

Council for Labor and Economic Growth
Quarterly Meeting
Lansing Community College West Campus, MTEC- Conference Center
Monday, May 23, 2005
10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Derick Adams	David Eisler	William Peterson
E. Sharon Banks	Norma Hagenow	Gene Pierce
Michele Barney	Doyle Hayes	Hubert Price, Jr.
Lloyd Bingman, Ph. D.	David Hollister	Sharon Rivera
David Binkley	Win Irwin	Trenda Rusher
Theodore Blashak	Robert Jacquart	Michael Schmidt
Richard Blouse, Jr.	Janet Joseph	Jaye Shamsiddeen
Thomas Boensch	Jack Litzenberg	Patricia Shimmens
Harry Bonner, Sr.	Frank Lopez	Kester So
Michael Bryanton	Myra Moreland	Marianne Udow
Antoon Brusselmans	Shelly Norman-Hill	John Van Wyck
Matthew Brynildson	Janet Olszewski	Sharon Wenzl
Patrick Cannon	William Orabone	Benjie Williams
Enrique Carrillo	Sharon Parks	George Yost
Matthew Chambers	Sharon Peters	Michael Zelle
Richard Dandurand	Sherri Peterson	Lynn Zuellig
Bradley Dyer		

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Wilma Abney	Jeremy Hughes	Phillip Power
Kenneth Baker	Eleanor Josaitis	Hari Radeshwar
Ralph Bedogne	Mitzi King	Alan Sanborn
Christopher Fitch	Albert Lorenzo	Buzz Thomas
Michael Haller	Alan Low	Mary Thornton
Dennis Hands	Kenneth Meshigaud	Mitch Tomlinson
George Heartwell	Juan Mestas	John Voorhorst
Thomas Hickner	Richard Pappas	

I. CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Sharon Wenzl, Chair, called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. Ms. Wenzl welcomed the Council members and stated that Vice-Chair, Mitch Tomlinson was out of state and would not be present to help chair the meeting. Ms. Wenzl acknowledged that Ms. Marcia Black-Watson is now the permanent manager of the Advisory Administration Unit that reports to Director Hollister and provides support for the Council for Labor & Economic Growth (CLEG).

Ms. Wenzl mentioned that 52 members were expected to attend the meeting and asked for a show of hands from those attending for the first time. Introductions of the members followed. Ms. Wenzl then mentioned the appointment of two new Council members from the Senate, Alan Sanborn and Buzz Thomas.

Ms. Wenzl talked about her difficulty getting familiar with the language of state government, particularly the use of acronyms. She indicated that the Abbreviations & Acronyms Directory provided in the back of the meeting booklets would be very helpful.

II. ACTION ITEMS

Ms. Wenzl talked about the responsibilities of CLEG. CLEG is an advisory body to the Governor, but also fulfills federal requirements. Those federal requirements include the development and maintenance of the State's workforce investment plan and providing oversight and leadership to the local workforce investment boards. Ms. Wenzl then stated the next agenda item, Action Items, included the approval of the meeting minutes from March 7 and the Workforce Investment Act State Plan.

II. i. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

A MOTION was made and SUPPORTED to approve the minutes of the March 7, 2005 meeting.

II. ii. TWO-YEAR STRATEGIC STATE WORKFORCE INVESTMENT PLAN

Ms. Wenzl introduced Mr. Matt Chambers, Chair of the Accelerating Re-Employment/Workforce System Committee, and Ms. Janet Howard, Deputy Director of the Bureau of Workforce Programs, Department of Labor & Economic Growth (DLEG), as presenters of the Two-Year Strategic Workforce Investment Plan.

Mr. Chambers introduced the members of the Accelerating Re-Employment/Workforce System Committee and talked about the committee's responsibilities. Mr. Chambers then gave an overview of the national strategic direction of the State's public workforce investment system and the plan components. He also talked about Michigan's key strategies, which include the creation of DLEG, establishment of CLEG, Michigan Regional Skills Alliances (MiRSAs), MI Opportunity Partnership, and Lt. Governor's Commission on Higher Education and Economic Growth. He also summarized the committee meeting held on May 16 to review the plan, asking the other committee members if they had anything to add, and then opened the floor for questions.

A question was asked regarding accountability using the MI Opportunity Partnership Initiative as an example and how the results would be tracked. This question was directed to Janet Howard, who stated that a tracking system for the MI Opportunity Partnership was currently being developed.

