

Executive Committee Meeting

Laura Cataldo, Chair
Francis Langer, Chair-Elect
Pam Christenson, Past Chair
Elizabeth Roddy, Secretary
Paul Dietmann, Treasurer
Todd Kearney, Chair—Audit Committee
Kathy Cromeey, Co-Chair—Planning & Development Committee
Margaret Leitinger, Co-Chair—Planning & Development Committee
Randy Guttenberg, Chair—Youth Committee

Thursday, June 24, 2021
9:30 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.

Workforce Development Board
via Conference Call
(929) 205-6099
Meeting ID: 961 6762 7119

Members: Laura Cataldo, Pam Christenson, Kathy Cromeey, Paul Dietmann, Francis Langer, Margaret Leitinger, Elizabeth Roddy

Staff: Seth Lentz, Lameece Tyne, Chris Ziegel

Guests: Julie Enloe

Agenda Item 1 - Welcome

Cataldo welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 9:34 a.m.

Agenda Item 2 - Review and Approval of the May 11, 2021 Committee Meeting Minutes

Cataldo requested a motion to approve the minutes of the May 11, 2021 Executive Committee meeting as presented. Leitinger moved to approve and Christenson offered the second. No discussion followed on this motion. The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

Agenda Item 3 - Executive Director Updates

Lentz began with updates to the Memorandum of Understanding for the region's job centers. The Dane County Job Center is undergoing a renovation. Sauk County does not plan to renew the lease for the Department of Workforce Development (DWD), however may have space available to accommodate services for our organization.



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Leitinger requested further information on the logistics behind the county's decision.

Lentz clarified Sauk County is looking to further expand their capacities which will require additional space. The county will provide lease space for our organization. DWD is looking for ways to retain Job Service and Department of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) staff within the county.

Lentz acknowledged DWD has provided comments on the monitoring submission and is requesting further clarification before closing out the monitoring process for the year. The Department of Labor (DOL) will be performing onsite monitoring for the Apprenticeship State Expansion (ASE) grant starting the 2nd week of July.

Lentz informed the Committee the region's job centers reopened in June. Walk-in traffic has been light. The region's prison job centers will be reopening the 1st of July with staff at the Oak Hill Correctional Institution being onsite two-and-a-half days a week.

Leitinger inquired on upcoming business service initiatives through the job centers.

Lentz reported no upcoming employer events have been scheduled with the job centers. Events have been run in a drive-thru format as well as virtual. Social media platforms are helping to increase visibility and drive attendance volume. The recent downtown job fair provided opportunities for 226 job seekers with 41 employers participating. The virtual job fair held on June 9th provided opportunities for 141 job seekers with 91 employers participating.

Roddy suggested the discontinuation of the pandemic unemployment assistance may have helped provide the increased turnout.

Lentz agreed and expressed that job fairs which were typically held at the Alliant Energy Center would provide ample space for attendees however the current environment suggests a large employer turnout with very few individuals to hire in attendance. Feedback received during these job fairs alluded to utilization of space from the region's hotels as a method for hosting in-person job fairs that would provide meaningful access to individuals who are barriered by the needs for transportation.

Cataldo inquired if bus routes are involved behind the decision-making process of location for job fairs.

Lentz explained the Dane County Job Center has typically been utilized as it's placed next to the North Transfer Point.

Lentz pointed out that Jobs for the Future (JFF) organizes a meeting of congressional staffers. The meeting includes a forum made up of individuals around the country sharing their perspectives. WIOA is up for reauthorization. JFF is focusing this year on youth and young adults, lessons learned from the pandemic, and barriers such as transportation, housing, childcare, and attaining drivers' licenses. The requirement of a driver's license appears on over 90% of job postings pulled and is not apart of the educational curriculum as it once was, furthering the attainment barrier.



Leitinger recollected partnership with the University of Wisconsin-Madison and Union Cabs to help address transportation barriers for employment. The program was meaningful however the implementation demonstrated too many scheduling conflicts and was not very cost-effectiveness.

