

Greater New Bedford Workforce Investment Board, Inc.
Finance and Performance Measurement Committee
August 13, 2009
Fairhaven Homecare Conference Room

Finance and Performance Measurement Committee members present: David DeJesus, Jr., Chair; Edward J. Dennehy, John Fernandes (written Proxy), Bruce Morell, Joseph Notini, Maria O. Pinarreta, Charles R. Simpson, Jr.

Finance and Performance Measurement Committee members absent: David Cabral (called), Peter J. Muise (called), James F. Snow (called)

Others in attendance: Len Coriaty, Steven Grant, Norm Audette, Jean Fox, Annie Massicotte, Bridget Alexander, Ron Rheume

In the absence of the Chair, Bruce Morell began the meeting at 3:10 pm. He noted he had a proxy from John Fernandes

Consent Agenda

Steven Grant stated that he was not able to complete the forward funding information yet. He also noted that the credit line was accessed last month for two or three days and may have to be accessed again due to timing of DCS payments.

A motion to approve the minutes of 6/11/09 and the Treasurer's Report through June 30, 2009 was made by Joe Notini and seconded by Maria Pinarreta and passed unanimously.

Reports

The draft business plan was circulated, as was the integrated budget and budget narrative. The margin notes and comments were Steve's, and he then explained the details of the plan and budget, noting that the plan was aligned with the Governor's workforce priorities.

Len Coriaty informed the Committee that he, Steve, and Ed had met earlier with Treasurer Peter Muise and Vice Treasurer Dave Cabral, both of whom support the plan but were unable to attend today's meeting.

Len also pointed out that the plan contains American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) references, which have just been approved by the state. These must be included in the budget, with the focus being on the current fiscal year.

Ed mentioned that the budget for Career Center "triage" reflects \$20K for software, \$10K of which is for an optical scan pilot designed to minimize data entry and enhance efficiency. If successful, it could be implemented statewide.

The healthcare initiative contract has not yet been finalized; therefore, it does not appear in the integrated budget.

It was also noted that about \$24K was allocated from Wagner Peyser 10% funding for an adult literacy pilot program program that would pair volunteers with individuals on ABE/ESOL waitlists. Attleborough has successfully managed such a program with 100 volunteers, and Mayor Lang is extremely supportive of a similar, low cost New Bedford initiative. Mike Longo may participate in this

effort. He has already been in discussion with Len and the Mayor. They may seek some grant funding through Secretary Bump. It is hoped that the pilot could begin this fall with a small core (around 12) of volunteers.

About \$21K has been allocated for tuition reduction for New Bedford Public Schools. Last year, \$30K translated to a \$35 tuition reduction for 700 courses, making the educational pursuit more financially feasible for area residents.

Regarding staffing, Steve observed that no additional WIB staff are included in the budget. The Coordinator position brings the current WIB staffing level back up to 10. A position was added at New Directions, after additional money was made available from State One Stop funding, therefore, including the original ARRA plan New Directions is increased by 2 FTE's overall.

There was also discussion on target areas, such as clean energy, a "green" focus for all youth programming, Brownfields, and resource development.

Page 5 of the Plan details the Youth effort. There are a total of 19 contracts and 15 vendors; there are 12 ARRA programs this year in addition to the typical three in-school and three out-of-school vendors in formula WIA. The stimulus funding resulted in a significantly expanded level of interest on the part of vendors, although the formula WIA response is still limited. The \$80K ARRA/Byrne funded YouthWorks in Wareham was just awarded and is not reflected in the Integrated Budget.

Bruce Morell requested more information on where the "green" jobs are at this point, noting that the training is probably beneficial, but the jobs do not appear to be materializing. Bridget Alexander agreed that the original "green" jobs projections have been scaled back significantly for a variety of reasons, including the increased per-house cost of \$6,500 and the possibility of requiring payment of prevailing wages, which are much higher than the \$10-\$14 per hour that has been the local experience. Many parts of the country are holding off on weatherization efforts as a result. While the number of jobs is expected to triple statewide to 1,400 by 2011, that is far below initial estimates. She also noted that the WIB's RFP is targeted to those already in construction and provides some certifications. State experts concur that cross training will likely yield positive results. "Some college" and engineering fields are where the openings will be seen.

Steve then reviewed the Integrated Budget Narrative, reminding the Committee that he followed the DCS format, which combines WIB and New Directions into one part of the narrative. He discussed staffing, increased travel costs that are largely due to ARRA, the .7 FTE re-entry person that will be covered by Wagner-Peyser, as well as the leasing of Dover Street property for another location for New Directions staff.. With Joe Notini's offer to support ½ of the lease payment along with the portion of the re-entry position, a little more has been added to ITA's under the ARRA plan Steve also addressed the application for set-aside funding for Eagle and Titleist.

Bruce Morell inquired about the "state-paid retained fringe rate," commenting that it is a "pet peeve" significantly impacted by the number of employees who need family plans versus those on individual plans.

He then asked if the WIB is part of the City's audit process. Discussion ensued relative to who would be conducting the audit. Norm Audette indicated that the decision lies with the WIB but additional costs may be incurred if a private auditor's reporting or credentialing is deemed inadequate. While a private auditor has been used in the past and is conducting the audit of New Directions, Len thought that the lack of professional development on the part of the private auditor resulted in the decision to

either have the City conduct the audit or have an auditor work with the City auditor. In any event, he felt that the decision should be the Mayor's. Chuck Simpson observed that there are remedies available to the WIB if the City charges too much for its auditing services; in addition, it would be simplest to have the City conduct the audit.

Ed Dennehy made a motion to have the City conduct the audit this year. The motion was seconded by Chuck Simpson and unanimously approved.

On the Integrated Budget and Plan, Chuck Simpson made a motion to approve. Maria Pinarreta seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

Career Center Operations

Ed Dennehy presented his report, noting that unemployment remains high and that staff are beginning to work with individuals who are running out of benefits. The final FY '09 figures will be finalized tomorrow and available for the next committee meeting.

He stated that all ITAs for dislocated workers have been expended. New Directions is attempting to dual enroll individuals and use adult ITA funds.

The outreach to recruit for Brownfields has resulted in a delay of Work Cert for the time being. Individuals are not submitting the required documentation. Ed is concerned that identifying 70 people for weatherization may also be problematic, since finding 20 for Brownfields has been a challenge. There was additional discussion on eligibility, with proof of income being cited as the most difficult to obtain. Chuck asked if the interview process provides some assistance and advice to potential applicants. He also asked if the interview touches on motivation and whether or not some may be earning "under the table." Perhaps the interview process should be refined to assist clients in identifying what they need to become eligible.

Bruce Morell noted that his organization receives 14,000 applicants for fuel assistance annually. The documentation requirements are similar, but those individuals do produce the paperwork.

Discussion then ensued relative to the RES program, with Ed stating that an additional 5 state positions will be forthcoming. Interviews should be completed this week for 4 people in New Bedford and one in Wareham. They should all be on board in September for the two-year positions.

Ed reported that Union Wear purchased lease space and is gearing up to hire 13 people. The Career Center is providing "lean" training. The company expects to have 100 workers by December.

The Operations Review will have an update on New Directions' objectives.

Scorecard

Because of the limited amount of time remaining, the scorecard discussion was tabled.

Respectfully submitted,

Jean C. Fox
Youth Council Director