

**NORTHEAST OHIO CONSORTIUM (“NOC”)
COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS
MEETING MINUTES**

Wednesday, April 24, 2024
11:00 a.m.

Geauga County Offices, Meeting Room A334,
12611 Ravenwood Drive, Chardon, Ohio 44024

MEMBERS PRESENT: Commissioner Sabrina Christian-Bennett
 Commissioner Jim Dvorak

MEMBERS ABSENT: Commissioner Casey Kozlowski

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE: Hattie Grubke (OMJ-Ashtabula), Brian Guarniere (GCJFS), Margo Reda (OMJ-Geauga), Alyssa Steinhoff (GCJFS), Patrick Arcaro (Director, ACJFS), Carly Spencer (OMJ-Portage), Brian Boykin (PCJFS), Craig Sernik (Area 19 Director), Denise Gehring (Area 19).

Ms. Christian-Bennett called the meeting to order at 11:16 a.m.

Minutes

Ms. Christian-Bennett moved to approve the meeting Minutes from February 28, 2024. Mr. Dvorak seconded the motion which was approved by all members present.

Administrative Report

Mr. Sernik discussed the H.R. 6655 A Stronger Workforce for America Act Bill with all those present. One positive about the bill is the lowering of what needs to be spent on out-of-school youth from 75 percent to 65 percent. This bill would require 50 percent of the WIOA adult and dislocated Worker funds would have to be spent on all training. Will ask fiscal people and work with the State to look at our past history of expenditures. Currently we are allowed to spend a maximum of 20 percent of adult and dislocated workers on incumbent worker training. The bill would raise this to 30 percent. Congress as part of this bill has made a deal on future funding of WIOA with the plan would be to give an allocation of initial 3 percent increase but then flat fund it for the next four years afterwards. The bill would also allow when WIOA comes down from the feds to the state they can take 15 percent to use for state discretionary and allow them to take another 10 percent. The OWA is having a meeting with all of the Workforce Board chairpersons around the State on May 15th. The RESEA pilot began on Monday. Asked the State for \$290,000 in adult and dislocated worker and \$540,000 in youth for a total of \$830,000 in redistribution funds

but received just around a quarter of a million. Indicated to the state that with those kinds of numbers Ashtabula would probably have to close their WIOA only eligibility, Portage froze their training program at least until July or October, and OhioGuidestone would be looking to close their WIOA only eligibility as well, too. The State responded Mark Anderson will give technical assistance to Geauga, Portage and Ashtabula Counties regarding obligations and accruals and once the obligations and accruals are booked the State will release \$303,673 to the area.

Fiscal Report

Mr. Sernik reported Ashtabula has agreed to offer up \$50,000 of dislocated worker as part of the redistribution with a condition that when the liquidation period occurs if there is more they would ask that Portage agree now and accepting these funds that they would do a dollar per dollar swap with youth funds for any additional dislocated worker funds. Mr. Sernik reviewed the handout which contained the amounts to distribute in additional funding between the counties with all those present. Geauga County stated if there should be any adult and dislocated left over that they join that same conversation with Portage about getting some CCMEP WIOA.

Ms. Christian-Bennet moved to adopt the distribution of \$303,673.00 of special grant funds as proposed within the handout email dated April 23, 2024 at 12:21 p.m.: Ashtabula Youth \$112,673.00; Geauga Youth \$25,500.00; Portage Youth \$36,000.00; Portage Adult/D.W. \$129,500.00.

Mr. Dvorak seconded the motion which was approved by all members present.

Mr. Sernik reported the State Auditor's Report had no findings, just suggested we do what is written into the continuous improvement plan last fall.

Ms. Christian-Bennett moved to approve the proposed distribution and redistribution of WIOA formula funding as presented within the handout: Ashtabula Youth \$121,088.00; Geauga Youth \$26,908.00; Portage Youth \$38,867.00; Portage Adult/Dislocated Worker \$13,976.00; and \$50,000.00 in Adult/Dislocated Worker transferred from Ashtabula to Portage. Mr. Dvorak seconded the motion which was approved by all members present.

Mr. Sernik reviewed the over/under report with all those present. The area should be receiving \$113,000.00 of RESEA in the next month and PY24 RESEA in the next 90 days.

Ms. Christian-Bennett moved to approve the over/under report as presented. Mr. Dvorak seconded the motion which was approved by all members present.

