



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

Steering Committee Meeting Minutes

August 25, 2021

3:00 pm – 4:30 pm

Hosted via GoToMeeting teleconference service

Members Present: Jason Cunha, Bo Duke, Walt Maizel, Tony Nichols, Pattie Tingle and Whitney Palmer

Members Absent: Paula Erdie

Staff Present: Shelly Brown and Dione Shaw

Guests: Gregory Padgham, Executive Director, Tri-County Council for the Lower Eastern Shore of Maryland and John Donegan, Administrative Services Director, Tri-County Council for the Lower Eastern Shore of Maryland

Tony Nichols, WDB Chairman, called the meeting to order at 3:02 p.m. He thanked everyone for participating in today's teleconference. A quorum was present. The Chairman asked for a motion to approve the May 20, 2021, minutes as submitted. **MOTION:** Jason Cunha moved to approve the minutes. Bo Duke seconded motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

Announcements: The Deputy Workforce Director announced that Tony Nichols, WDB Chairman, was recently promoted to Regional Vice President of BBSI. Roger Martinson is our newest Workforce Development Board member. He was recently appointed by the Wicomico County Council; representing the business sector. Sherri Sigrist has been hired as the Youth Program Manager and her start date is August 30. She brings to the position 16 years of combined experience in the education and human services. LSWA staff changes, new hires, and promotions were also mentioned. The Grant Manager position has been posted. This individual will manage the Relief Act and ARPA funds.

Updates

- The Deputy Workforce Director said that there are two sources of pandemic relief funds:
 1. **Relief Act** –
 - These funds were used to purchase a virtual job fair platform called Premier Virtual. The first job fair was held on August 4, 2021. LSWA plans to offer another virtual job fair sometime in the winter or early spring.
 - LSWA also purchased Metrix Learning. This platform is a learning management system and the Deputy Workforce Director anticipates that this platform will be up and running by the end of fall. Everyone must go through 20 hours of job readiness training, and once they complete that, the entire catalog will become available. Metrix Learning offers thousands of free training opportunities. All offer course certificates and digital badges. Many provide industry recognized credentials. This is available to anyone residing in the three counties not just WIOA customers. Some of the other projects that were approved by the state for use of these funds have been put on hold until the new Workforce Director is hired.
 2. **American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA)** – The Deputy Workforce Director provided some background information on the goals and limitations of these funds. The Federal Act states four criteria for allowable use of funds. The first one was to respond to the public

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health emergency with respect to the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID 19) or its negative economic impacts. The Maryland State Legislature passed Maryland House Bill 588 that further limits the use of the funds to projects connected to an apprenticeship or employment training program. The Deputy Workforce Director said that LSWA's project narrative has been approved and continued with the scope of work.

Business Applications for Work-Based Learning Contracts	LSWA plans to work directly with businesses in their need for training, retraining, or upskilling new or incumbent employees.
Community Health Worker Partnership with MAC, Inc.	Develop a training program for Community Health Care Workers to assist our vulnerable populations in their homes or healthcare facilities.
Community Health Worker Partnership for Ethnic Communities with Tidal Health	Develop a training program for Community Health Care Workers to work our ethnic/cultural populations who may be vaccine-resistant or otherwise in need of health education.
Basic Computer Skills Lab	The Computer Resource Lab will provide students with basic computer skills. The courses will provide technology training providing the foundation for either additional education or employment.
Other partnerships for training opportunities directly related to the strategy listed on the narrative.	Additional projects will be pursued and developed.

The Deputy Workforce Director asked if there were any questions. A discussion ensued. **ACTION ITEM:** The Deputy Workforce Director will contact Pattie Tingle to continue a conversation on the Community Health Worker Partnership with MAC, Inc. **ACTION ITEM:** The Chairman will convene a mini summit to discuss creative ways in which to spend ARPA funds.

- Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP) – The Deputy Workforce Director said that all three counties participated this year. The preparation funds that were held back from PY20 have been expended, and all programs are wrapping up this week. While conducting the site visits, there was an opportunity to meet with a few of the employers and talk with some of the participants. When visiting Wicomico County, the students were in the classroom learning communication soft skills needed to be successful in the workplace, and the district was creating a video about the program. The Deputy Workforce Director shared the Career Research Education and Work (C.R.E.W.) video with the committee. All three programs are run very differently, and all are hugely successful
- Eastern Shore Business Summit – The Deputy Workforce Director said that the Eastern Shore Business Summit was held on Thursday, August 12th. Dr. Karen Olmstead, SU Provost gave the Welcome Address and Mayor Jake Day kicked off the event. Dr. Memo Diriker delivered the Keynote Address. Due to the ongoing pandemic, it was an all-day virtual event. There were nine different breakout topics in three separate sessions. There were 95 registered attendees, and

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there were several other participants and attendees who used the link provided without registering. The planning committee was satisfied with the attendance number even though it was half of the normal in-person event. The committee feels the reduced attendance can be attributed to a general fatigue of online and virtually held events. Next year's Business Summit will be held in-person at Salisbury University.

