

**WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD
MEETING MINUTES**

Wednesday, August 26, 2020

BOARD MEMBER PRESENT

Business Majority: Kevin Whirley–Chair, Caroline Battles, John Frederick, Jeffrey Mazur, Lee Metcalf, Gwen Mizell, Reginald Scott

Required Representative: Mary Abbey, Jason Archer, Mary Grott, Lydia Mitchell, Hart Nelson

Labor & Workforce Reps: Mark Bethell, John Bowman, Julie Gassner, Carolyn Seward, Ron Tierney

Optional Members: John Gaal

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT

Business Majority: Elliott Henry, Melissa Miller, Vanessa Parker-Lewis

Required Representatives: Donnie Carroll

Labor & Workforce Reps: Cenia Bosman, Michael McMillan

Optional Members: Don Willey

ST. LOUIS COUNTY EXECUTIVE REPRESENTATIVE

None

ST. LOUIS COUNTY STAFF MEMBERS

Greg Laposa, Ethan Dixon, Loris Williams, Tanisha Travis, Stephanie Hill, Joanna Brueggemann, Michele Williams, Tiffany Manning, Karen Brown

GUESTS PRESENT

Anna Crosslin, Blake Hamilton, Chelsea Hand-Sheridan, Barbara Wheatley, Deborah Stovall, Kofi Ansa, Cynthia Wilson, Michael Holmes

- I. CALL TO ORDER** - Kevin Whirley-Chair called the meeting to order at 7:30a.
- II. ROLL CALL** – Roll call was conducted at 7:31a. There was a quorum present
- III. REVIEW OF BOARD MINUTES**
 - a. May 27, 2020 Minutes – the minutes were read silently. A motion was made and seconded to accept the minutes as written with no changes or corrections.
 - b. June 11, 2020 Minutes (Closed Door, Emergency Meeting) – the minutes were read silently. A motion was made and seconded to accept the minutes as written with no changes or corrections.
- IV. CHAIRMAN’S REPORT**

The Chair informed the Board that after the last meeting (Emergency Meeting, June 10, 2020) there were concerns from several Board members about the St. Louis County Request for Proposal (RFP) process and “Cone of Silence” policy, in particular, which excluded the Board from being involved in the RFP process. The Chair expressed understanding of the concern, explained the need for the “Cone of Silence,” and informed the Board of the benefits of the policy. He assured the Board that the function of the Board was not to “rubber stamp” the process. The Chair also stated that the Board’s concerns were addressed with the Director of Human Services, the Director of Workforce Development and the Procurement Department to discuss the Board’s disquiet and determine ways in which the Board could be involved in the process going forward. It was stated that in the near future, the Procurement Department would address the Board to further explain St. Louis County’s procurement process.

The Director of Workforce Development extended the Director of Human Services’ remarks of apology for her absence and appreciation to the Board for their guidance, support and leadership and thanked all of the Board members for their flexibility in being able to be a part of the virtual meeting.

V. 2019 YEAR-END REVIEW

- a. One-Stop Operator, Adult and Dislocated Workers Programs – an overview of the Job Center’s annual performance was given. The report included the number of clients served, the training outcomes and the economic impact that the programs had on the regional economy. According to the presentation given, the Adult program placed 139 individuals, with an average wage of \$13.47/hr. for an estimated 12-month economic impact of \$3,894,446. The Dislocated Worker program served approximately 28 individuals for an average wage of \$18.99/hr. and an estimated 12-month economic impact of \$1,065,210. The estimated 12-month economic impact for the 479 Wagner-Peyser clients served and placed, was \$20,145,590.00. Service to these approximately 646 individuals contributed an estimated \$25,105,246.00 to the St. Louis County Workforce Development Region. A total of 136 individuals enrolled in PY18 & PY19 ITA programs graduated with industry recognized credentials. 97% of program graduates were placed in jobs in their respective field with an average wage of \$14.28/hr. resulting in an estimated economic impact of \$4,960,301.00

More than 80,000 adult and dislocated workers registered in the MOJobs system for the St. Louis County Local Workforce Development Area (LWDA), which was a 298% increase over last year. 178 individuals received intensive services, of which 173 were approved for training. There was \$573,862.00 spent on training, which resulted in an estimated potential economic impact of \$4.96m in 12-months of earned income.

