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

## **Workforce Development Board Minutes**

December 14, 2022

11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Hybrid Meeting

**Members Present:** Ruth Baker, Bo Duke, Paula Erdie, Ambere' Eskridge, Whitney Palmer, Jena Paquin, Angela Paris, Daniel Thompson, Erika Uebel, Francisco Vega, Alicia Warren

**Members Absent:** Nick Caruso, Jason Cunha, Tim Howlett, Walter Maizel, Roger Martinson, Freddy Mitchell, Claudia Nelson, Tony Nichols

**Staff Present:** Leslie Porter-Cabell, Shelly Brown, Bob Hendricks, Sherri Sigrist, Rebecca Gagnon, Johanna Allen, Julie Allen, Bonnie Nay, Terri Page, Sheronda Brown, Mekia Cherone

**Guests:** Bryan Ashby, Wicomico County CTE; Chastity Chronister, Eastern Correctional Institution; Alison Hamilton, Tidal Health Human Resources; Kim McBride, Tidal Health Human Resources

Leslie Porter-Cabell, Workforce Director, called the meeting to order at 11:03 a.m. She thanked everyone for participating in today's hybrid meeting. The Deputy Workforce Director continued with a roll call. A quorum was not present.

**Meeting Format:** The Workforce Director gave a brief overview of virtual meeting protocol: 1) identify yourself when talking; 2) identify anyone who is present with you during the call; and 3) mute your line unless speaking.

**Approval of the September 7, 2022 meeting minutes** – Since there was not a quorum, this voting item was tabled until the March 8, 2023, Board meeting.

### **Director Updates**

- Good Jobs Challenge Award – The funding from this award has been approved. It will cover three positions: a Data Specialist, a Navigator, and a Program Coordinator.
- Business Services Staffing – a Career Specialist and a Job Placement Coordinator have been hired using APRA and Relief Act funding. The Business Services Department has expanded and we are looking to hire another Career Specialist to service the five main industries that have known staffing issues: 1) Manufacturing 2) Hospitality 3) Healthcare 4) Skilled trades and 5) Retail.
- Blueprint for Education – A brief outline of what the blueprint is was discussed along with some statistics. There is a March 14 deadline to submit a plan. The Director advised that Mike DiGiacomo, Executive Director of the Governor's Workforce Board, would be joining us later to provide more details.

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- Staffing Updates – Several positions were vacant due to staff retiring or moving on. An RFP for a Grants Administrator has been posted and one for a One Stop Operator will be posted soon.

New staff introductions:

- Youth Engagement Specialist – Sheronda Brown
- Administrative Specialist – Johanna Allen
- AJC Front Desk Receptionist (part-time) – Patricia McCafferty
- Jobs Placement Coordinator - Bonnie Nay
- Business Services Career Specialist - Julie Allen

### Finance

- WIOA – The WIOA budget was approved.
- RELIEF Act – The RELIEF Act funds are being used for effective for On the Job Training (OJT), AJC customer service training, and updating signage around the building. Interior signage is coming soon. Additionally there is an AJC Welcome Center video being worked on that will highlight each AJC partner agency.
- ARPA I & II – There are five awardees for ARPA I:
  - MAC, Inc. - Senior Community Health Worker Certification
  - Wor- Wic Community College – Skilled trades
  - Tidal Health – CNA nursing training certifications
  - Vehicle for Change – automotive technical training
  - Wor-Wic Computer Lab

ARPA II will be primarily focused on administration of ARPA I. Access to the funds has been approved and facilitated the hire of a Business Services Career Specialist, Julie Allen, and will soon support the hire of a Project Coordinator.

