

The CT Low Wage Employer Advisory Board Meeting
June 20, 2017 – 2:00 P.M. - Conference Rooms A&B
Connecticut Department of Labor, Wethersfield, Connecticut

Minutes

Members present: Co-Chair James Bhandary-Alexander, Co-Chair Jennifer Putetti, Merrill Gay, Helene Figueroa, Susan Coleman, Merle Berke-Schlessel and Michael Seid. **A quorum of members present was reached.**

Members absent: Deborah Schwartz (on maternity leave) – represented by Deb Chernoff, SEIU 1199, Kurt Westby – represented by Carolyn Treiss, CT Department of Labor, Monica Morneau, Paul Lavoie, Eddie Stephens and Stanley McMillen.

Other Attendees: Chris Caruso, CT Department of Labor.

Welcome and opening remarks: Co-Chair Bhandary-Alexander welcomed his fellow Board Members and convened the meeting at 2:50 P.M.

Review and approval of the March 21, 2017 Board Minutes: Co-Chair Bhandary-Alexander entertained a motion by Helene Figueroa to approve the minutes. Susan Coleman seconded the motion. **There being no changes to the minutes, the motion passed unanimously.**

Work Group Reports: Co-Chair Bhandary-Alexander asked each Work Group to report on its progress as well as any requests for support, or securing speakers for future Board Meetings.

- **Job Training and Workforce Development** – In an effort to learn more about existing workforce development and job training programs offered by the State, Carolyn Treiss arranged presentations for the Group on the Department of Labor Apprenticeship Training programs, Vocational-Technical High School programs and Community College programs such as the Advanced Manufacturing Technology Centers. The Group was also meeting to learn more about the Manufacturing Innovation Fund administered by the Department of Economic and Community Development with business outreach support from the Department of Labor. Carolyn offered to arrange additional presentations as needed. A few of the Board Members were interested in hearing more about the apprenticeship training and community college advanced manufacturing programs – specifically how many individuals go on to secure long term employment/careers as a result of their training.

- **Barriers to Work** – Because of numerous barriers (transportation, childcare, housing, elderly care, etc.) facing today’s unemployed and underemployed, Co-Chair Putetti reported that the Group is focusing its efforts on how to effectively build a “care giving” economy in order to allow/support people to go to work, build meaningful careers and reach their goals without barriers limiting their potential. Helen Figueroa discussed a study at Georgetown University on the topic of a caregiving economy. For the next Board Meeting, she will try to secure a speaker from the University.
- **Social Services Research** – Deborah Chernoff reported that the Group is looking at how State government systems interact with the people they serve, and what can be done to develop standards across systems to allow for a more effective program delivery while reducing barriers.

Co-Chair Bhandary-Alexander thanked the Work Groups for their reports. Chris Caruso will follow up with Helen and Carolyn to secure future speakers as requested by two of the three Work Groups.

A few Board Members expressed an interest in hearing from Electric Boat on their efforts to hire 2,000 workers. Carolyn Treiss commented on a newly formed manufacturing work group in Bristol that is focused on bringing manufacturers and educational institutions together in an effort to create a regional pipeline for potential employees. She also acknowledged Board Member Paul Lavoie’s involvement with the Work Group. Carolyn also reported on House Bill 5590 which creates a workforce development training authority fund. The Fund would be administered by an appointed board of directors with support services provided by the Department of Labor. The legislation passed, but funding for the initiative is pending. Michael Seid provided a brief overview of President Trump’s funding initiatives concerning apprenticeship training programs.

Public Comment: There were no members of the public present.

Adjourn: Co-Chair James Bhandary-Alexander thanked everyone for their participation and stated that future Board Meetings will return to a 3:00 PM start time rather than 2:00. He then entertained a motion by Helene Figueroa to adjourn the Meeting. The motion was seconded by Michael Seid and passed unanimously. **The Meeting was adjourned at 4:13 P.M.**

Respectfully submitted,
Chris Caruso
CT Department of Labor