

**Workforce Development Board Executive Committee
Meeting Notes
June 12, 2020**

CALL TO ORDER: Workforce Development Board Chair, Randall Hazelbaker, called the virtual meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

Randall Hazelbaker welcomed everyone and stated that a Roll Call vote will be taken for items on the agenda that require Board approval. Kathy Olsen will read the names of each Executive Committee member for each vote.

INTRODUCTIONS: Kathy Olsen introduced the individuals who were connected to the virtual meeting.

WDB Executive Committee Members Present:

Lisa Godfrey (PS) Randall Hazelbaker (PS) Kris Jenkins (Educ)

WDB Executive Committee Members Absent

Morris Applebey (Labor) Dave Maurer (PS) Frank Tecumseh (PS)

Oher WDB Members Present

Dan Dunn (PS) John Fiore (MRS) Elizabeth Van Dussen (PS)

Michigan Works! / Upjohn Institute Staff Present:

Jakki Bungart- Bibb Ashley Iovieno Amy Meyers
Ben Damerow Jessica Meskil Kathy Olsen

Michigan Works! Services / Program Staff Present:

Jennifer Klempnow (PATH/WEUI)

Guests Present:

Caller 01 Bud Norman (Branch Don Reid (the Daily
John Curran (for Senator County) Reporter)
McCann)

TRANSPARENCY & INTEGRITY OF WDB DECISIONS

Kathy Olsen asked members present if there were any items on the agenda requiring a vote for which a conflict of interest or a potential conflict of interest exists; and if so, the conflict should be declared at this time. There were none.

Due to the lack of a quorum of Executive Committee members, no action was taken. These notes are for informational purposes only.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES - *Exhibit A*

No action was taken.

CITIZENS' TIME

No comments.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Disability Awareness Resource Team (DART)

Kathy Olsen reported the Disability Awareness Resource Team (DART) committee met on June 2, 2020. This being the first meeting since COVID and the implementation of the Stay-at-Home order, there was a modified agenda. Members provided updates on service and operational changes due to COVID including effectiveness of maintaining service delivery, challenges encountered, and developing and beginning implementation of “return-to-work” protocols. All members who participated in the meeting noted experiencing challenges during this time and the success of service delivery varied among organizations. Currently DART member organizations are continuing to engage customers and work together to support individuals with disabilities. In-person services are beginning to be provided and expected to expand over the coming weeks.

Information and resources pertaining to services and supports for individuals with disabilities were also shared, including information on clear masks to accommodate customers who rely on lip-reading, considerations/accommodations for virtual meetings, updates on unemployment benefits and recommended actions to best resolve concerns.

Request for Proposals (RFPs)

Employment Services / One Stop Operator (ES/OS) RFP

Kris Jenkins reported a Request for Proposal (RFP) was posted in April for a provider of Employment Services as well as a One-Stop Operator. In response to the solicitation, one response was received from KRESA/YOU. The Michigan Works! Southwest Workforce Development Board’s RFP Evaluation Committee met on May 14 for the purpose of evaluating the proposal received. Based on the submitted risk assessment, technical evaluation, internal staff review, and the Workforce Development Board’s RFP Evaluation Committee’s review, the Committee recommended that subaward agreement negotiations proceed based on the proposal submitted by KRESA/YOU to serve as the provider for Wagner-Peyser Employment Services, and Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) Services, as well as the One-Stop Operator in the Michigan Works! Southwest area beginning July 1, 2020.

