

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

May 15, 2020
2:00 PM

Conducted via Phone Conference
Due to Coronavirus Pandemic

ROLE CALL OF THOSE PRESENT VIA PHONE CONFERENCE:

MEMBERS PRESENT: Commissioner Casey Kozlowski
Commissioner Sabrina Christian-Bennett
Commissioner Jim Dvorak

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE: Patrick Arcaro (ACDJFS-Director), Ron Smith (ACDJFS), Hattie Grubke-Barnard (OMJ-Ashtabula), Margo Reda (OMJ-Geauga), Mandy Berardinelli (OMJ-Portage), Angel Brandner (PCJFS), Brian Boykin (PCJFS), Sue Brannon (PCJFS), Veronica Curry (OhioGuidestone), Kim Brown (OhioGuidestone), Dr. Jerry Brockway (A-Tech), William Moore (ODJFS), Craig Sernik (Area 19-Director), Michelle Laveck (Area 19), Denise Gehring (Area 19)

Today’s meeting was published in the local newspapers which referenced the NOC COG website that provided the call-in information. According to the guidance received from the Attorney General’s Office, we believe we are in compliance with the State’s Sunshine Laws and with quorum of the member Commissioners of the NOC COG will be a dually held full business meeting of the NOC COG and the Area 19 Workforce Board.

Mr. Kozlowski called the meeting to order at 2:07 p.m.

Mr. Kozlowski announced he is unable to participate for the entire meeting due to an Ashtabula County situation and that Ms. Christian-Bennett, Vice Chairperson, will continue to lead the meeting.

Minutes

Ms. Christian-Bennett moved to approve the meeting Minutes from March 4, 2020 and Minutes from April 8, 2020 as presented. Mr. Dvorak second the motion.

Roll Call:

Ms. Christian-Bennett – Yes.

Mr. Dvorak – Yes

Mr. Kozlowski – Yes

The Motion approved.

Administrative Report

Mr. Sernik reported on the following items.

Updates on Attempts to Secure Unemployment Data. The State is making progress with processing unemployment claims and the \$600 payments are beginning to flow to individuals. Workforce and WIOA have no responsibility associated with unemployment. Notice was received from Kathy Nakoski, employer specialist situated at the Ashtabula OMJ Center, that going forward the State is now in a position with the unemployment office to speak to individuals directly. Based upon dislocated worker data received unemployment for each county of Area 19 is at least 12 percent and will continue to rise possibly to 20 percent with not knowing how many temporary furloughs versus permanent layoffs there are. The Governor has a timeline in place for the reopening of all businesses except for those involving large crowds. As businesses are allowed to reopen it will be important for the State to mine the unemployment claims data by each county and compare the new weekly data to the old data which will give a good analysis of what is staying closed and what is reopening. Pressing the State for this information on both a macro and micro level so we can push out to our commissioners, economical developers, and workforce educators for use in providing assistance to both workforce and employers. Also asking the State to identify for the area the fresh job orders that are appearing in Monster and OhioMeanJobs.

COVID 19 Relief Programs. There has been an introduction of new legislation the Health and Economic Recovery Omnibus Emergency Solutions (HEROES) Act that would provide money to the Department of Labor to be specifically passed on to the Workforce Boards for dislocated workers, adults, and youth. Question was asked if the HEROES Act was in proposal format at this point in time. Mr. Sernik responded in the affirmative. Mr. Sernik and his office will send a letter to Area 19's Congressional Officials requesting their support of the HEROES Act in relation to the money that is being allocated for workforce and not on any other positions within the Act.

Opioid Grant #3 Update. Portage and Geauga Counties have been spending their opioid money on various programs that they have in place. Area 19 is one in eight counties in the state of Ohio that are positioned to hit their expenditure mark and receive additional Opioid Grant #3 monies. We are currently waiting to receive an additional \$70,000 of Opioid Grant #3 money. If the additional \$70,000 or part of it is not received in another week, a temporary swap of opioid money will be done taking from the amount earmarked for Ashtabula County and provide it to Portage County who is in need of the additional money. And when the additional allocation is received from the State, Ashtabula County will receive its availability back.

