

AREA 19 WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD
MEETING MINUTES
December 6, 2023
10:00 a.m.

Geauga County Offices, Meeting Room B167-B168
12611 Ravenwood Drive
Chardon, Ohio 44024

MEMBERS PRESENT: Judith Barris, Brad Ehrhart, Mark Goffinet, Gina M. Hofstetter, Phil Rath, Ned Sherry, Scott Wludyga, Gregory King, Lynn Hartman, Christian Klein, Monica Bricker-Thompson, Greg Myers, Kelley Hollander, Eric Davis, Dr. Angela Spalsbury, Mark Trushel, Teresa Simons,

MEMBERS ABSENT: Michelle Bertman, Nicole Deligianis, Mike DeLuke, Joel Domino, Dawn Farrell, David Flautt, Mark Frisone, Jonathan Forbes, Anthony Lignetta, Kenny Lohr, David Shea, Keith Wyatt, Eladio Yenderrozos.

Others in Attendance: Margo Reda (OMJ-Geauga), Hattie-Grubke (OMJ-Ashtabula), Mandy Minnick (OMJ-Portage), Alissa Drees (ACJFS), Craig Sernik (Area 19 Director), Denise Gehring (Area 19).

Mr. Sherry called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

Approval of Past Business

Approval of Minutes from September 27, 2023.

Ms. Hartman moved to approve the Minutes from September 27, 2023 as presented. Mr. Ehrhart seconded the motion which was approved by all members present.

Approval of Motions of the NOC COG since last meeting.

Motions approved by the NOC COG on November 15, 2023

Motion to adopt the amended NOC COG employee handbook policy 402 Availability of Vacation Benefits on carry-over of vacation days with the addition of the language “not to exceed 80 hours” to number 2.

Motion to accept the resignation of Ryan Keegan, Exscape Designs, representing Business for Geauga County, from the Area 19 Workforce Development Board.

Motion to accept the resignation of Rose Dolance, MAG LTT, representing Business for Portage County, from the Area 19 Workforce Development Board.

Motion to accept the resignation of William Moore, OWD/ODJFS, representing Wagner-Peyser & Vets for Portage/Geauga/Ashtabula, from the Area 19 Workforce Development Board.

Motion to approve the appointment of Mark Goffinet, OWD/ODJFS, representing Wagner-Peyser & Vets for Portage/Geauga/Ashtabula, to the Area 19 Workforce Development Board.

Mr. Wludyga moved to accept the motions of the NOC COG report from September 27, 2023. Ms. Barris seconded the motion which was approved by all members present.

Administrative Report

Mr. Sernik reported the State's Comprehensive Workforce plan just came out this week and is open for public comment for the next 30 days. Area 19 has agreed to be part of the RESEA program pilot. This will involve an extra workshop to RESEA to see if this more intensive workshop will help individuals get back to work faster. The CCMEP youth program is currently going through a statewide evaluation to see if there are ways to improve it with the report to be received next summer. The Quest 1 grant is broadband/5G was awarded to YSU and Area 3. Area 3 and YSU announced they took care of the eligibility requirements but advised workforce areas that if you do identify an individual who is WIOA eligible to use the WIOA grants to pay for their training. They're building a cohort of employers who would be agreeable to hiring the individuals in the program. The State is giving us \$13,000 for rebranding each OMJ Centers will be receive \$4,000 and may use their adult and dislocated worker funding if needed. Rebranding will need to be completed by June 30, 2024, but still waiting for the high resolution logo from the State. UI has changed to a 4 week for a searchable resume and 8 weeks for the survey and assessment.

Fiscal Report

Mr. Sernik reported funds returned to the state were \$103,000 in PY21 youth, \$12,000 in adult, \$162,000 in dislocated worker, and no RESEA funds were returned. The GAAP conversion for the NOC COG was completed and submitted to the state auditor. Received a hold harmless notice from the state of Ohio for the Performance Report due to issues with the accurate reporting in the ARIES system. Mr. Sernik reviewed the PY 22 Performance Measure Report with all those present.

Reports of County OMJ Centers

OMJ Geauga County. Ms. Reda reported they're waiting for the vector for rebranding, will receive \$4,000 for rebranding but the cost will be \$8,000 and will need to use adult and dislocated worker funds. Did an RFP for the career center and Auburn Career Center was awarded the contract. Planning for events occurring the first two quarters of 2024 with the first event in partnership with Geauga Growth Partnership at KSU-Geauga a Career Awareness event on March 5th and is open to high school students and young adults. In February, sponsoring the Leadership Geauga government class speaking to business leaders as well as elected officials on the IWT program. The high school career and job fair will be held again at Cardinal High School on May 9th. Will be doing more mock interviewing in the schools. The Auburn Career Center annual Reverse Job Fair will be held in March. Planning to hold a First Amendment training via Teams either in February or March. The CCMEP program had 35 youth doing a lot with career preparation and job clubs, and in November had someone in to speak to the youth about personal responsibility education program, and working with Lake County on podcasts that will be done monthly to spotlight services.