TITLE II APPLICATIONS (Adult Education)

Kris Jenkins reported in alignment with the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), which promotes coordination between the local workforce development boards and adult education providers, local boards are required to review the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA) applications to ensure alignment with the local workforce plan. The local board is not responsible for scoring or approving the applications, but rather reviewing the applications to determine whether the application is consistent with the local workforce plan. On June 8, 2020, members of the WDB review committee met to review the applications. Those identified as highly aligned engaged with MWSW and the work of the local workforce development system. They included:

- Instructional applications, Battle Creek Public Schools, Sturgis Public Schools and Kalamazoo Public Schools
- Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education (IELCE): Kalamazoo Public Schools and Sturgis Public Schools
- Institutional: Battle Creek Public Schools and Kalamazoo Public Schools

Applications that were determined to have moderate alignment with the local workforce development plan and present many opportunities to collaborate in the future included:

- Instructional: Centreville Public Schools and Three Rivers Public Schools
- Institutional: Centreville Public Schools

One application was determined to have little alignment:

- Institutional: Three Rivers Public Schools

The applications that were determined to have little or moderate alignment presented opportunities for enhanced relationships with the WDB and/or the CEAC, as well as the opportunity to use local labor market information (LMI) to assist in guiding services.

NEW BUSINESS

WDB Plans – One Stop Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) and One Stop Infrastructure Funding Agreements (IFAs) - Exhibits B1-B3

Amy Meyers reported that under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), the development and execution of Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) (*Exhibit B1*) with One-Stop partners is required. Also, in accordance with the WIOA, the MOUs must include an Infrastructure Funding Agreement (IFA) (*Exhibit B2*), which details how infrastructure costs for the One-Stop delivery system will be funded in the Michigan Works! Southwest area. She reported the MOU portion of the documents assists all local partners with effective coordination and collaboration, and each partner agrees to a partnership to best serve job seekers and employers in the communities served in the Michigan Works! Southwest area. The required partner list of those who are identified on the MOU is included on the overview that was included in the agenda packet (*Exhibit B1*). The infrastructure funding agreement outlines the infrastructure costs of all the Michigan Works! Southwest One Stop Centers, which are defined as non-personnel costs that are necessary for the general operation of the One-Stop center. The financial contribution of each partner was determined by a methodology set forth by the state, as outlined in the IFA document. (*Exhibit B2*). These MOUs and IFAs have been distributed to all of the Michigan Works! Southwest local partners for their review. There will be one combined MOU for the State partners which include Veterans Services, the Unemployment Insurance Agency (UIA), Michigan Rehabilitation Services (MRS) and the Bureau of Services for Blind Persons (BSBP). Staff anticipates having that document available for review at the July WDB Executive Committee meeting.

No action was taken.

Upjohn Institute / County of Kalamazoo Contract Mod - Exhibit C

Amy Meyers reported the county contract or “workforce development agreement” is renewed every two years with an annual modification done to reflect the actual budget for the year prior and to update the planned budget for the coming year. This is a modification year. The purpose of the Agreement is for the county to establish a relationship with the W.E. Upjohn Institute for

Employment Research for the planning, administration, Workforce Development Board staffing, and program and fiscal management of the four-county workforce development system (Michigan Works! Southwest) and to define the terms and conditions of this undertaking. As outlined in the plan document (*Exhibit C*), the funding allocation budget currently planned for the year beginning July 1, 2020 is estimated at \$6,909,836. In addition, a budget modification for the year that began on July 1, 2019 and is ending June 30, 2020 has been updated to reflect an actual budget of \$11,153,128. The estimated budget for the upcoming year is based on current information and will be updated at the end of the year to reflect actuals.

No action was taken.

WDB Policies

WDB Policy 36 – Stipend Payments - *Exhibit D*

Kathy Olsen reported a stipend is a payment intended to defray expenses and support an individual while participating in a training or learning experience that enhances the choices available to eligible participants and encourage progression through a career pathway and entry into unsubsidized employment that leads to self-sufficiency. Consistent with WIOA law, the guidelines in this policy will be used when stipend payments are being considered by the subrecipient/service provider and the Michigan Works! Southwest Agency staff. The policy states that training stipends, as allowable by fund source, may be used for eligible participants who are actively participating in a training, learning experience or exploration activity. Core components of the policy include allowable activities, funding requirements, payment requirements, participation requirements and procedure requirements. Ms. Olsen noted that if a subrecipient/service provider wishes to provide stipends, they are required to submit and receive prior approval of their written stipend payment procedures, prior to issuing any payment.

