

**Workforce Development Board of Okaloosa and Walton Counties**  
**Board Meeting \* December 5, 2007**  
**Sandestin Baytowne Conference Center – Magnolia Room**

**Call to Order**

Chair Sylvia Hanks called the Workforce Development Board of Okaloosa & Walton Counties meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. on December 5, 2007.

The following Board members were present:

Dr. Jack Azzaretto	Dr. Dianne Barlar	Larry Boldin
Mike Brown	Jiri Crowder	Earnestine Carswell
Robert Dobson	Dr. David Goetsch	Sylvia Hanks
Dwight Howard	Dr. David Miller	John Mirra
Dawn Moliterno	Judy Byrne Riley	Larry Sassano
Pete Smith	Pam Tedesco	Janice Thomas
Al Ward		

The following Board Staff members were present:

Mary Lou Reed	Linda Sumblin	Art Lee-Drewes
Will Miles	Jeanne Barnes	Emily Imsand
Kristen Candell	Sue Berntsen	Amber Milkeris

Also present:

Natalie Simpson (Rep. Sansom)	Rose Caruth	Jim Breitenfeld
Jerry Miller (Board Counsel)	Jerry McDaniel	Stephanie Jacobs
Cindy Ternay	Terry Youngblood	Michelle Burns

**Approval of Minutes**

Ms Hanks asked if there were any corrections or comments from the September 5, 2007 Board minutes as distributed. There were none.

*Motion by David Miller, seconded by Judy Byrne Riley, to approve the Board meeting minutes for September 5, 2007.*

*All Ayes.*

Ms Hanks initiated introductions around the table. This is the first Board meeting for several recently appointed members. Al Ward then reviewed the new Board member's orientation held Nov. 28<sup>th</sup>. Materials from the orientation are available for those who were unable to attend. Ms Hanks also introduced Natalie Simpson from Rep. Ray Sansom's office. Ms Simpson reminded the Board and audience that the property tax initiative which will be voted on in January. Information and assistance is available at [www.myfloridahouse.gov](http://www.myfloridahouse.gov) or through Rep. Sansom's office.

Ms Hanks reviewed the trip to Washington D.C. taken with Mary Lou Reed and Linda Sumblin. The Military Spouse Career Advancement Initiative was officially announced in a ceremony at the Pentagon with Secretary of Defense Robert Gates and Secretary of Labor Elaine Chao presiding. Information from the announcement was distributed for review.

Mary Lou Reed continued the discussion of the Military Spouse CAA announcement, referring to the press release in the folder. Katherine Wilson, Chair of WFI and Chris Hart, newly confirmed President of WFI, were also in attendance representing the State of Florida. The demonstration project is in eight states and 18 installations, serving spouses of E-1 through E-5 and O-1 through O-3 with tuition assistance of up to \$3K per year for two years. Rose Caruth said that Hurlburt Field has briefed 150, made 62 eligibility determinations and has applications from an additional 50. Jiri Crowder from Eglin AFB stated that the reactions from military members and spouses have been enthusiastic, and that this is a wonderful tool to enhance retention. Stephanie Jacobs, the JobsPlus Military Family Employment program manager is playing a key role in the new program.

**COUNCIL REPORTS**

**Finance Committee:** Dr. David Miller, Finance Committee Chair, Art Lee-Drewes, Finance Director.

Dr. Miller and Art Lee-Drewes reviewed finances at the Orientation. The next Finance Committee meeting is scheduled for January 29, 2008 at 8:30 a.m. at the Shalimar administrative office.

Dr. Miller announced he was signing a check for approximately \$91K for the down payment on the new mobile one-stop. It was suggested that we have a ribbon cutting (or perhaps several) once the mobile unit is delivered. Total cost is about \$301K for the unit, plus about \$10K for graphics. The unit will have 13 workstations. Anticipated delivery is prior to March 15, 2008. A driver/maintainer will be needed. The unit will be scheduled for special events, employer needs and to serve rural areas of our Region. The mobile One Stop will also be available for use during any national emergency such as a hurricane.

**WFI Update:** Al Ward spoke about the Career and Professional Education implementation. The regional Workshop for our area is scheduled for December 18<sup>th</sup> at the Emerald Coast Conference Center. Both WFI President, Chris Hart and the Director of AWI, Monesia Brown are expected to attend. Workforce, business, and economic development representatives are urged to attend this regional launching of the new legislation. .