OMJ Ashtabula County. Ms. Grubke reported employer job orders are between 12 to 15 a month, rapid responses were done for a small voluntary layoff at Grand River Rubber in October and for

Teijin in Conneaut who had 65 employees laid off but called most back which was directly related to the UAW strike, served 172 veterans, unemployment for Ashtabula County is at 3.5 percent, scheduled 141 appointments in October for those with work assignments, CCMEP mandated enrolled is 47, the entire youth program total as of November 10th is 632 participants with 127 in follow-up, Kingsville Library is hosting every other week a game club for the youth, RESEA had 10 this week, had 72 unemployment related instances in November that staff had to assist, mock interviews will be done on December 14th at Edgewood High School with more through March. Ms. Grubke stated she will be traveling in January within the county to principal meetings to show them the VR headsets and the ability to work with the students.

OMJ Portage County. Ms. Minnick stated the WIOA Team held the annual all industry job fair in November at Reed Memorial Library with 21 employers and nearly 50 attendees. Will hold two specialized job fairs one for STNAs and a second for transportation drivers. Held a rapid response for Deluxe Company which is closing. Already halfway through the \$200,000 earmarked for ITA's. The Work Activity Unit is seeing an increase in TANF applications, PRC applications have increased, CCMEP Unit is gearing up for the yearend holiday workshop on December 22nd for the CCMEP youth gearing it to work readiness and team building. Finalizing the CCMEP Leadership and Entrepreneurship Service to have in place by February 2024. Currently in the schools with the Transfer VR headsets and the jail work release program will begin sometime in the new year.

Discretionary Reports of Economic Developers on the WDB

Geauga County. Ms. Bricker-Thompson reported Geauga Growth Partnership made 68 business retention/expansion visits so far, working on projects with JobsOhio and TeamNEO, March 20th is GGP's annual meeting the focus will be on economic development within Geauga County, and preparing for the summer internship program. Ms. Hofstetter, Geauga County Community Economic Development, reported applied for a \$1 million opportunity for Brownfield for a cleanup project, second phase of the demolition grant opportunities are available, and in September hosted a workshop with lenders.

Ashtabula County. Mr. Myers reported sites for the two deep water ports have been very active the last 8 to 12 months. Submitting an application this Friday requesting approximately \$20 million to be invested in two sites in Ashtabula County to assist with adding infrastructure through the Community Appalachian grant program. Ashtabula Growth Partnership has a new staff person, Sonia Newman.

Portage County. Mr. Ehrhart reported activities as of November 30th conducted 177 business retention/expansion visits, 200 referrals with most for workforce related training, doing aggressive cold calling making sure the information on the JobsOhio inclusion grant gets out, and 34 active projects with 9 new projects in the fall. End of year projects are 18 of which 9 are inclusion grants, total impact of the 18 projects is \$232 million of new investment creating 241 new jobs over the next three years retaining 325 jobs for total of 566 jobs impact is an annual payroll of over \$32 million. The biggest project so far is the German Company coming into the turnpike commerce center with the first phase a manufacturing facility creating 68 jobs which is over \$170 million in investment and the second phase will be a distribution facility in 2025. Portage Development Board will hold a workforce workshop on March 26, 2024, at the KSU Hotel and Conference Center. Currently working with OMJ Portage with school events.

Old Business

Incumbent Worker Training Policy Presentation. Mr. Sernik reviewed the revised Incumbent Worker Training forms with those present. The forms will be used next week and will begin making sure when companies apply that they're not eligible for the TechCred program.

New Business

Presentation on the Grit Grant Opportunity (Ashtabula County, plus poor rural communities in Geauga and Portage Counties). Mr. Sernik explained WDB Area 1 has a grant agreement with the Ohio Department of Development. Their vision is for youth graduating high school who do not have an educational career pathway to assess these individuals for career pathways and interests, provide them with guidance on this, then connect them to some type of employment or internship opportunity, and then get them placed in that position of employment. The grant will begin in Ashtabula County. A-Tech will submit the application with the NOC COG's support. The populations A-tech is looking to initially serve are CCMEP enrolled youth, summer TANF program youth, those that apply but are not eligible to be in the CCMEP program, ASPIRE individuals, and any youth referred to A-Tech for the service by the school district or any adult referred to A-Tech by OhioMeansJobs. This will begin sometime in February 2024 and end June 30, 2025.

Discussion regarding Conexus Grant (Portage County plus Summit County). Mr. Sernik reported this grant is only Summit and Portage counties and is a pay for training with wrap around services so approximately 120 to 150 individuals may get connected to the manufacturing industry sector. The intake and assessment will be done by a third party provider and not Conexus.

Mr. Wludyga announced A-Tech received some of the Career Tech facilities funding from the State to expand A-Tech's Public Safety Academy.

Public Comment

None.

Mr. Ehrhart moved to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Hofstetter seconded the motion which was approved by all members present.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:58 a.m.

Minutes prepared by Denise Gehring.