No action was taken.

Career Educational Advisory Council (CEAC) Appointment - *Exhibit E*

Kathy Olsen requested Board consideration and approval to appoint Sam Morseau, Director of Education, Pokagon Band of Potawatomi, representing tribal education to the Career Educational Advisory Council (CEAC) for Michigan Works! Southwest for a term that begins July 1, 2020 and ends June 30, 2022.

No action was taken.

STAFF REPORTS

Business Services / Talent Fund / LMI – *Exhibit F*

Ashley Iovieno reported on business services operations that included updates pertaining to employer outreach, the Work Share program and layoffs.

Employer Outreach – Ms. Iovieno reported the Business Services team has been very busy assisting employers through this difficult time. In conjunction with the team at the Upjohn Institute, business services put together a survey titled the ‘Southwest Michigan Reopening and Recovery Plan’. The focus of this survey was to gather information as to how employers are working through safety measures for either reopening or continued work, if they are offering any incentives for individuals to return to work, and the knowledge level of businesses regarding the Work Share program. The survey was also an opportunity to assess employers’ hiring needs, as

well as needs related to Work Share and UI assistance. The survey was conducted over a week's time and was sent to 665 employers; 124 responses were received. Through this survey, 21 companies indicated they needed assistance with hiring needs, 10 companies requested assistance with Work Share, and 15 companies asked for UI assistance. The Business Services Team sent the survey results to all companies on the list, even if they did not participate, in order to share information and show what can be provided with employer participation.

Work Share - A couple of weeks ago, the Business Services team went through a training with the Michigan's Unemployment Insurance Agency (UIA) so that staff are better equipped to assist employers with Work Share. Since the training, Business Services staff have been continually answering questions from employers and helping to educate them on the Work Share program. Currently, staff are working closely with approximately 20 employers who have Work Share questions.

Layoffs - Layoffs have slowed down as many employers are now starting to call employees back to work; however, with production and workflow not fully back to what it was prior to COVID, many individuals remain on unemployment. As mentioned at previous meetings, staff have prioritized the permanent layoffs in the Michigan Works! Southwest area where approximately 500 individuals are affected by those closures. Staff are working closely with these companies and offering worker orientation sessions virtually in order to further assist the individuals affected. Staff will continue to monitor the situation and offer assistance where it is needed.

Labor Market Information - The website link to the labor market reports generated from Burning Glass Analytics and Real Time Jobs Data (*Exhibit F*). that identified top detailed occupations, skills greatest in demand, and employers with the most job openings in Prosperity Region 8, Michigan Works! Southwest, and each of the four counties in the MW! Southwest Area for the period April 1, 2020 through May 31, 2020 was included in the agenda packet notice

Michigan Works! Southwest Operational Update

Jakki Bungart-Bibb reported Michigan Works! Southwest (MW!SW) staff began working from home and providing services to customers virtually in March and staff continue working from home to provide those services virtually. While working from home, MW!SW teams have spent time transitioning and changing the framework for operations. Staff have been creating virtual orientations, virtual workshops, transforming documents to include digital signatures so that program intakes could continue, and supportive services could still be provided.

Although all programs and services have continued, the greatest need during this time has been related to unemployment. The vast majority of calls and requests have been individuals attempting to resolve unemployment issues. Many of the MW!SW staff have been partially repurposed, meaning they have been trained to assist in answering unemployment questions and have dedicated time to resolving unemployment issues. Most recently, thousands of unemployment benefits were suddenly stopped or 'flagged' for possible fraudulent activity. MW!SW staff received additional training to assist in verifying identity in order to assist in resolving those issues as well. Once individuals heard that Michigan Works! could resolve those issues, news traveled fast and social media has played a huge role on the increased call volume. There are several unemployment 'help' groups on social media. These groups were created by individuals seeking answers from others who were also struggling with the unemployment system. She noted that one of the groups has around 40,000 members. The group members are

sharing Michigan Works! phone numbers on the group pages and the Michigan Works! phone systems are literally crashing all over the state. Although there has been a huge increase in phone calls to the MW!SW area, so far, the MW!SW system has been able to handle the call volume.

