Onondaga Workforce Development Board Meeting
August 14, 2026 – 12:00 PM
960 James Street, Syracuse NY 13203

Board Attendees: Tony Baird, John Camp, Aimee Durfee, Deka Eysaman, Mitch Latimer, Jeff Maidment, Anne Napper, Peter Naughton, Eric Peckham, Jim Thompson, Ann Marie Taliercio, Christopher Tuff, Nancy Williams

CNY Works Staff Attendees: Rosemary Avila-Ticio, Sheryl Bowman, Bruce Brumfield, Sue Cooley, Darlene McCann, Mary Parry

Guest Attendees: Debbie Rosenbaum, ProLiteracy

One-Stop Operator: Mari Ukleya

The meeting was called to order at 12:05 PM

Rosemary stated that Deka Eysaman will be retiring from our Board after this meeting. Rosemary and Eric thanked Deka for her years of service and supporting the work we do.

ONE STOP OPERATOR

Progress Reports
Mari provided key updates of One-Stop Operator activities for June and July

- Workforce Advisors will begin regular outreach services at:
  - Manlius Public Library (September)
  - Liverpool Public Library (October)
- With the goal of expanded partnerships, Mari had meetings with the following community partners in June and July:
  - Syracuse Northeast Community Center
  - Jubilee Homes
  - Probation Department
  - Planned Parenthood
  - Meetings with additional community-based organizations have been scheduled for August and September
- Initial piloting of the Life Needs Assessment has begun. This tool will help to identify participant barriers including:
  - Housing
  - Food insecurity
  - Transportation
  - Lead exposure and environmental concerns
  - Educational gaps
  - Lack of health insurance/mental health needs

- Staff provides technical assistance to workforce partners and continues strengthening referral networks under the "No Wrong Door" service model.

Strategic Plan Update

Mari reported progress on all strategic priorities:

- Submitted a workforce grant application in partnership with large support from our Board and educational partners. This grant would support dislocated workers.
- Continued effort to strengthen branding and what CNY Works does in the community. Many in the community confuse CNY Works with the New York State Department of Labor (NYSDOL since they are collocated in the same building.
- Continued focus on increased community engagement. An effort to connect with different community partners has been the push. In June and July, 23 additional community partners have been contacted to schedule meetings with to discuss collaborations and ways to better partner.
- Continued monthly professional development initiatives for staff.
- Improved internal processes and ITA workflows to increase operational efficiency.
- Prior to the board receiving a revised policy, it has been reviewed with NYSDOL to ensure compliance.
- Advanced work on clarifying organizational brand identity, vision, and mission.
- Continued pursuit of diversified funding opportunities beyond WIOA resources.

Risk and Reward Framework

Mari presented a framework outlining opportunities and risks associated with the One-Stop Operator contract.

Key opportunities identified:

- Becoming a regional workforce convener rather than solely a compliance monitor.
- Strengthening partner accountability and collaboration.
- Piloting innovative service delivery models.
- Pursuing grant funding beyond traditional workforce programs.
- Building a true "No Wrong Door" workforce system.
- Measuring community impact through meaningful performance metrics.
- Creating a culture of continuous improvement.
- Establishing CNY Works as an innovative workforce system recognized statewide.

Discussion included opportunities to expand partnerships with temporary employment agencies to connect workers to career pathways.

IN-DEMAND LABOR MARKET PRESENTATION

Diana Pena, Senior Economist, New York State Department of Labor, presented a detailed labor market update for Central New York.

Highlights

- Onondaga County ranks as:
  - Third most economically diversified county in New York State.
  - Sixty-seventh most diversified county nationally.
- Average annual wages increased to approximately $70,200.
- Fastest-growing industries:
  - Social Assistance
  - Warehousing and Storage

    - Computer and Electronic Manufacturing
- Highest-paying industries:
    - Construction
    - Professional and Business Services
    - Financial Activities
- Central New York unemployment rate stands at 3.9%, below the statewide rate of 4.4%.
- Significant regional growth expected through:
    - Micron semiconductor project
    - Interstate 81 reconstruction
    - Regional construction projects
    - Biotechnology sector expansion
- Micron projections:
    - $100 billion investment
    - Approximately 9,000 direct jobs
    - Approximately 40,000 indirect jobs
- AI-related positions continue to grow, with Syracuse ranking fifth among New York metropolitan areas for AI job postings.