Overall, the services provided to customers exceeded last years’ numbers in spite of the COVID-19 pandemic. In working through the COVID related requirements, the center was able to acquire an online file submission system that allowed the approval, service and compliance processes to proceed despite the pandemic. Services to the customers included both virtual job fairs and virtual workshops. The presentation culminated with sharing success stories of program participants.

- b. Adult – Limited English Proficiency (LEP) – the presentation regarding the LEP program included enrollment, services, training and placement data. During the time period covered (including the COVID-19 pandemic) included placing 116 clients at 34 different companies for an average wage of \$13.28/hr., enrolling 112 in AEL/ESL classes, and providing on-going career counseling and job readiness classes.
- c. Out-of-School Youth (OSY-II & OSY-PZ) – the presentation of the OSY-II & OSY-PZ programs informed the Board that regardless of the pandemic, the staff continued providing Work Readiness Training, using a virtual format. Throughout the year, 122 youth were enrolled, 97 youth participated in work experience, 27 enrolled in college/skills-based training, 81 obtained

employment with an average wage of @12.78/hr. resulting in an estimated 12-month economic impact of \$2.1m.

- d. In-School Youth – it was reported that during the pandemic, case managers continued to reach out to students to provide virtual learning opportunities, case management and work readiness training. The program produced 18 graduates with 9 of the graduates continuing on to college; 5 found gainful, full-time employment and 4 obtained part-time employment.
- e. Better Family Life (MWA/SNAP) – though the MWA program is not a WIOA program it is conducted by a co-located partner agency, and as such participated in the Year-End presentation. The MWA program served 1673 clients; 120 participants took part in training, 212 were employed with an average wage \$12.76/hr. for an estimated economic impact of \$5,626,650.00
- f. 4th Quarter Performance Outcome and Negotiated Performance Measures – the annual negotiate performance rates were given with the actual performance outcomes. The region’s performance exceeded the goals with over 100% for all measured areas with the exception of 2nd Quarter Youth and Wagner-Peyser, the performance in those areas was 99.83% and 96.75% respectively.

VI. WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT REPORTS – WFD Director’s Report – As presented, all programs are functioning at a very successful level, providing much needed services to the citizens of St. Louis County. The Director also thanked the staff of the Job Center for their diligence and commitment to serving the clients, even during these very trying time of the COVID-19 pandemic.

- a. State of the Economy & Workforce – the Director provided a brief overview of the state of the St. Louis economy as it pertained to workforce development. The Director reported to the Board the responses of the St. Louis County Department of Human Services (DHS) and the impact of DHS’s efforts of to provide humanitarian relief. The report included use of the CARES Act funding by DHS to address the community’s needs around food distribution, supporting business recovery efforts, addressing domestic violence programs, and support of the Workforce Development division in efforts to provide immediate assistance as well as the division looks forward toward economic recovery of the SLCO Workforce Development region.
- b. Job Center Update – the St. Louis County Missouri Job Center was one of the first in the state to reopen after the initial closing. The Director spoke on the reemergence of the Job Center services to customers. The center is welcoming, on average, about 30/40 customers per day coming in to the Job Center. The Job Centers’ full cadre of services are available to clients and being provided, including employment assistance, enrollment in training opportunities and supportive services. The State of Missouri has provided some additional funding to provide additional training monies to get workers skilled up and prepared to return strong.
- c. Initiatives – In addition to providing the “usual” services, the Workforce Development Team is working to develop strategies that will better address the racial and economic disparities that the have been starkly revealed during the course of the pandemic. It is not that the team did not recognize that there were already systemic disparities that existed prior to the pandemic, but with the onset of the pandemic, greater disparities have emerged, and the team wants to address them in as significant a way as they can. The Director asked the Board to embrace that idea and urged them to keep that as a focus of the work to be done.
- d. Sub-State Monitoring Report – The Sub-State Monitoring Report was included in the Board packet where it could be read independently, and questions posed as needed.

VII. BOARD ENGAGEMENT

- Re-activating Standing Committees – TABLED

VIII. FSIS Report – the WIOA Expenditure report was provided for the Board with a brief explanation of the expenditure status of the funds.