### Program Updates

- Youth – The Youth Program transition into an all in-house service program model is going well.
  - The Youth Committee Chair continues to remain vacant.
  - Youth Engagement – We have two Youth Engagement Specialist now. Sheronda Brown brought over all her cases from Telamon. There are currently 27 active cases and 23 follow-up cases.
  - September – December there were 24 referrals to the program, 7 applications, and 7 new participants. Six courses have been completed, three driver's education courses, one dental assistant I course, and one CNA I course.
  - Our first WEX participant was placed at the Wicomico County library. Some discussion ensued about what WEX is and what types of businesses it best serves.
  - Youth Career Exploration Video Project – Videos are being developed to provide key information on different career paths including salaries and employers. One video has been posted to the AJC YouTube channel, and two more are coming soon.

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- Adult – The Adult Program continues to find the most efficient ways to serve participants.
  - Training statistics – For the month of September, the LSWA Intake Office received interest from 30 individuals and 31 applications. In October there were 35 individuals interested, and 35 applications. In November there were 23 individuals interested, and 16 applications. In December there have been 12 individuals interested and 12 applications. From September to December there were 100 individuals that expressed interest and 89 applications.
  - Success Story – CNA participant, Ashley P., was included in your packet.

**Business Services** – The Business Services Manager provided updates:

- New Colleagues
  - Bonnie Nay is the new Job Placement Coordinator. She will be primarily matching LSWA customers to businesses.
  - Julie Allen is the new Business Services Career Specialist. She will be primarily working with business, informing them about what services we offer, assessment testing, and workplace training.
- Work-Based Training Programs
  - Seaside Plumbing: Four new plumbing apprentices have been hired. Two in October and two in November. They have reached the maximum number of participants. The program has been so successful that we are considering extending the contract.
  - Maryland Broadband Cooperative: The contract was signed on November 28 to train 4-5 fiber optic splicers and network techs. So far they have one new participant and are looking for three more. Additionally, they are looking to upskill current employees using Metrix Learning.
  - Insurance Industry: A new program is being developed for the insurance industry to assist in recruiting. LSWA will fund a MD Insurance License prep class for 10 students. Recruiting for the class will begin in February and the class will be held in March. The program will be sponsored by the five largest insurance companies in the region.
- Offshore Wind Energy Workforce
  - Things are picking up. There will be a workforce planning event January 24, 2023 to kick off the program. Originally we reached out to 25 stakeholders and now we have 50 interested in attending the planning session.

**Special Projects** – The Deputy Director provided updates:

- RELIEF Act Funded Activities
  - AJC Welcome Video is still being worked on. Scripts have been received from DSS, Telamon, and LSWA. The script from Department of Labor is waiting for approval.
- Unite Us – A platform for agencies to make and track referrals. Similar to MyChart. Baltimore, Southern MD, and Tidal Health use it. Looking into seeing if it will work for use at the AJC.

Blueprint for Education – Mike DiGiacomo from the Governor's Workforce Development Board, met with us and spoke about the Blueprint for Education. He pointed everyone to the website for the Governor's WDB: <http://gwdb.md.gov/> and in particular recommended the CTE Committee tab near the top for

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upcoming meetings and agendas discussing the Blueprint. There was a discussion about the Blueprint and how it was going to be implemented.

### **Workforce Development Board**

- Membership – The Workforce Director said Danny Thompson has been very helpful in identifying potential Board members in Somerset County. Several businesses have been contact and we are waiting to hear back from them. Tony Nichols' term ended in October. He has agreed to help out until a new one is voted in. The guidelines state if a replacement is not voted on for two consecutive meetings (6 months) then the chair of the TCC will choose a replacement. A new one will need to be found by March. No one responded to calls for nominations or volunteers. The Youth Committee Chair position is also still vacant.
- Terms Expiring - Mitzi Scott, Tidal Health, Wicomico County – term expired September 18, 2022. Lori Lee, Tidal Health Workforce Development Manager is the replacement for Mitzi and will be going thru the process for that.

**Adjourn:** The meeting was adjourned at 12:34 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Johanna Allen  
Administrative Specialist

Approved March 8, 2023

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