Diana will send Mary the presentation to send to the Board members. She also indicated that updated industry reports are expected to be released within the next month and will be shared with the Board.

ACTION ITEMS

Consent Agenda

The consent agenda included approvals for:

- June Meeting Minutes
- Christopher Tuff as Board Treasurer
- Adding Alan Marzullo to the Executive & Finance Committee
- Nancy Williams as the Governance Committee Chair
- Amber Rangel as a new Board Member

Motion: Anne Napper
Second: John Camp
Opposed: None
Abstentions: Chris Tuff and Nancy Williams
Motion carried.

Discussion and Action Items

OJT Policy Revision Approval

Mari provided a summary of revisions to the On-the-Job Training (OJT) Policy. Major updates included:

- Alignment with NYSDOL and USDOL requirements.
- Increased employer reimbursement flexibility from 50% up to 75%.
- Expanded eligibility to include part-time positions.
- Enhanced employer vetting and due diligence processes.
- Strengthened documentation requirements within OSOS.
- Clarified governance and accountability procedures.

Ann Marie asked about employer evaluation procedures. Rosemary stated that we do our due diligence, including site visits and employer checklists conducted by Business Services staff.

Motion: Mitch Latimer
Second: Tony Baird

Opposed: None
Abstentions: None
Motion carried.

Vision Statement Approval
Vision Statements were created from the ideas that staff developed during meetings where they brainstormed ideas. The proposed vision statement received overwhelming support through an internal voting process.
Motion: Aimee Durfee
Second: Mitch Latimer
Opposed: None
Abstentions: None
Motion carried.

Logo Approval
Staff met and came up with multiple ideas for a new logo. The different options were sent to staff for their vote. The approved logo:
- Retains core CNY Works branding elements.
- Allows gradual transition to avoid unnecessary expenses.
- Works effectively in both color and black-and-white formats.

Motion: John Camp
Second: Anne Napper
Opposed: None
Abstentions: None
Motion carried.

Metrix Learning Contract Approval
The Board revisited renewal of the Metrix Learning Contract. Mari provided an analysis comparing Metrix and Coursera advantages and disadvantages. The key findings were:

Metrix Advantages
- Accessible to youth under 18.
- Available to both employed and unemployed individuals.
- Provides administrative controls for assigning coursework.
- Includes professional development and compliance training opportunities.

Coursera Challenges
- Primarily available to unemployed or underemployed individuals.
- Restricted to participants 18 years and older.
- Some content requires additional fees.

After some discussion, it was decided that Coursera doesn't have the accessibility that we need. We will designate an administrator so that they can follow up on unfinished courses, train people, and increase usage and completion of courses. Once we have a dedicated staff member working and following up with people, those numbers will increase drastically. For the people that aren't completing the courses, Ann Marie would like to see what jobs they are applying for. Eric said we need to investigate why regardless.

Motion: Mitch Latimer
Second: Christopher Tuff
Opposed: Peter Naughton
Abstentions: None
Motion carried.

Cleaning Services and Information Technology Services Request for Proposals (RFPs)
Cleaning Services and Information Technology Services Contracts will end on September 30th. Rosemary has provided a timeline for the RFP process which applies to both RFPs. Rosemary has confirmed with the NYSDOL Financial Oversight and Technical Assistance (FOTA) that the RFP release period does not have to be 30 days. This release period is three weeks due to the timing of the Executive & Finance Committee and Board meetings, who are required by NYSDOL to review and approve the RFPs prior to being released.

Both contracts will be for one year with up to four additional yearly renewals.

Cleaning Services Evaluation Form Approval
Motion: Christopher Tuff
Second: John Camp
Opposed: None
Abstentions: None
Motion carried.

Cleaning Services RFP Approval
Rosemary presented the Cleaning Services RFP and evaluation criteria. Updates to the RFP include:
- Revised dates and timelines.
- Updated prevailing wage requirements.
- Addition of vending machine maintenance requirements.
- Removal of automobile insurance requirements.

Jeff asked if the vendor could change the price for the renewal years. Rosemary said yes. Prior to coming back to the Board every year for approval of the renewal, we reach out to the vendor and ask them what the new amount will be for that year. We don't put that on the RFP, but we can put that on the contract.
Motion: Mitch Latimer
Second: Deka Eysaman
Opposed: None
Abstentions: None
Motion carried.