Since the start of the project to assist with UI, MW!SW staff have fielded over 6,000 calls; logged 680 hours of staff time to the project; have reviewed over 3,500 customer claim issues, and were able to resolve over 2,500 of those; and they have resolved 100 ID verifications. Every one of those ‘numbers’ represent an individual who has been waiting without income for weeks or even months and who was absolutely desperate to just talk to a person, the MW!SW staff are able to, among other things, unlock accounts which allows the individual to login, certify and receive their benefits.

Ms. Bibb extended a huge thank you to the entire MW!SW team for their dedication to this project. She also expressed thanks to the staff for their ability and willingness to continue to adjust to the ever-changing environment and noted that it most certainly is making a huge difference in the lives of the customers.

Ms. Bibb further reported that the State of Michigan is opening back up with a phased approach - certain regions and industries have opened or are planning to open soon and restrictions are slowly being lifted. Locally, staff are planning and preparing to return to offices and begin in-person appointments. Although a confirmed date has not been set, the planning team has developed a safe return to work plan. The goal of this plan is not only to address all required elements as mandated by the Governor’s Executive Order, but also to develop a plan that allows staff to feel confident returning to a safe and healthy workplace.

A system-wide staff meeting was held on June 3, 2020 to present the plan to all staff and partners, and to gather feedback and answer questions. As presented in the staff meeting, the plan is a living document, subject to change based on circumstance and state and local directives. Similar to the statewide safe return plan, the local plan is designed with a phased approach. Flexibility will be key as the transition may take place quickly through the phases or there may be a need to take steps backwards. MW!SW staff are working with our state partners so that there is a coordinated approach with the return to work and navigating through the different phases. It will be very important for the state partners to be in the buildings with MW!SW staff, working together to serve the customers - specifically the Unemployment Insurance partners - as we know, the unemployment customers will be anxiously waiting to speak with them. Staff anticipates a need for security as we return to work in the buildings and that is included as part of the safe return to work plan.

Director’s Report – Exhibit G

Ben Damerow referred attendees to the Director’s Report dated June 12, 2020 (*Exhibit G*) that was emailed with the updated agenda packet prior to the meeting.

HEROES Act - He reported on May 15, 2020, the House passed the \$3 trillion HEROES Act 208-199. The Act includes workforce development, worker compensation and work protection priorities administered by the Department of Labor. To date, the Act has not been taken up in the Senate. The legislation focuses on maintaining core elements of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and Career Technical Education (CTE) by focusing on the most vulnerable populations and ensuring supports will be provided to those most affected. The Act

increases flexibility so more funding can be used for training, supportive services and career services. The legislation proposes \$2 billion in workforce funding with individual amounts that include:

- \$597 million State Dislocated Worker Grants
- \$518 million Youth Workforce Investment Activities
- \$485 million Adult Education and Training Activities
- \$400 million Dislocated Workers Assistance National Reserve
- \$25 million for Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker Programs

Mr. Damerow reported that he will be participating in a couple of national meetings next week on this topic.

Unemployment Insurance Fraud - An international crime ring exploiting the COVID-19 crisis has been committing largescale fraud operations against state unemployment programs. The Michigan Unemployment Insurance Agency (UIA) with the help from federal and state enforcement has taken extra precautions to protect individuals' identities. On June 5, 2020, the Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity announced they are investigating over 340,000 claims that have received some payments. That equates to 20% of all claims paid by the state. The state has asked for more information to verify the identity of the 340,000 filers. As reported in the MW!SW Operational report, MW!SW staff are assisting with resolving these issues. Mr. Damerow extended a thank you to the MW!SW staff who have been assisting to resolve UI issues for customers.