Another question was asked regarding revisions to the Michigan Works! System Governance and Minimum Standards. Ms. Howard stated that the current Minimum Standards will be in place until new Workforce Investment System standards are developed. A Council member inquired

about how policies are disseminated to the local level. Ms. Howard answered that local capacity building will be ongoing and information will be shared throughout that process.

Mr. Chambers talked about the timeframe to secure the Governor's signature and submit the State Plan to the U.S. Department of Labor. He then stated that the committee recommends the approval of the State Plan as presented.

A MOTION was made and SUPPORTED to approve the Two-Year Strategic State Workforce Investment Plan.

II. iii. LOCAL EMPLOYMENT DYNAMICS

Mr. Gary Yakimov, Senior Partner, Corporation for a Skilled Workforce, provided an overview of the Local Employment Dynamics (LED) program. The LED program matches census bureau information with unemployment insurance records to develop new information about local labor market conditions. Mr. Yakimov explained the LED was prohibited in the State of Michigan due to confidentiality language in the Michigan Employment Security Act (MESA), and a bill was introduced to the State legislature to amend this language. He hoped to get CLEG's endorsement of LED and support for amending the MESA.

Mr. Chambers, stated the Council should support LED. After Mr. Yakimov answered questions on the LED, a MOTION was made and SUPPORTED approving CLEG's endorsement of the LED program and the bill before the State legislature.

III. i. JOBS TODAY, JOBS TOMORROW/EMPLOYER SURVEY RESULTS

Ms. Wenzl presented the results of the CLEG Employer Survey, which was administered in an effort to capture Council member's staffing levels, job vacancies, and use of Michigan's publicly-funded workforce investment system. She then asked for a show of hands from individuals who utilize the Michigan Talent Bank, which indicated that 40 – 50% of the Council uses the system. Ms. Wenzl asked Council members to continue to send in the surveys, since not many were received.

III. ii. JOBS TODAY, JOBS TOMORROW INITIATIVE UPDATE

Director Hollister gave an update on two Jobs Today, Jobs Tomorrow Initiatives - - the MI Opportunity Partnership and the Jobs for Michigan Fund. Council members were directed to a copy of Governor Granholm's letter that announced the MI Opportunity Partnership pledge drive and the attached pledge card. Director Hollister gave the most recent pledge drive response statistics and talked about the process of bringing partnerships together to make the program work. Director Hollister asked Council members to participate in the program by pledging their organization's job vacancies.

Director Hollister then gave an overview of the Jobs for Michigan Bond Fund. He stated the bond initiative will target four competitive edge technologies: 1) life sciences; 2) alternative energies; 3) advanced automotive, manufacturing and, materials; and 4) homeland security and defense. Director Hollister stated that Michigan is the only state that wants a bond proposal that looks at alternative energy and that the few hearings the Senate has had on the proposal have

been well received. Council members were asked to help spread the word about the bond proposal to legislatures, local media, and other groups.

IV. DEVELOPING MICHIGAN'S HUMAN CAPITAL

Director Hollister talked about the need to ensure that the people of Michigan have the skills for the jobs that are in demand and that developing human talent is essential to creating the 21st Century workforce needed in our state. He introduced a panel presentation consisting of four Council members, representing partners in the workforce investment system, discussing how they prepare individuals for jobs and careers.

Ms. Trena Rusher, CLEG member and public workforce system representative, gave an overview of the Michigan Works! System and provided a definition of a Michigan Works! Service Center. Ms. Rusher talked about the partnership between the Workforce Development Boards and Local Elected Officials. She then asked the Council members to visit a Service Center, sign up for the Michigan Works! for People Conference that will be held in September, and to be a "barrier buster" by breaking down the barriers that prevent Michigan Works! from serving employers.

Mr. David Eisler, CLEG member and education representative, talked about the importance of the transition from high school to college, the need for a focus on structure and culture, and how structure and culture do not always match with supply and demand.

Mr. David Binkley, CLEG member and employer representative, gave an overview of the process the Whirlpool Corporation uses to train employees. Mr. Binkley provided a list of skills and capabilities his organization expects of employees and the approach Whirlpool uses to build upon an employee's skills and capabilities through the use of education and training. Director Hollister asked Mr. Binkley if Whirlpool utilizes the Michigan Works! system. Mr. Binkley answered that their use of the system was limited.

Mr. Tom Boensch, CLEG member and labor representative, stated that placement and retention were important and talked about opportunities for employers through apprenticeships. Mr. Boensch used the construction industry as an example and indicated that construction jobs could lead to more opportunities in the industry. Director Hollister asked Mr. Boensch if his organization partners with Michigan Works! Agencies (MWAs). Mr. Boensch indicated they did in conjunction with career fairs at schools.