Old Business

- PY21/FY22 Budget – John Donegan, Administrative Services Director, said that the PY21/FY22 draft budget, that was previously approved by the Board in June, has no substantial changes. John gave a review of the LSWA FY20 Carry In-Report. This report reflects monies left over from one fiscal year to the next fiscal year. This year's carry-in is \$1.4 million. This is more than double from last year and it is attributed to the lack of service that we were not able to provide in FY20, due to the pandemic. John told the committee, that the operational funds received this year were significantly less than last year, so the increased carry-in will actually help balance that out. We are projecting a lower than normal carry-in for FY23. John asked if anyone had any questions; there were none. The Chairman asked for a motion to approve the PY21/FY22 Budget as presented. **MOTION:** Pattie Tingle moved to approve the budget. Walt Maizel seconded motion. The motion was unanimously approved.
- 2021-2024 Local Plan Revisions – A summary of the required revisions from the State and LSWA's responses were provided in your packet for review. The Deputy Workforce Director asked if anyone had any questions; there were none. The Chairman asked for a motion to approve the 2021-2024 Local Plan revisions. **MOTION:** Whitney Palmer moved to approve the Local Plan revisions. Bo Duke seconded motion. The motion was unanimously approved.
- Membership Review – The Deputy Workforce Director told the committee that Bo Duke has been reappointed by the Worcester County Commissioners for another four-year term. Ivy Wells was originally appointed to represent the business community per the WIOA requirements. She is being moved from a Business member to a Public member representing Economic Development. This is actually a better representation of her role in the community. That means there is now a vacancy in Worcester County. While we did not recommend a specific individual for appointment by the Worcester County Commissioners, we did suggest that we would like someone from the healthcare field as that is a high demand industry in our area. The Chairman suggested to the committee that if they knew of someone in the health care field in Worcester County, to please reach out to them and see if there is an interest. **ACTION ITEM:** Bo Duke will reach out to Toni Keiser at Atlantic General Hospital.
- PY20 Q4 Performance – The Deputy Workforce Director said that there's good news and bad news. The good news is that our Youth Measureable Skills Gains improved from 42.9% to 47.4% with our local adjusted performance measure being 48%. The bad news is we have the lowest youth credential rate in the state. In Quarter 3 we were at 14.3% with the locally adjusted performance measure being 62%. Quarter 4 we were at 0% credential rate. That is directly related to the Covid shutdown. However, nine of the other 13 areas were at a passing rate of 59% or higher. A strongly worded email was sent to the LSWA youth providers informing them of this and although there is nothing that can be done to fix PY20, it must absolutely improve for PY21. LSWA also failed the dislocated worker median wages. Again, that was directly related to the pandemic shutdown. A discussion ensued. The Deputy Workforce Director clarified that the failing credential measure was for the Youth Program and not the Adult Program. A brief explanation of the PY20 Qtr 4 chart was provided.

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New Business

- Policy Revision - Priority of Service – The Deputy Workforce Director said that a new Training and Employment Guidance Letter (TEGL) was released by U.S. Department of Labor in November 2020 revising their vision of required Priority of Service. As a result, LSWA has revised the local Priority of Service policy to reflect TEGL 7-20. The new policy draft was included in your packet for review. The new policy focuses on recipients of public assistance, low income individuals and individuals who are basic skills deficient. It also adds a priority that allows the Governors Workforce Board and/or Local Area Workforce Boards to add additional targeted populations if needed. The Chairman asked for a motion to approve the revised Priority of Service Policy. **MOTION:** Pattie Tingle moved to approve the revision to the Priority of Service Policy. Whitney Palmer seconded motion. The motion was unanimously approved.
- Youth Committee Reappointment – The Deputy Workforce Director told the committee that Jennifer Bertrand's Youth Committee term has recently ended. Jennifer has agreed to offer her support and dedication for another two-year term on the committee. This will be her 3rd term. The Chairman asked for a motion to approve Jennifer's reappointment to the Youth Committee. **MOTION:** Jason Cunha moved to approve the Youth Committee reappointment. Walt Maizel seconded motion. The motion was unanimously approved.
- PY20 WIOA Monitoring Review – The Deputy Workforce Director told the committee that our State monitoring review began this past Monday, the 23rd. All requested documentation and electronic files were submitted. The monitors arrived this morning for the in-person monitoring visit. They only found one problem; it was a data error in some of the adult files. They gave us five days to fix them. Otherwise, we can expect a positive monitoring report in about two weeks.
- Committee Meeting Dates – The remaining 2021 meeting dates and the 2022 meeting dates were provided. The Deputy Workforce Director said that all meetings will continue to be virtual, at least until the end of this year. Do you as a committee want the meeting time to remain 3:00 p.m. – 4:30 p.m for the remainder of the year? The committee agreed that the current timeframe was a better option at this time. **ACTION ITEM:** The Operations Coordinator will update all the Steering Committee schedules to reflect the 3:00 p.m. – 4:30 p.m meeting time. **ACTION ITEM:** The Operations Coordinator will contact Walt Maizel regarding his Steering Committee membership status as the immediate past Chair.
- September Board Meeting – Agenda Items – The Deputy Workforce Director said the agenda will include the 1) LSWA announcements and updates; 2) the voting items that were approved by the Steering Committee today; and 3) Greg Padgham has agreed to present the new Tri-County Council website (LESMD.NET). The Deputy Workforce Director asked if anyone had any more suggestions; there were none. **ACTION ITEM:** The Deputy Workforce Director and the Operations Coordinator will prepare the September 8, 2021, Workforce Development Board Agenda.

Adjourn: A motion was made to adjourn the meeting. Adjourned at 4:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Dione Shaw
Operations Coordinator

Approved October 21, 2021

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