



Onondaga Workforce Development Board Meeting
February 17, 2026 - 12:00 PM
960 James Street, Syracuse NY 13203

Board Attendees: Tony Baird, Aimee Durfee, Eric Ennis, Dekka Eysaman, Mitch Latimer, Jeffrey Maidment, Alan Marzullo, Jessica McCarthy (remote), Kristen Mucitelli-Heath, Anne Napper, Peter Naughton, Kare Oja, Eric Peckham, Darin Price, Matt Tarolli, Jim Thompson, Nancy Williams, Randy Wolken

CNY Works Staff Attendees: Rosemary Avila-Ticio, Sheryl Bowman (remote), Bruce Brumfield, Susan Cooley, Christelle Marpaud, Darlene McCann, Mary Parry

Guest Attendees: Kerry Twomey, Metrix Presenter

One-Stop Operator: Mari Ukleya

WELCOME

- **Rosemary welcomed:**
 - Eric Ennis, Chief Development Officer with the City of Syracuse
 - Jeff Maidment, Director NY Site Construction with Micron
 - Christelle Marpaud, CNY Works Director of Workforce Programs & Career Center Operations
 - Mari Ukleya as the One-Stop System Operator - OCM BOCES

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- **Rosemary made the following announcements:**
 - If you haven't completed your conflict of interest acknowledgement form yet, please do so as soon as possible. We have the policy and forms at the meeting for anyone that needs them.
 - If you would like to have us copy an assistant or other additional contact when sending things to you, please give Mary their contact information.
 - We have provided an acronym listing for anyone that would like to take one.
 - Randy encouraged everyone to come to the Board Retreat in April.

ACTION ITEMS

- **Approve December Minutes**
Anne Napper made a motion to approve. It was seconded by Kate Oja. All in favor, none opposed; motion carried.
- **Approve Work Experience Wage Increase**
The goal is to pay a dollar more than minimum wage. Effective tomorrow, the hourly wage for Work Experience will be \$17/hour.
Kristen Mucitelli-Heath made a motion to approve. It was seconded by Al Marzullo. All in favor, none opposed; motion carried.
- **Approve ITA Policy Addendum**
Sue Cooley briefed the Executive & Finance Committee on the final report of rate and volume, but we don't have enough funding. The policy was created with a cap of \$7,500/program year or



\$15,000 for two program years. We are proposing a lower cap of \$2,500 per program year for Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth. This doesn't affect QUEST. This can be rescinded if things change before the end of the fiscal year; we can make changes to the addendum.

Kate asked if it would go back up when funding renews. Rosemary said that we will have to continue to monitor it and decide.

Kristen stated that when you bring the cap down you can fund more people, but the lower rate may not be as effective and wondered if it would be better to fund fewer people. Rosemary reminded the Board that WIOA is always last resort funding. We foresee that students will have to take more student loans. The spirit of WIOA is for participants who are work-ready. How do we maximize funding and get more people in the door?

Kristen asked if the cap is up to \$7,500 why do we have to lower cap? Kate asked if we could lower it to \$5000? Rosemary having a lower cap, rather than having directors need to decide where to draw the line; it will provide the Directors with uniform guidance. We are looking at all angles to make sure that we are consistent. The amount of the cap is driven by finance report. We are trying to make an adjustment for the rest of this fiscal year. Randy is interested in knowing what the cost of the average ITA is.

Aimee asked about the two different policies: this and QUEST. Rosemary said it is all based on eligibility.

Eric Peckham asked how we decided the dollar amount. Sue said when she projected from July 1 to December it showed that we would be overspent on the award if we continue to spend on same trend that we have been. Once funds are exhausted, we cannot approve ITAs. We need to make a big change to make up for the overspending. We have to make up for 6 months of higher ITAs. If we don't make these changes quickly, we could run out of funds in a month or so.

A lot of training is for two years, and we are already obligated for that amount. Aimee suggested in the future having staff show what the impacts have been. Rosemary stated that our FOTA rep said we have a very generous cap compared to other Workforce Boards, and other Workforce Boards don't fund two-year programs, only one-year programs. WIOA is for upskilling and reskilling underemployed and unemployed individual with barriers. We want them to get a job, not the best job.