- a. Funding Expenditure Update – The PY19/FY20 Adult, Dislocated Workers and PY19 Youth funds were first discussed with 93.12% of Adult funds, 17.91% of Dislocate Workers and 80.95% of Youth funds being expended as of July 31, 2020. It was explained to the Board that the PY20/FY21 WIOA funds were still being processed, so as of July 31, 2020, 0% of those funds have been expended. Explanations of other funding streams were discussed with the Board, including a \$90,818.00 Humanitarian COVID-19 grant. It was stated that \$75,000.00 of the Digital/Automotive Apprenticeship grant had been recaptured by the State, leaving \$145,000 remaining from the original \$220,000.00. It was explained that the funds were recaptured because the State ended the automotive portion of the program early due to a lack of participants from a state-wide perspective. The YouthBuild program is in the process of submitting invoices now, so we will have updated information on the YouthBuild program in the next WDB meeting. The PY19 funding for the EO was extended until 12/31/2020. Of the PY19 funds, 83.77% of those funds have been expended. The Missouri Return Strong program was a special program that the State funded to assist with ITA training. Approximately 82.34% of the total \$100,000.00 awarded have been spent.
- b. Approval of Funds –
 1. C.A.R.E.S. Act Grant (Vote Required) –Allocated \$458,000.00 to ensure sufficient coverage of ITA training. (Discussion – is there any reason that we would not approve the acceptance of these funds. According to the Director, there is no foreseeable reason that these funds should not be accepted as they will assist the LWDA in providing much needed training – end of discussion). A motion was made and seconded to accept the C.A.R.E.S. Act funds. (Motion Passes – unanimously)
 2. COVID-19 Humanitarian Grant (Vote Required) – the State provided a one-time grant funding in the amount of \$90,818.00 for COVID-19 relief specifically. A motion was made and seconded to accept the funding as discussed. (Motion Passed – unanimously)
 3. TET Automotive Apprenticeship (Vote Required) – (Discussion – Members of the Board felt that it is troubling to turn back money. It was explained that the SLCO WFD is providing those services using current Dislocated Worker funds appropriately. To accept additional funds would not enhance service delivery but could put an unrealistic burden on the Board to expend those funds – end of discussion). A motion was made and seconded to not accept the \$220,000.00 funding allotted for this program. (Motion Passed – unanimously)

IX. CONTRACT STATUS UPDATE –

- a. PY19/FY20 WIOA Contracts – contracts for PY19/FY20 were extended until August 31st.
- b. PY20/FY21 WIOA Contracts – are currently in negotiation and should be finalized and ready to be signed by August 31st, so that programs can proceed without interruption.
- c. YouthBuild – TABLED
- d. Procurement Discussion – Adult Limited English Proficiency (LEP) – Procurement is developing a two-tiered process that creates more opportunity for the Board to be involved in the procurement and deliberation process. While the Board will not have direct input on the evaluation process, they will be given more opportunity to be involved in the RFP process. Members of the Board were reminded that there was no LEP service provider secured during the 2020 RFP cycle, a new RFP will be posted to secure those services in the coming weeks. To ensure the continuation of services, the current contract for Adult – LEP, has been extended with the current provider, International Institute of Metropolitan St. Louis. The question was asked about the extent and length of time for the Cone of Silence. It was explained to the Board that the Cone of Silence remains in place until the contracts for the programs are fully-executed.

X. LOCAL PLAN UPDATE – A

a. MOU Update – TABLED

b. Firewall Policy (Vote Required) – a policy that outlines the separation of functions of the One-Stop system and operational responsibilities of the LWDB staff for the purpose of avoiding conflicts in interest while ensuring effective oversight. Multi-Function Agreement differs because it pertains a specific agency, where the Firewall Policy is an overarching policy pertaining to the One-Stop System. A motion was made and seconded to accept and initiate the Firewall Policy. (Motion Passed – 12 – Yay; 1 – abstention)

XI. ADJOURNMENT – The meeting was adjourned at 9:32a.

THE NEXT MEETING:

TBD

7:30 am

Meeting to be conducted via Zoom

Minutes prepared by Loris M. Williams, MSW, MSM