Addressing Systemic Racism - In response to the local, state and national protests addressing systemic racism, Michigan Works! Southwest published the following message on the MW!SW website and social media accounts:

“Michigan Works! Southwest stands in solidarity with communities of color in the fight against systemic racism and injustice. Michigan Works! Southwest strives to promote equitable access to opportunities and commits to continued ant-racism efforts through training and action.”

The W.E. Upjohn Institute President, Mike Horrigan, published the following letter about addressing systemic racism.

“In the aftermath of the killing of George Floyd in Minneapolis on May 25th—that fateful span of 8 minutes and 46 seconds that is so painful to watch or accept—the emotions being felt across this country are hard to describe in words. But it is words we need, and with the lack of an empathetic conversation at the highest levels of our government, it is left to everyone in our community—and in each community across the country—to start, renew and continue the dialog around how racism affects us all, and most especially, African Americans. I join the chorus of others who condemn all violence and focus on the underlying problems, namely systemic racism. As a white man, I know I need to continue to learn from others and seek opportunities to better understand and be accountable to people of color. It is very important to me to be open to the experiences of others with a sense of true humility and commitment.

In addition to words, it is essential that we take specific and concrete actions to fundamentally change a system that let such an outrage happen. The Upjohn Institute since its founding in 1932 has existed to help people overcome barriers that prevent them from getting and keeping good jobs. Those barriers include endemic racism and its devastating effects in schools, workplaces, the criminal justice system and too many other parts of life. We will continue to research the impacts of policies meant to help all workers and their families; to propose ideas to address economic hardship and resolve racial inequities; and to provide skills training, job search assistance and other services to lift people up in our own and other communities.

And we must start within our own house. Over the past two years we have begun to mandate equity and inclusion trainings for our employees. We are developing educational approaches to address issues of racism, equity, and inclusion to sustain an environment where *all* our employees feel valued and supported. Identifying and acknowledging the consequences of both intended and unintended racism are small but important steps. We recognize the vital importance of addressing and correcting historical wrongs and are working to ensure the representation of people of color at every level within our Institute.

Since the day I arrived in Kalamazoo just over one year ago, I have been impressed with the dedication and passion that so many individuals and groups bring to improving the lives of our residents. The Upjohn Institute is proud to stand alongside our many local and state partners to help meet this challenge. While there is much, much more to be done, I have an enduring faith and optimism that we can, we must, and we will succeed.”

Mike Horrigan
President

Mr. Damerow reported this has been a difficult time for staff. He noted that fifteen MW!SW leadership staff have been participating in equity training through a Kellogg Foundation grant. There are plans to provide equity training to all employees at the MW!SW Service Centers and at the Upjohn Institute. He also noted how important it is to listen more and be more accountable in order to address systemic racism.

OLD BUSINESS

None.

CITIZENS' TIME

None.

MEMBERS' TIME

None.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

The next WDB Executive Committee meeting will be a virtual meeting and is scheduled for July 10, 2020 at 9:00 a.m.

The next meeting of the full WDB is scheduled for Friday, September 11, 2020. A decision regarding meeting in-person at Glen Oaks Community College, or meeting virtually, will be based on the COVID restrictions in place at that time.

The next Monitoring and Evaluation Committee meeting will be a virtual meeting and is scheduled for Tuesday, June 23, 2020 from 8:00-9:30 a.m.

The next Disability Awareness Resource Team (DART) Committee is scheduled for Tuesday, September 11, 2020 from 2:00-4:00 p.m. A decision regarding meeting in-person at the Upjohn Institute, or meeting virtually, will be based on the COVID restrictions in place at that time.

The next Career Educational Advisory Council (CEAC) meeting is scheduled for Monday, September 21, 2020 from 1:00-3:00 p.m. A decision regarding meeting in-person at the Kalamazoo RESA, or meeting virtually, will be based on the COVID restrictions in place at that time.

Dates for the next Veterans Committee meetings are to be determined.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no other reports or business for the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 9:38 a.m.

Kathy Olsen

Date

Randall Hazelbaker

Date