

Region 4 Workforce Board Meeting Minutes of January 26, 2022 Location: Virtual - GoToMeeting	NEXT MEETING Wednesday, March 23, 2022 Location: TBD – Lafayette / Virtual
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Directors Present:

Randy Vernon, chair
Karen Mellen, vice-chair
Steve Snyder, secretary
Richard Bradshaw
Spencer Buchanan
Deb Close
Amy Wood

Excused:

Mike Barnes
Dennis Carson
Alicia Hanawalt
Randy Holmes
Elva James
Dean McCurdy
Shannon Polmateer

Staff and Guests Present: *Roger Feldhaus, CEO; Tara Bradley, CFO; Deb Waymire, COO; Mellisa Leaming, Director of Operations; Blake Sempsrott, Financial Coordinator; and Tina Overley-Hilt, Executive Assistant*

Guests Present: *Kimberly Morisette, Huth Thompson, LLP*

Call to Order and Welcome

The January 26, 2022, WDB meeting was held via GoToMeeting conference call. Attendees were welcomed and the meeting was called to order by Chair, Randy Vernon, at 8:30 a.m. Introductions were made. A quorum was not present at the start of the meeting. Approval of the consent agenda was moved to later in the meeting.

New Business

Operations

Status of Multiple “Alphabet Soup” Grants

- **America’s Promise Grant (APG)** ended on December 31, 2021. APG was a four-year grant with a one-year, no-cost extension with a focus on advanced manufacturing. Over 1400 individuals were served with the grant and performance metrics were met and exceeded. We were unable to spend all the funds because of the pandemic and a lack of interest of individuals to engage in training. APG was a great opportunity for Region 4 to engage and build relationship with employers.
- **Rural Healthcare Grant (RHG)** began in February 2021. Region 4 is the lead recipient working with eight other Indiana regions. We are on target to meet the year one goals. Healthcare is quite challenging; the goal of the grant is to help individuals receive training in direct client service occupations.
- **Disaster Recovery Grant (DRG)** – We met the performance metrics set for the region. There is funding remaining that we do not expect to spend.
- **Employment Recovery Grant (ERG)** is to serve dislocated workers. We have struggled to use these funds because we also have WIOA Dislocated Worker funds to use. There is also a lack of individuals who meet the eligibility criteria and are interested in training. We do not see a need for the funds and have offered to return them to DWD for reallocation to other regions.
- **Workforce Ready Grant (WRG)** – Region 4 accepted \$50,000. Staff completed training to learn how to assist individuals who are interested in self-registering for training funded through this grant.
- **Employer Training Grant (ETG)** – Region 4 was awarded \$2 million in Employer Training Grant funds. These funds have been fully obligated for reimbursing employers for the costs of training they are providing. The obligations become accruals subject to reimbursement when training has been successfully completed and the affected employees have been retained for at least six months thereafter.
- **Apprenticeship State Expansion Grant (ASE)** – Performance metrics were met and funds were fully expended.

- **WIOA Performance Support Grant (PSG)** One project funded by this grant will support training of younger adults through Ivy Tech-Kokomo to help with costs for industry recognized certification and internships. Because of the delay in the contract and a lack of internship opportunities, all the funding proposed will not be used. We will submit a request to DWD to also use the funds for renewable energy training, including solar farm construction/solar panel installation. Another project funded by the grant will be used to support a pilot WorkLife Navigator program that will benefit newly hired, recently trained workers achieve a healthy work-life balance insuring higher employment retention rates and greater productivity.

COVID Concerns and Responses

With the surge of the Omicron variant new protocols were set up to keep staff and customers safe and healthy. Starting January 10th, staff in Lafayette and Kokomo WorkOne offices are working in a two-team structure. Each team will alternate between working one week in the office and one week remotely. Several staff have tested positive or have needed to quarantine because of exposure. Lafayette and Kokomo are open by appointment only and will assist others virtually. WorkOne offices in Logansport, Monticello, and Peru are closed and staff will work remotely and assist customers virtually. We will continue with this process through February and reassess as the month progresses. There have been challenges.

Amy Wood, Director of Adult Resource Academy, commented on the affects COVID is having on LARA. LARA continues to offer both on-line and in person classes. English Language Learner classes are in person. There hasn't been any outbreak among class sessions. Considering everything, all is going well in Lafayette and at Adult Ed satellite sites throughout the region. Amy and her team will continue to watch things closely.

DWD Monitoring Review and Highlights

DWD monitored all state programs including WIOA, RESEA, and the Migrant Seasonal Farm Worker Program during this review. It was challenging to gather all documents requested for each program monitored. One point mentioned during the exit interview was a concern that Region 4's WIOA Service Provider and One-Stop Operator RFP (Request For Proposal) required respondents to propose services for both functions rather than allowing respondents to apply for one or other of the functions. The review team prefers that we issue separate RFPs so that respondents can propose each function separately rather than both together as a package. The team wanted to interview participants, case managers in all the offices, and interview a Board member. Randy Vernon, Board Chair, graciously agreed to be interviewed. Randy commented that it was not a bad experience. He spoke to reviewers about his experience on the Board and how fortunate it is to work with the Board staff and to have a working and engaged Board.