IT RFP Evaluation Form Approval
Motion: Mitch Latimer
Second: Christopher Tuff
Opposed: None
Abstentions: None
Motion carried.

IT RFP Approval
Updates included:
- Windows and server infrastructure changes.

- Migration to Fortinet systems.
- Enhanced requirements regarding equipment-lifecycle management and accountability.
- Updated communication response standards.

Motion: Anne Napper
Second: Tony Baird
Opposed: None
Abstentions: None
Motion carried.

ITA Policy Cap Approval
We propose maintaining the current Individual Training Account (ITA) cap of $2,500 for Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth programs through Program Year 2026.
The QUEST grant ITA cap remains $7,500.
The cap will be revisited prior to Program Year 2027.
Motion: Nancy Williams
Second: Mitch Latimer
Opposed: None
Abstentions: None
Motion carried.

Eric Peckham, the Board Vice-Chair, asked for a motion to enter an Executive Session
Motion: Mitch Latimer
Second: Christopher Tuff
Opposed: None
Abstentions: None
Motion carried.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Board Attendees: Tony Baird, John Camp, Aimee Durfee, Deka Eysaman, Mitch Latimer, Jeff Maidment, Anne Napper, Peter Naughton, Eric Peckham, Jim Thompson, Ann Marie Taliercio, Christopher Tuff, Nancy Williams

CNY Works Staff Attendees: Rosemary Avila-Ticio, Sheryl Bowman, Sue Cooley, and Mary Parry

The Board went into an Executive Session at this time to ensure a quorum was met.

Executive Session included discussion of:
- Severance Policy
- Retroactive severance payment resolution
- Personnel-related matters

No formal actions were taken during Executive Session.

Actions Following Executive Session

Severance Policy Approval
Motion: John Camp
Second: Mitch Latimer

Opposed: Ann Marie Taliercio
Abstentions: Peter Naughton and Jim Thompson
Motion carried.

Retroactive Severance Resolution
The Board considered a resolution approving a prior severance payment identified during a fiscal review.
Amount approved:
$6,384.62
Approval resolves a questioned cost identified by NYSDOL fiscal reviewers.
Motion: John Camp
Second: Deka Eysaman
Opposed: None
Abstentions: None
Motion carried.

CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER UPDATES

Financial Statements
Due to time constraints, Sue did not go over the financial statements. They were distributed to all Board members and Sue asked that they review them and let her know if they have any questions.

NYSDOL PY24 Fiscal Review
Eight findings were identified, including:
- Incomplete expenditure documentation.
- Severance policy documentation.
- Cost allocation procedures.
- Cost allocation plan revisions.
- Physical and fiscal inventory reconciliation.
- Subrecipient monitoring documentation.
- Grant closeout procedures.
- Journal entry support documentation.

Corrective actions have been put into place.

Internal Control Advisory
A technical advisory recommendation was provided regarding check-signing authority and segregation of duties. Currently, the CFO is the secondary signer on checks over $2,500 or $10,000 for training, and the signer for checks payable to the CEO, or if the CEO is unavailable. Our COO is remote and the only other option would be for the Board Chair to sign instead of the CFO. We had to do that before when we didn’t have an Executive Director and it was a logistical nightmare.
Aimee Durfee stressed the need for an alternative secondary signer. We agree that that would be ideal, but at this time, we don’t have a good option to do so.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER UPDATES

Program Review Findings
Two program findings were reported:
- Workforce Board membership composition remains out of compliance pending City appointments.

NYSDOL knows that we are working to add the required Board members and understands that the process of appointing a new member is somewhat lengthy.

- QUEST program performance metrics were below expected targets, though corrective actions are underway.
  We provided a resolution and course of action. We now have the framework and structure of staff, including a Director. We also have a supportive services staff member, and the Workforce Advisors are recruiting for the QUEST grant.

USDOL QUEST Grant Audit

Two findings were reported:

- Slow implementation of the grant and enrollment performance.
  At the time that the audit took place, we had less than 11% enrollment and expended approximately 42% of the grant.
- Inadequate fiscal controls.
  CNY Works finance staff could not trace transactions back to the source documentation. Corrective actions have been submitted and implementation is ongoing.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:41 PM