**JobsPLUS Council:** Chair Earnestine Carswell discussed WT case loads and participation rates. Ms Carswell reported on the status on several issues impacting delivery of services including news of a House Bill which increased Pell grants from \$4300 to \$5400 over five years. The Ready to Work program is up and running at district schools. The credential will be nationally recognized. The WIN grant serves currently employed but underemployed and those who require skills upgrades to retain or advance their employment level.

Ms Carswell distributed the summary of the self sufficiency wages study, which is being updated. The current version was issued prior to Hurricane Wilma, and before gas prices rose to about \$3 per gallon. The study is being updated and will again be distributed to state representatives, and county and state agencies. The new report is expected in Feb. or March of 2008.

**First Jobs/First Wages Council:** Board liaison Will Miles explained and distributed a flyer for Career Quest II. He reviewed his report to the DJJ Blueprint Commission. Key issues are the overrepresentation of minorities, girls and repeat offenders. Twenty-five recommendations have been made, some requiring legislation. State-wide cooperation is needed, as many released return to another area.

**Executive Director's Report:** Mary Lou Reed discussed the various Councils and urged new Board members to get involved with the Council/s of their choice.

The final version of the two year Workforce Services Plan was distributed. A draft was distributed at the Sept. 5, 2007 meeting. The plan has been approved by both the Okaloosa and Walton County Boards of County and the State.

The Florida Career and Professional Education Act requires that every school district in Florida have a program modeled after the Okaloosa County CHOICE program by 2008-09. A workshop for Regions 1-4, which includes 11 school districts is scheduled for Dec 18, 2007, 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. at the Emerald Coast Conference Center. Barbara Griffin and Lucy Hadi will conduct a general session in the morning followed by lunch and technical workshops in the afternoon.

Ms Reed welcomed Amber Milkeris, Communications and Outreach Director to the Board staff and Cindy Ternay to the JobsPlus AWI Veterans staff.

**BRAC Update:** Jim Breitenfeld reported the draft environmental impact statement is expected in May, 2008 with the final due November 2008. A net gain of 5000 troops is expected for the Eglin complex plus contractor support and families, for a total gain of 10,000 – 12,000 residents. Five million square feet of construction at a cost of \$700M is anticipated. The 46<sup>th</sup> Test Wing status studies are indicating the wing belongs at Eglin, there are no military or economic advantages to moving.

The Florida Defense Alliance continues work to retain separating military talent in Florida. A UWF/Haas Center military impact study for Florida is being updated. The \$44 billion impact last documented is expected to rise 20%. Having projects on the shelf for quick start is to our advantages. The military economic impact to the local area is about \$4.1 billion.

**Education Update:** Dr. David Goetsch and Dr. Jack Azzaretto commented on the cooperation between the local universities. The schools are growing despite reduced funding, partnering with other schools and the military, and the new CAA initiative.

**EDC Update:** Larry Sassano stated the anticipated military construction should have significant impact on local construction contractors. He also reviewed the status of the E-Sync program, surveying business in 16 counties in targeted industries for business retention and expansion.

**WIRED:** Pam Tedesco reported that WIRED project consultants from SRI International were in the area looking at economic development opportunities. Next week SRJ (Boston) will be on site looking at development of renewable energy in the region.

The third RFP for CHOICE replication for secondary institutions is out. There is interest and excitement from around the country. A panel including Jeff Scroggins, Director of CHOICE and Mary Lou Reed presented at the WIRED Academy in Seattle and have been asked to speak directly to other WIRED regions and possibly provide testimony to the Senate Committee on Education. A local USDoL visit is scheduled for this Friday. Funding of replication sites on a national level is being considered.

**Comments and Information:**

- Red shirts are available to new Board members after the meeting.
- All Councils and Committees welcome new members
- Dawn Moliterno announced the Coalition of Chambers NW FL Legislature Forum for Jan 17, 2008 at Sandestin Resort. Ten counties and 21 chambers are expected to participate. Local legislators will be present.

**Public Comment:** None

**Old Business/New Business:** None

**Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 10:20 a.m.