Roger added that DWD has a genuine concern of being relevant to us, communicating well, and understanding constraints. Region 4 has a good working partnership with DWD. We do not feel there will be any negative feedback or findings on the monitoring report.

Interesting Developments

- Indiana Readiness Grants – The Greater Kokomo area received \$30 million of Indiana Readiness funds. The Greater Lafayette area also received \$30 million. There will be at least \$60 million (not counting local matching funds) for economic development and talent attraction and retention activities that Region 4 will benefit from over the next several years. Our role in workforce development is to complement and leverage this funding whenever possible to support the Board's mission.
- Greater Kokomo (GKEDA) is about to enter into a purchase agreement with a landowner to develop an industrial park adjacent to the Stellantis (KEP) plant on U.S. 31 N. Kokomo is also looking forward to the start of construction on a new downtown hotel and conference center.
- Congratulations to Steve Snyder on his comments in the Lafayette Journal & Courier article about the paradigm shift in the workforce. The article will be emailed to WDB members.

- Charlie Sparks has announced his retirement as the President and CEO of the Greater Kokomo Economic Development Alliance.
- Delphi Technologies was acquired by Borg Warner. Borg Warner may decide to sell the physical assets, lease back the space it needs, and attract other companies to locate in Kokomo.

Fiscal

PY 20 Audit Report Presentation- Huth Thompson LLC

Kimberly Morisette, Huth Thompson LLP, presented the audit summary report for the year ending 6/30/2021. The summary report, management letter, governance letter, and financial statements were provided to the Board prior to the meeting for review. The audit report is a clean opinion. It was a single audit, also known as a Uniform Guidance audit. This year the major program was the WIOA program. There were no difficulties performing the audit or disagreements with management, no adjusting entries, and no past adjustments. Significant audit areas included compliance and revenue recognition.

There are new auditing standard changes that will apply to next fiscal year.

- There was verbiage change in the Statements on Auditing Standard No 134-140.
- The opinion will be reported in the first paragraph of the audit report.
- In the fiscal year ending 6/30/2023, there is a new lease standard in place. All leases will be shown as an asset and liability on balance sheets.
- There was one Business Advisory Comment: one WIOA monthly bank reconciliation document was found that had not been reviewed by the Executive Director.

There were no findings, deficiencies, or weaknesses to disclose. The audit will be submitted to the Federal Audit Clearinghouse for approval. TAP continues to be classified as a low-risk auditee. Huth Thompson is working on the Form 990 tax return that will conclude its services for the period ending 6/30/2021.

A motion was made to accept the audit report as presented.

Motion: Richard Bradshaw

Second: Karen Mellen

Action: Unanimous approval

Consent Agenda

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

Motion: Karen Mellen

Second: Richard Bradshaw

Action: Unanimous approval

Board Administration

TAP's Presentation to USDOLETA regarding Rural Healthcare Grant

On February 1st Deb Waymire and Mellisa Leaming will be making a PowerPoint presentation during a U.S. Department of Labor Employment and Training Administration's national webinar to other DOL grant recipients. They have been asked to share Region 4's and the eight Indiana Rural Healthcare subgrantees' experience in implementing effective outreach and recruitment strategies. We are one of two grant recipients selected to present because of our performance on the Rural Healthcare Grant and the two previous DOL grants.

The presentation on recruitment successes and challenges was reviewed with the Rural Healthcare Advisory Board at its quarterly meeting and January 25th. It was interesting to hear all the challenges in the healthcare field including, burn-out, work-life balance issues, inability to provide training, and out-migration of nurses. Deb Close provided more insight on the challenges.

Consideration of the HHS funding Opportunity (Rural Public Health Workforce Training Network Program)

Roger Feldhaus shared a funding opportunity that was under consideration by the Board staff that would build on helping rural communities with the need for healthcare workers. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services has an opportunity to support rural healthcare development. It is a \$1.5 million, three-year grant. The purpose is to expand public health capacity by supporting healthcare job development, training, and placement in rural communities. While tempting, there are more reasons for not applying for this grant than applying. A chief reason for not applying is that this is not a DOL grant opportunity. It is unlikely that we would have the standing with HHS that we have enjoyed with DOL. We will continue to look for other opportunities to support healthcare.

National Association of Workforce Board (NAWB) Upcoming Forum 2022

The NAWB Forum will be held in-person April 11-14, 2022. Protocols from both Washington D.C. and the CDC will be followed including requiring individuals be fully vaccinated in order to enter indoor facilities. Total cost to attend the sessions, hotel and airfare will be approximately \$2,500 per person. We will keep Board members posted.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at

Motion: Karen Mellen

Second: Deb Close

Action: Unanimous approval by all members present

Respectfully submitted,
Tina Overley-Hilt
Executive Assistant

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