Reports of County OMJ-Centers

OMJ Portage County. Ms. Spencer reported the Transfer VR headsets are a success in the schools and the next phase is to open it up to anyone who comes into the OMJ Center for services. The work activity team received 40 PRC applications of which 31 were TANF cash assistance participants, 16 of them received SNAP and the All Family Participation rate is at 42 percent. CCMEP is focusing on strengthening the relationship with the juvenile detention center. CCMEP had in March 176 youth enrolled 95 were in-school and 57 were out-of-school. Portage County had spent \$200,000 on training, 153 resource room customers, 25 ITAs, 52 Benefit Bridge cases, and 33 individuals selected for RESEA. Business Services held a transportation fair in the OMJ

OMJ Ashtabula County. Hattie Grubke reported in the month of March 136 individuals visited the resource room of that number 121 needed assistance with unemployment, 68 veterans served this year, unemployment rate is 5.5 percent, 112 SNAP/ET, CCMEP OWF only had 106 scheduled appointments, 42 March RESEA appointments, one CDL training, doing mock interviews, and each high school will be doing their own separate career fair. fast. The A-Tech yO! program has become part of the GRIT program with over 200 individuals who have gone through the GRIT assessment. As of April, 704 youth are enrolled in the program, 156 are in follow up, 157 WIOA only, 358 TANF only and 33 dual. Transportation is a constant challenge. Summer youth will begin soon, ASPIRE has a full class of 15, and May 8th will be the Ashtabula County Job Fair held at the old courthouse on the 2nd floor.

OMJ Geauga County. Ms. Reda reported the unemployment rate is at 4 percent, did Career Awareness Day at Kent State-Geauga in March with 22 businesses present and 70 youth with parents, did the Reverse Job Fair at Auburn Career Center with 200 businesses came through, did Prep for Mock Interviewing at both Cardinal and Chardon schools then at both schools brought businesses in plus OMJ staff to do mock interviewing. Job fair for all high schools will be on May 9th and summer manufacturing camp will be in June. Both Ms. Reda and Commissioner Dvorak were invited to a meet and greet with Lt. Governor Husted who met with the schools at Berkshire, Summer youth Employment program will be administered by OhioGuidestone and have capped the program at \$50,000 and will be for 8 ½ weeks.

Old Business

Renewal of the CORSA Property & Casualty for the NOC COG.

Ms. Christian-Bennett moved to approve the renewal of the CORSA Property & Casualty for the May 1, 2024 to April 30, 2025 Program Year for the NOC COG. Mr. Dvorak seconded the motion which was approved by all members present.

New Business

WDB Membership Re-appointments:

Ms. Christian-Bennett moved to approve the Slate of Re-appointments to the Area 19 Workforce Board for a two year term:

- **Lynn Hartman, Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities (OOD) representing OOD for Ashtabula, Geauga, and Portage Counties.**
- **Mike DeLuke, AFSCME Ohio Council 8, representing Labor for Portage County.**
- **Eric Davis, Electrical JATC, Warren, representing Apprenticeship for Geauga County.**

Mr. Dvorak seconded the motion which was approved by all members present.

WDB Membership Appointments:

Ms. Christian-Bennett moved to approve the appointment of Alissa Holdson, Ashtabula County Community Action Agency, representing Community Organization for Ashtabula County, to the Area 19 Workforce Development Board. Mr. Dvorak seconded the motion which was approved by all members present.

Additional Agenda Items.

Ms. Christian-Bennett moved to add to the agenda the following items:

- 1) Redistribution of RESEA PY 24 funds.**
- 2) Authorize the Executive Director along with the CDJFS' to negotiate and enter into discussions to amend their contracts and the contracts with the youth providers for funds to not exceed what was approved in the redistribution.**

Mr. Dvorak seconded the motion which was approved by all members present.

RESEA Redistribution. Mr. Sernik reported the area is set to receive \$178,972.06 in RESEA PY24 funds.

Ms. Christian-Bennett moved to approve the distribution of RESEA PY24 allocation as follows: Ashtabula \$49,611.00; Geauga \$25,128.00; Portage \$86,336.00. Mr. Dvorak seconded the motion which was approved by all members present.

Amending WIOA Agreements to include the Redistribution of Grant Funds.

Ms. Christian-Bennett moved to Authorize the Executive Director along with the CDJFS' to negotiate and enter into agreements amending their contracts and those with the youth providers in amounts not to exceed the redistribution that was approved earlier in the agenda. Mr. Dvorak seconded the motion which was approved by all members present.

Data Sharing and Confidentiality Agreement D-2425-15-0538.

Ms. Christian-Bennett moved to add to the agenda the item Data Sharing and Confidentiality Agreement D-2425-15-0538. Mr. Dvorak seconded the motion which was approved by all members present.

Ms. Christian-Bennett moved to authorize the NOC COG CEO and Executive Director to enter into and execute the Data Sharing and Confidentiality Agreement D-2425-15-0538 with ODJFS effective from October 1, 2023 to September 30, 2026. Mr. Dvorak seconded the motion which was approved by all members present.

Public Comment

None.

Adjourn the Meeting

Ms. Christian-Bennet moved to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Dvorak seconded the motion which was approved by all members present.

Meeting Adjourned at 12:23 p.m.

Minutes prepared by Denise Gehring.