

Region 4 Workforce Board Meeting Minutes of March 24 2021 Location: Virtual Meeting-Conference call	NEXT MEETING Wednesday, May 26, 2021 Location: To Be Determined -Virtual Meeting/In-Person
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Directors Present:

Randy Vernon, chair	Elva James
Karen Mellen, vice-chair	Dean McCurdy
Arden Cramer, treasurer	Larry West
Steve Snyder, secretary	
Mike Barnes	
Dennis Carson	
Randall Holmes	

Excused:

Richard Bradshaw
Spencer Buchanan
Deb Close
Alicia Hanawalt
Shannon Polmateer
Amy Wood

Staff and Guests Present: *Roger Feldhaus, CEO; Tara Bradley, CFO; Deb Waymire, COO; and Tina Overley-Hilt, Executive Assistant/Financial Assistant.*

Call to Order and Welcome

The March 24, 2021, WDB meeting was held virtually via conference call and GoToMeeting as a result of health concerns related to COVID-19. Attendees were welcomed and the meeting was called to order by Chair, Randy Vernon, at 8:30 a.m. Roll call was taken. Roger Feldhaus introduced the newest member of the Region 4 Workforce Board, Randall Holmes, Technical Training Manager with SIA. A quorum was present.

Arden Cramer announced his retirement as President and CEO of Logansport Savings Bank and as a WDB member, effective August 31, 2021. Arden and his wife will be moving to Louisville, Kentucky, in order to spend more time with family.

Consent Agenda

A motion was made to approve the consent agenda items as presented.

Motion: Larry West

Second: Steve Snyder

Action: Unanimous approval

New Business

Fiscal

990 Tax Return Review

A copy of the Tecumseh Area Partnership, Inc. Tax Return for the Fiscal Year Ending 6/30/2020 was sent to the Board members prior to the meeting for review. Members were invited to review and provide any questions or comments to Tara Bradley by Friday, March 26, 2021. Following this review period, the Form 990 Tax Return will be submitted to the IRS.

Operations

WorkOne Center Certification

The WorkOne Center Certification is a comprehensive review of the processes and procedures of the WorkOne offices in accordance with DWD policy and WIOA rules and regulations. Board Chair, Randy Vernon, and Board Secretary, Steve Snyder, along with Board staff members, Deb Waymire and Mellisa Leaming, conducted the certification review. The certification team completed its review on February 19, 2021, the results of which were forwarded to DWD for ratification. The team found that all quality and consistency of services criteria were being met. A big “Thank You” goes out to Randy and Steve, for assisting in the certification process.

WIOA Service Provision RFP

WIOA One-Stop Operator and Service Provision Request for Proposal will be released on Friday, March 26, 2021. The RFP will be sent to organizations who would like to be considered for one-stop operator and employment and training service provision for adults, dislocated workers, and youth across our 12-county region. Letters of Intent to Bid are due April 5, 2021, with proposals due April 30, 2021. Members of the Board will be asked to serve on the committee that will review proposals and recommend an awardee. The plan is to present a recommendation for the Board's approval at its May 26th meeting, to begin negotiations during week of June 1st, and to have a contract in place by July 1, 2021.

WIOA Local Plan Modifications

The Region 4 WIOA Local Plan was submitted to DWD on January 29, 2021. DWD reviewed the plan and responded with a request for more information in three areas: 1) clarify the differences between In-School Youth and Out-of-School Youth services, 2) provide strengths and weaknesses of the ISY and OSY services, 3) explain how needs of businesses are determined. The revisions have been completed and the plan will be re-submitted to DWD on March 25, 2021.

USDOL Rural Healthcare Grant Update

Region 4 as the lead entity, and representing eight other Indiana regions, was awarded the \$2.5 million USDOL H-1B Rural Healthcare Grant. The grant is aimed at preparing individuals in rural areas for entry level positions in healthcare service such as CNAs (certified nursing assistants) and QMAs (qualified medication aides). Individuals must be 17 years old and not currently enrolled in secondary education. The grant is for a four-year period ending January 31, 2025.

