broderick about the Early College High School program as she has an IT company as well that might be able to allow students to shadow.

**Tim McKernan-** They are in the middle of job shadowing with P-Tech students. They have invested in dual robot/table setup technology and are nearing full employment (2-3 people short). They are expecting another good year.

**Marq Brown-** Marq asked about a date for another networking event and Rachel will reach out to try and get the planning going for a new date.

**Amanda Quaile-** In talks with Syracuse Heating and Cooling about a possible OJT with an Oswego County Resident.

**Kelley Thurlow-** Shared that the PY '22 Annual Report is completed and has been sent out to members. She also shared that she will be sitting in on the Perkins Committee for Cayuga Community College.

**Rachel Pierce-** CNY Works is hosting a job fair for I-81 on 1/31/24. Marq asked for an update on this project. Austin shared that there are 5 phases to the project and right now they are currently working on updating on-ramps and lanes which according to Kim Sizemore is phase 2 of the project. However, this project might be tied up indefinitely due to litigations.

**Group-** Austin asked if changing to the Department of Workforce Development will change how we conduct business with other businesses. Rachel shared that all the split really did was take us out of the Department of Social Services umbrella so that we no longer oversee the mandated/public assistance team in Mexico and changed

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who we report to. The split will open opportunities for new services for customers and businesses. Currently we are trying to finalize a paid work experience package for High School Seniors and updating our car repair program to remove some of the restrictions we previously had. Greg asked the group if anyone knew what the rate of students not attending college after graduation this year was. According to Zach Menter (stemming from a conversation with Sean Broderick about Fulton Students) it's at a 40-60 split with 60% entering the workforce.

There were no other updates at this time. The meeting was adjourned at 10:31 a.m.

**Next Meeting:** April 10<sup>th</sup>, 2024, at 9:00 a.m.

**Location:** One Stop Center Conference Room 2A, 200 N. 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, Fulton, NY 13069.

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