NEG Grant Application. The State put in an application to the feds who rejected it because it was more business outreach focused and they wish to stay more traditional. The State redid its application stating they wish to steer away from the traditional temporary dislocated worker type jobs and focus more on using it to put individuals into training or to placing individuals with employers. This grant is still being pursued.

Update on Ohio Works Incentive Program (OWIP). The State is permanently ending the OWIP program. Each county may continue to enroll participants through June 30th and then in the coming year as participants hit the various milestones under the program can bill for those invoices but

only for participants enrolled through June 30, 2020. The Ohio Workforce Association (OWA) and the Directors' Association recognized the benefits of the State incentive program and are currently working together on a proposal to discuss with the State creating additional similar programs.

Letter of Support. VANTAGE Aging has asked Area 19 for a letter of support as they continue to be the Title V provider. Mr. Sernik asked the Board for permission to issue a letter of support noting VANTAGE Aging has been a satisfactory Title V provider for the last number of years within Area 19. Question was asked what the normal protocol for these types of requests is. Mr. Sernik responded these requests are not receive very frequently and not sure if there is a protocol. Discussion commenced. Discussion concluded. The NOC COG Board recommended that before any letter of support is to be sent the Area 19 Executive Director is to confer with the NOC COG Board first on a case by case basis.

OMJ Center Update. All three OMJ Centers are providing virtual services and are not meeting face to face with customers. Discussions are being held regarding what the summer employment programming will look like and the challenges due to Covid-19. Looking to do summer programming with youth participating in the CCMEP program. Also, submitted a question into ODJFS regarding guidance with placing youth into work experiences and the different challenges and risks due to Covid-19.

Money and Funding. Area 19 monies for the upcoming year show the area will pick up .08% more money than last year. Mr. Sernik has reached out to the State for a county by county breakout of the funding. The State has made a commitment that if areas have any funds that would end June 30, 2020, they are going to find a way to give those monies back to use for a year.

Miscellaneous.

Mr. Sernik reported he participated in a phone conference with the state of Ohio regarding hiring and career fair platforms. The state is looking to either create its own platform or contract with a vendor. This would be statewide with the State using it to do industry job fairs either once a month or every other month. The overall platform would be paid for with state money and locals could use it per a fee schedule to be developed for an amount paid back to the state. The State is hoping to develop this in a three to four month time.

Fiscal

Ms. Laveck reported she will provide at the next monthly meeting a budget for next year for administration.

Old Business

OMJ Center Reports.

- OMJ PC - Ms. Berardinelli reported the OMJ Center has been successful with virtual services and broke a record with the amount of services offered to job seekers in April which is due to assistance offered for unemployment. She has received many letters of thanks from claimants for OMJ staff assisting with unemployment and connecting them with other resources in the

community. They are currently in the process of developing a plan and a strategy for how to reopen the OMJ Center and have created an unemployment video that was shared online and was successful in assisting employers and job seekers.

- OMJ AC - Ms. Grubke-Barnard reported they have reached out to 1100 individuals who are on unemployment to make them aware of the other resources that can be provided to them. Have received new WIOA applications, individuals calling interested in training, and working on how to TABE individuals during social distancing. Unemployment is approximately 14 to 16 percent for April with a lot of unemployed individuals stating they are getting called back or will be called back to work. Ran just a few job orders in April with CDL drivers still needed. Planning a summer employment program, CCMEP case worker talking to just as many individuals over phone/internet as was when it was face to face, CCMEP program is at 775 of those 466 are in active follow-up, 72 WIOA only, 13 dually funded, and 224 TANF. The county has decided to cancel the summer manufacturing camp for this year.
- OMJ-GC - Ms. Reda reported Geauga County has also cancelled their summer manufacturing camp for this year. The OMJ Center focus has been on virtual services in order to do hybrid virtual and in-person services for job seekers. Looking at potentially relocating the OMJ Center for a period of time to better service the citizens in Geauga in-person. A company in Solon and Fargo Machine in Ashtabula made face shields for the GCJFS social workers. Ms. Brown with OhioGuidestone reported OhioGuidestone and the OMJ Center were contacted by Lake Hospital System to see if any youth would be interested in making masks in which 10 youth stepped up with five as sewers and five cutting the fabric. It is a paid work entrepreneurial situation for the youth and is a great leadership lead in. The youth have named their company, are doing the ordering, doing the communication between each other, and Ms. Brown does the delivery between the youth. Was able to procure three donated sewing machines from the East Geauga Kiwanis. In the process of making 300 masks for GCJFS, 500 masks for Lake Hospital System, and delivered 80 masks to GCJFS last Friday and early Monday.