Matt said that the timing of it would apply to all fall enrollees 2026 and would apply to prep. Rosemary said we will wait until we get our Notice of Obligational Authority (NOA); it can be subject to change. Randy said we should look at two-year funding, we should consider all of our options. Right now, we are between a rock and a hard place for the short term based on fiscal responsibility. We need to look at how we can be nimble and what policy changes need to be made for us to be successful. Al said it is a living document that we continue to visit it and continue to be fiscally responsible. We also have to be ready to be nimble.

Eric Ennis asked when we receive the NOA. Rosemary stated that it is July first and we can change this if appropriate. Our job as fiscal agents is to understand our policies. Some of our supportive services don't have caps and that may have to change too.



Al Marzullo made a motion to approve. It was seconded by Mitch Latimer. All in favor, none opposed; motion carried.

ONE-STOP OPERATOR REPORT

This is Mari's 3rd week. She has met with 26 of the 27 staff members just to get to meet them and hear about what they feel is going well. Staff wants clarity on where we send our customers, professional development, OSOS training, deescalating a challenging customer, and criminal records.

Mari has met with 12 MOU and priority partners and gathered feedback on how we work well together. The first MOU/Priority Partner meeting is scheduled for February 27.

METRIX PRESENTATION

Kerry Twomey from Metrix Learning gave an Overview of Metrix and what we are doing with it at CNY Works. The annual cost to CNY Works is \$25k.

Powers SkillUp programs for CNY Works. We have been with CNY Works since 2019; over 5,000 people have used Metrix and have logged over 15,000 hours of training. Metrix isn't meant to replace brick and mortar education and training but helps fill the gaps. It offers accessibility tools for those that need it. There are unlimited licenses for those served by CNY Works at no cost to the learner. Allows us to ask people if they have completed the prep course before we pay for exam. Kerry will send the presentation to Mary and Mary will send it out to the Board.

CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER UPDATES

Sue has been going through the finances and has made adjustments/corrections where necessary.

- ***Accumulated Earnings Report (AER) - December***

This is what we spent and what we know is obligated, doesn't include future wages or occupancy costs.

WIOA PY23 - QUEST Grant award of \$4.5 Million - we still have \$3m to spend. This grant ends in September.

WIOA PY24 - we closed out all grants and have now moved into spending PY25.

The total amount of new award is \$ 7.5m (column E).

We spent/obligated just under \$4.5m

69% of Adult funds.

14% of Dislocated Worker funds. We plan to move \$800k from Dislocated Worker to Adult.

71% of Youth funds

At the bottom are the other grants not funded thru WIOA.

- ***Balance sheet***

As of September 30th, everything looked good.

- ***Income Statement***



This is a 6-month financial statement. The agency wide revenue is 5.8 and after expenses, a small loss of 129k.

Sue has made a lot of progress and has done a lot of forensic accounting.

Rosemary had a conversation with Mayor Owens to look for ways to get more funding to cover the Empire State Development (ESD) grant disallowed amount of \$209k.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR UPDATES

- ***Board Retreat***

We will discuss our Strategic Plan. Staff will drive this, but Randy asked if anyone had anything they wanted to bring up. Kristen asked if the purpose of the Retreat is to discuss our direction. Randy said it will be a start. If you can't make it and have thoughts let us know. Mari Ukleya, our One-Stop Operator will be facilitating it. Randy said it will be helpful at the end do discuss how we should do the next conversation and when we should do it.

Rosemary also wants to have some training for new board members on our organization.

- ***Quest Preemployment Bootcamp***

This started on 2/2. They are learning soft skills, financial and digital literacy, and workplace skills. We plan on running these cohorts back to back until September. Jeff asked what happens after the 3-week bootcamp. Rosemary stated that the hope is that they are able to get a job.

CHIEF OPERATIONS OFFICER UPDATES

- ***Organizational Chart***

There has been a slow down for the Workforce Advisor positions, but we will keep going. We are talking about the culture of agency and want to do quality hire instead of quantity.

- ***Fourth-Quarter Annual Turnover***

Annual data ended at 60.3% but that is because we are a small company. The 2024-2025 culture change led to us terminating a couple of staff members due to conduct and performance. Third quarter will always be higher because of the summer monitors. Randy asked Shery to present this as the next board meeting with the Monitors pulled out.

- ***Randy Wolken made a motion to adjourn***

Nancy Williams made a motion to approve. It was seconded by Al Marzullo. All in favor, none opposed; motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 1:23