Lentz outlined the submission of the Pathway Home 2 grant offered by DOL, targeting prison reentry. The proposal was a partnership with Employ Milwaukee for services performed through the Thompson Correctional Center. While the proposal satisfied all requirements, DOL pursued alternative proposals. Collaboration continues with the Department of Corrections (DOC) under the Adult Reentry and Employment Strategies (ARES) grant. The grant has moved into the training phase which incorporates offering training to partners.

Lentz stated the United Way and the Greater Madison Chamber of Commerce met last week to discuss the labor shortage and how to get employment back to pre-pandemic levels. While a lot of the information gathered is speculative, the engagement did provide useful in determining which specific populations to focus on for reengagement into the labor force and what strategies the community can identify and address. The collaboration is expected to convene an additional three times over the next few months.

Leitinger recalled the prior Board Meeting discussion with DWD's Secretary-designee, Amy Pechacek, noting the unemployment rate is comparable to pre-pandemic levels (3.2% vs 3.6%).

Roddy expressed interest in comparisons between the region's urban versus rural populations.

Lentz agreed and articulated the request will be discussed at the next MadREP meeting.

Lentz provided updates on Board Member recruitments and convening of the Local Elected Officials to take place late August or early September.

Leitinger inquired on specific industries for Board Member recruitment that would be the most impactful.

Lentz suggested a focus toward Information Technology, Insurance, and Finance. Suggestions from current members is highly encouraged.

Cataldo recommended specific focus on recently vacated seats as well as geographical and industrial markets desired. Board Member orientation should include assignment to a veteran Board Member to help facilitate familiarization.

Langer proposed an ad hoc committee to discuss unemployment statistics and workforce strategies.

Leitinger questioned if this information would be incorporated into the planned August 11th Business and Education Summit.



Lentz responded that trends will be discussed at the Business and Education Summit along with a heavy focus centered on Youth Apprenticeship. The State may have economic resources available to help present upon driver industries and recent data obtained. Event and data summarizations will likely occur during our next Board of Directors' meeting planned for September.

Roddy recommended employer surveys be utilized to determine worksite employment in comparison to virtual employment for both the pre-COVID economy as well as the current economy in addition to any employers who may be looking to bring their staff back to worksite employment.

Christenson requested any feedback received from other area workforce development boards in regards to the increased unemployment assistance and observed that Wisconsin's Chambers of Commerce are working to end any additional unemployment benefit assistance.

Lentz specified that no official stance will be given on behalf of any of Wisconsin's workforce development boards. The partisan perception has the workforce development boards straying away from any official communication. Our organization has inquired with the Unemployment Insurance division of DWD around the average unemployment payment to an individual. Further analysis is needed regarding the average cost of childcare and whether it be cost-effective to maintain unemployment assistance when childcare costs outweigh earned wages.

Leitinger recommended obtaining national data on the impacts of removal of the subsidy.

Lentz stated further conversations with the Secretary-designee are planned for next week.

Agenda Item 4 – Fiscal Report

Tyne provided analysis on the February 2021 financial statements. *Program Expenses* are under budget due to low enrollments. *Work Experience Wages* are provided through COVID-19 Disaster Recovery DWG funding. *Personnel Wages and Fringe* amounts are on target for budget along with *Non Personnel Expenses*. *Staff Training & Conferences* have limited utilization and online trainings for staff have been suggested and encouraged. *Travel - Staff* consists of Independent Living transportation costs along with the Bureau of Apprenticeship Standards Training Navigator transportation costs. Adjustments will continue to be made for year-end closeout, though numbers should not deviate much from the current information provided.

Kearney requested further elaboration on any unexpected costs and status by year-end.

Tyne explained carryover of grant funds will most likely be higher than expected. Initial projections utilize monthly vs annual estimates.