Discussion regarding the Timeline for Youth RFPs. Mr. Sernik reported Area 19 local policy and contracts state this is the year to procure for new CCMEP Youth contracts to begin October 1. With the uncertainty of the current pandemic, a joint decision will need to be made with each of the CDJFS' who are each the lead agency for TANF of whether to go forward this year with procurement or to delay and discuss potentially giving the current providers, on a county by county basis, a six month or a full year extension.

Discussion regarding reopening of OMJ Centers and Area 19 Offices. Mr. Sernik stated the OMJ Centers are in a better position to decide on a county by county basis what is best for their centers. Discussion commenced regarding the reopening of the Area 19 Office. Discussion concluded. The Board suggested Mr. Sernik come up with a NOC COG Office reopening plan for the Board to review the last week of May to see if in favor of a staggered return to work plan for the month of June.

New Business

Mr. Sernik reported there may be a need to swap new money for old money to make things easier for Area 19 and to keep counties spending because the State does not know how it is going to return money they otherwise take back in the June to September closeout period.

Mr. Dvorak moved to give the Executive Director the authority to do no cost swaps at the discretion of the Executive Director and each CDJFS during the month of May.

Ms. Christian-Bennett seconded the motion.

Roll Call:

Ms. Christian-Bennett – Yes

Mr. Dvorak – Yes

Motion approved.

Mr. Sernik explained the amendment to the CCMEP agreement between NOC COG and PCJFS with Family and Community Services for the October 1, 2019 through September 30, 2020 period is to increase their TANF budget amount from \$402,700.00 to \$476,700.00 giving more TANF money for a greater summer work experience program.

Ms. Christian-Bennett moved to adopt the amended CCMEP Youth Agreement with Family & Community Services of Portage County for the period of October 1, 2019 through September 30, 2020 which increases the TANF budget amount from \$402,700.00 to a TANF amount paid by PCJFS to not exceed \$476,700.00 for the TANF summer youth program.

Mr. Dvorak seconded the motion.

Roll Call:

Ms. Christian-Bennett – Yes

Mr. Dvorak – Yes

Motion approved.

WDB Membership – Re-appointment of Current Members.

Ms. Christian-Bennett moved approve the Slate of Re-appointments for the following current members of the Workforce Development Board whose term expire to a new term of May 15, 2020 to May 14, 2022:

- **Lisa Shank, Lake City Plating, (Business-Ashtabula County)**
- **Eric Davis, Electrical JATC-Warren, (Apprenticeship-Geauga County)**
- **Mike DeLuke, AFSCME Ohio Council 8, (Labor-Portage County)**
- **William Moore, Office of Workforce Development/ODJFS, (Wagner/Peysers-Portage/Ashtabula/Geauga Counties)**
- **Dean Stocker, Kent State University-Ashtabula, (Workforce Higher Education-Portage/Ashtabula/Geauga Counties)**
- **Lynn Hartman, Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities, (OOD-Portage/Ashtabula/Geauga Counties)**

Mr. Dvorak seconded the motion.

Roll Call:

Ms. Christian-Bennett – Yes

Mr. Dvorak – Yes

Motion approved.

Public Comment

None.

Adjourn the Meeting

Mr. Dvorak moved to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Christian-Bennett seconded the motion.

Roll Call: Commissioner Christian-Bennett - Yes

Commissioner Dvorak - Yes

Motion approved.

Meeting Adjourned at 3:43 p.m.

Minutes prepared by Denise Gehring.