



Serving as the Workforce Development Board for the Lower Shore of Maryland

Steering Committee Meeting Minutes

April 15, 2021

3:00 pm – 4:30 pm

Hosted via GoToMeeting teleconference service

Attendance: Jason Cunha, Bo Duke, Paula Erdie, Walt Maizel, Tony Nichols, Dione Shaw and Rebecca Webster

Absent: Shelly Brown, Whitney Palmer and Pattie Tingle

Tony Nichols, WDB Chairman, called the meeting to order at 3:03 p.m. He thanked everyone for participating in today's teleconference. A quorum was present. The Chairman asked for a motion to approve the February 18, 2021, minutes as submitted. **MOTION:** Bo Duke moved to approve the minutes Jason Cunha seconded motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

Old Business

Director's Report - Compliance Updates

- Local Plan: The plan has been submitted to the State. The GWIB will distribute the plan for review and then provide feedback and, in most cases, they will require clarification or changes to the document which will allow time for the Board to approve the final Local Plan at the June 9th Board meeting. The four-year Comprehensive Plan (2020-2024) becomes effective on July 1, 2021.
- MOU/RSA: Partner feedback has been received, so now that information will be placed into the template that Labor provided. The goal is to finish that tomorrow and send it back out to the partners for final approval. The submission deadline to the State is April 30th. The MOU/RSA will be presented to the Board for approval on June 9th and it becomes effective July 1, 2021.
- Board Membership: Meeting attendance and county vacancies were reviewed and discussed.
 - Somerset County has one business member vacancy, and there is concern about participation from the other Somerset County members.
 - Wicomico County has one business member vacancy, and due to scheduling conflicts, Mitzi Scott, business representative from the hospital, has only attended one out-of-the last nine meetings. Therefore, a letter is being drafted for the Executive Director of the Tri-County Council to send to the Wicomico County Executive's Office requesting Roger Martinsen as her replacement.
 - Worcester County has no vacancies and board meeting participation has been good.

New Business

Director's Report – A brief review of 2021 Planning was provided and discussed.

- Budget: As expected, current funding is significantly underspent this year.
- Summer Youth: SYEP funds are separate from WIOA funds. This funding is sub-granted to the schools in the three counties and they use those funds to provide work experience opportunities for area youth. At this time, funding amounts are not available.
- Relief Act Plan: We will receive Maryland's Recovery for the Economy, Livelihoods, Industries, Entrepreneurs, and Families (RELIEF) Act funding to "engage, upskill, and connect residents to

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employment". Seven million dollars was made available to the local Workforce Boards. Funds were automatically allocated based on the same formula used to distribute WIOA funds. LSWA received approximately \$400,000; with flexibility in spending the funds. The narrative and budget has been submitted and approved. As of April 19th, we can begin spending these funds. The Workforce Director reviewed a list of ideas and stated that the logistics are moving forward. Time was allotted for the committee to ask questions and make comments.

- Work Experience Expenditures: Part of our requirement for each PY19 Grant is to spend 20% on work experience. Due to the pandemic, employers were not hiring so our Youth providers could not place participants in work experience. Again, we have underspent. This requirement cannot be waived because it is written directly into the WIOA law. A discussion ensued.
- Hospitality and Retail COVID-Recovery Challenges: The Workforce Director said that she participated in a Zoom meeting yesterday with the Ocean City Chamber Workforce Solutions Committee. Information from that meeting was shared with the committee. Now that businesses are open, it seems that their biggest issue is finding people to work. Various issues and possible solutions were discussed.
- Career and Technical Education: The Workforce Director said for workforce and education to be better aligned, the advisory requirement for CTE is being shifted to the Governor's Workforce Board. A discussion ensued.
- Youth Program Manager: The Workforce Director said that the job description is not being posted on public job boards. This is a targeted recruitment. We are seeking an individual with grant management experience and a vast knowledge of computer skills. A discussion ensued.

Open Discussion: The Chairman requested the availability of the AJC Mobile Unit for a Job Fair to be held by Mountaire Farms on May 19, 2021. The Workforce Director said that there is a job fair tomorrow in Somerset County and the Mobile will be at that event, but no one will be allowed inside. Due to COVID restrictions, laptops are to be set up outside for job searches and for filling out online applications. The Workforce Director would like to review the feedback from this event before making a commitment.

Adjourn: A motion was made to adjourn the meeting. Adjourned at 4:24 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Dione Shaw
Operations Coordinator

Approved May 20, 2021

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