Lentz elaborated training and support funds will likely be carried into next year and help with piloting any new initiatives, such as a stronger focus on upscaling underemployed or marginally-employed individuals, planning for higher expenditures on a cost-per-individual basis for the next fiscal year, and/or increased offerings of hybrid or evening offerings with the partnership of the technical colleges.



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Kearney queried the timeline of pilot programs and strategies in regards to implementation along with new programs and strategies utilized by other workforce development boards in the state.

Lentz described the partnership with the technical colleges which provides insight into hybrid and remote program offerings. Regional campuses for the colleges in addition to employer partners that are willing to host trainings provide space for in-person attendance. Analyzing businesses with shared common needs to further expand remote networking. Testing implementation is expected in the next few months, with the potential full rollout starting in the fall. Businesses will be essential in helping to recruit for any potential training cohorts.

Tyne added regulations limit ten percent of funding to be spend on incumbent workers.

Lentz further stated the Directors of the workforce development boards meet monthly. Many areas have not spent out their allocations with the decrease in participant volume caused by COVID-19. All areas are working on adapting to the rapidly-changing environment and alternative training formats.

Agenda Item 5 – Youth Incentive Policy & Guidance

Lentz pointed out youth incentives are being utilized in many areas to facilitate youth participation and recognition. WDA 10 has not had the need to implement such a policy previously, however youth participation is decreasing. As such, a policy will need to be in place to implement the strategy. Incentives would be used for all programs administered under the WDBSCW, where allowed, and will not be limited to WIOA Youth participants. Amounts have been aligned with other area’s current policies. The policy will be tier-structured with the potential of additional elements in the future.

Roddy was pleased with the policy and provided suggestions for modification to the *Employment Retention* table.

Kearney agreed and proposed having larger incentives in place for longer tenure with *Employment Retention*.

Langer inquired if updates were made from the draft presented at the last Youth Committee meeting.

Lentz confirmed and specified the changes made since then. Implementation of the policy will also help to track the longer-term employment and training metrics.

Kearney questioned the assessment the budgetary impact.

Lentz advised the larger carryover will help to pilot and there is discretion to scale-back if the incentive is utilized more than anticipated.

Leitinger was pleased with the policy and highlighted that the referrals based on the incentives will help to drive participation.



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Lentz articulated further updates will be made available to Boards Members at future meetings.

Cataldo requested a motion to approve the Youth Incentive Policy as presented. Leitinger moved to approve and Roddy offered the second. No discussion followed on this motion. The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

Agenda Item 6 – Technology Guidance Additions

Lentz reported the guidance for technology is being updated within the program guide. The guide specifies technology funding is limited. Further clarification will be made to expand upon technology purchases and will be restricted to the same \$500.00 limit as many of the other supportive services. The initial strategy will be to lend out any current technology on hand prior to purchasing any new units. Further evaluation will be made to determine needs and requirements as it relates to usage of a Chromebook or Windows-based laptop.

Leitinger noted many school districts work directly with PC manufacturers for discounted pricing in bulk, and suggested further research be made looking into possible grant opportunities.

Roddy questioned if inventory needs have been determined.

Lentz responded additional information will be needed to determine an approximation and purchases cannot be made in advance of the documented requirement. Scale and volume will be determined with the fall semester.

Kearney asked if implementation should be halted until needs have been determined.

Tyne answered the expense falls under supportive services and this remains the lowest, direct individual expense and allows for the availability to utilize multiple grants to offset the costs if needed.

Agenda Item 7 – Adjournment

Cataldo made a motion to adjourn at 11:02 a.m.

Adjourned: 11:02 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted:

Elizabeth Roddy
Board Secretary
Workforce Development Board of South Central Wisconsin, Inc.

Attachment for Board Records:



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- Agenda
- Draft Minutes from May 11, 2021
- April 2021 Financial Statements
- Job Fair Campaign Handout
- Draft Youth Incentive Policy



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