The floor was then opened for additional questions to the panel presenters. The presenters were asked if they worked with other populations, such as individuals with disabilities, single mothers, and ex-offenders as a source for labor. Mr. Eisler answered that they have looked at all of these populations, except ex-offenders. Mr. Boensch stated his organization looks at all populations in the labor force and has initiatives to address the employment barriers of some targeted populations.

The presenters were also asked if they utilized tax incentives, and if not, why? Mr. Boensch answered that most of their ventures were collaborative, but not to that extent. He stated that it was difficult to persuade employers to sign any kind of contract. Mr. Eisler answered that Ferris State University has utilized tax incentives, but he was not aware of the status of any and further

indicated there is a perception that anything that deals with the government tends to be slow. Mr. Eisler then stated that his organization has had success with single mothers, but work habits of individuals right out of high school are generally poor. Mr. Boensch said that it is important for employers to advise local school systems of their needs.

Director Hollister asked the presenters what one thing they would fix within the public workforce system. Answers included: promoting the message that graduation is not the end of something, but should be the beginning; making sure the different programs available to individuals are easy to use; promoting the idea of lifelong learning; commonality of communication; working with partners in the system and communicating what the system has to offer.

V. JOBS TODAY, JOBS TOMORROW COMMITTEE LAUNCH

Ms. Wenzl stated the committee formation was a result of the survey that Council members participated in to select the highest priorities for CLEG's focus. Ms. Wenzl introduced the committee chairs and, if appointed, committee vice-chair. She then thanked the Council members for taking on their roles. The committees then participated in break out sessions to share initial thoughts on what they would seek to accomplish based on their broad focus areas.

VI. COMMITTEE REPORT OUT

Mr. William Orabone, Chair, *Creating a State Culture of Entrepreneurism Committee*, reported that everyone who aspired to be an entrepreneur would be encouraged and that the committee would like a statewide mentoring system for entrepreneurs. Mr. Orabone also stated the committee would be looking at what was going on currently statewide in educational institutions regarding entrepreneurship to ensure consistency and wanted to promote to larger corporations how entrepreneurship could benefit them.

Ms. Sharon Parks, Vice-Chair, *Creating a Low-Wage Worker Advancement Strategy Committee*, stated their committee had a lively discussion about how the low-wage population is often overlooked, the importance of integrating programs, linking workforce and economic development, finding the intersection between low-wage workers and employers, and what policy intervention is do-able and will make a difference. The committee will build on recommendations from the Workforce Action Network (WAN) and will look at successful models such as Cascade Engineering in Grand Rapids for best practices.

Mr. Matthew Chambers, Chair, *Accelerating Re-Employment/Workforce System Committee*, stated their committee discussion revolved around how difficult it was to maneuver through the public workforce system and possibly mapping movement through the system would help identify problem areas. The committee also talked about matching jobs to the recently unemployed, focusing on short term training in certain areas, and influencing the use of funds to be more effective. The committee would be setting up a meeting sometime in July.

Mr. Michael Schmidt, Chair, *Increasing Educational Attainment Committee*, reported that their committee would first be getting up to speed on the Cherry Commission recommendations and exploring the following themes: 1) identifying the group of students that fall through the cracks

of the educational system; and 2) narrowing the scope of the recommendations to do a few things well. In addition, the committee feels they need more data to feel comfortable.

Ms. Myra Moreland, Chair, *Increasing Michigan's Global Competitiveness Committee*, said their committee talked about understanding the reality of globalization, looking at the success stories from our state that makes us globally competitive, and working on the image of the State that it is not just Detroit and manufacturing. Ms. Moreland also stated their committee would start with a SWOT analysis to list the strengths and barriers of our state with the goal to report concise action at the September CLEG meeting.

Mr. Jack Litzenberg, Chair, *Tackling Major Workforce Issues Facing Key Industry Sectors Committee*, reported their committee talked about identifying industries that offer the most in economic development and the strengths and weaknesses of the labor market. The committee planned to meet in July to begin their work.

IX. PUBLIC COMMENT/CLOSING REMARKS

Ms. Wenzl asked for public comment, but there was none. Members were reminded of the next meeting on September 13, 2005, at the Soaring Eagle Resort, and were asked to fill out the evaluations. Committee chairs were thanked for their role as well as committee members for their work.

X. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Ms. Wenzl adjourned the meeting at 2:00 p.m.

In accordance with the Americans With Disabilities Act, the information in these minutes will be made in alternative format (large type, audio tape, etc.) upon request.

Approved September 13, 2005