WIOA Performance Measures

Region 4 is meeting all performance measures at or above the 90% goal level. The higher goal is to attain 100% or higher of each performance metric. The time periods being considered for performance are just now beginning to reflect the impact of COVID-19. We will continue to track the effect of COVID is having on our performance.

Apprenticeship State Expansion (ASE) Grant

Region 4 received a three-year subgrant from DWD's USDOL Apprenticeship Expansion Grant to support the increase of registered apprenticeship programs. The goal is to assist 67 new individuals enter apprenticeship programs. We have reached out to IBEW and Plumbers & Steamfitters to assist in their apprenticeship programs. We are working with the Caterpillar Large Engine Center in sponsoring its CNC Machinist apprenticeship program, as well as other manufacturing companies.

Larry West asked about the availability of CDL-A training. There was more demand for CDL-A training when the training was Workforce Ready Grant eligible. Ivy Tech Lafayette is expanding its CDL-A program. Ivy Tech Kokomo has partnered with a private provider to offer the training. Region 4 has funds available to support CDL training for individuals who meet the eligibility criteria.

Board Administration

DWD Monitoring Exit Conference

Earlier this month the DWD Regulatory Oversight and Compliance team conducted its annual comprehensive operational and fiscal review of processes and procedures of Region 4. The monitoring documentation was submitted electronically and interviews were conducted virtually. Board staff members were impressed with the thoroughness, organization, and professionalism of the DWD monitoring team. At the exit conference on March 12th, DWD team lead, Becky Paul, provided some general observations and feedback that were all very positive. We take all monitoring feedback to heart and use it to improve. Thanks go out to Board staff, and to JobWorks and DWD staff—especially to those working on the frontlines!

Thoughts-Best Uses for Influx of Federal Funding

There are times when funds are available that Region 4 is unable to use effectively or efficiently because they are unexpected, we aren't geared up to use them, or the intended recipients aren't able to benefit from them. If additional funds are received through the State, how best can we use them? The floor was open for discussion.

Some ideas to consider: provide more internship opportunities and assist with internship wages; invest in upscaling incumbent workers' skills; press for more flexible funding not tied to "Flames", but relevant to regional needs; press for eligible training provider accommodations; and support the use of funding for a Work-Life Navigator pilot program.

Mike Barnes: More funds are expected from the American Recovery Plan Act. DWD wants feedback on distribution and purposing of the funds. Indiana's labor participation rate is on a downward trend. How do we encourage more individuals to reenter the workforce?

Steve Snyder: Institute initiatives that support higher wages for employees and incentives for employers who increase the wages they pay. Paying fairer wages solves other problems such as healthcare, transportation, childcare, etc.

Dennis Carson: Continue to increase training opportunities for skills that result in more technically advanced positions, improvements in the acquisition of soft skills, and higher wages.

Randall Holmes: Transportation to and from work continues to be an issue

Karen Mellen: Haynes has an aging workforce. The company wants to honor current employees that have done a good job while encouraging them to upskill to fill gaps. Stressing the need for life-long learning is very important.

Thoughts-Returning to In-Person Meetings

The floor was opened for discussion regarding the return to in-person WDB meetings. Guidelines are being lowered allowing for such gatherings. Virtual meetings are okay, but in-person meetings often seem more effective. We will look for locations that will accommodate both in-person (with mask and social distancing considerations?) and virtual meeting preferences.

WDB Meeting Schedule – PY 21 (July 2021-June 2022)

The meeting schedule for PY 21, July 1, 2021-June 30, 2022, was shared with Board members. The WDB will continue to meet on the 4th Wednesday of every other month. Meeting invitations will be sent to members for adding to their calendars.

Adjournment

A motion was made to adjourn.

Motion: Larry West

Second: Steve Snyder

Action: Unanimous approval

The meeting was adjourned at 9:32 AM.

Respectfully submitted,
Tina Overley-Hilt
Executive Assistant

Stephen Snyder, Secretary
Tecumseh Area Partnership, Inc.
d/b/a Region 4 Workforce Board