

**Workforce Development Board
Executive Committee Meeting Minutes
August 19, 2021**

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

Kathy Olsen introduced attendees. Randall Hazelbaker was participating from Branch County Board of Commissioners, Jared Hoffmaster was participating from St. Joseph County Board of Commissioners, and Mike Quinn was participating from Kalamazoo County Board of Commissioners.

WDB Members Present:

Dan Dunn (PS)*	Dave Maurer (PS)*	Ken Willcutt (Labor)
Lisa Godfrey (PS)*	Jose Orozco, Jr. (CBO)	* Exec Committee
Randall Hazelbaker (PS)*	Mike Quinn (PS)	
Jared Hoffmaster (PS)	Frank Tecumseh (PS)*	

WDB Executive Committee Members Absent

Kris Jenkins (Educ)*

Michigan Works! / Upjohn Institute Staff Present:

Jakki Bungart-Bibb	Aseel Hussein	Amy Meyers
Ben Damerow	Ashley Iovieno	Kathy Olsen

Michigan Works! Services / Program Staff Present:

Paige Daniels (YOU/KRESA)	Amanda Sutherland (YOU/KRESA)
Dawn DeLuca (YOU/KRESA)	Mark Waurio (PATH/WEUI)

Guests Present:

Don Reid (Daily Reporter)

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.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES (Exhibit A)

Motion made by Lisa Godfrey and supported by Dan Dunn to approve the WDB Executive Committee meeting minutes of July 15, 2021.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

AYES: Dan Dunn, Lisa Godfrey, Randall Hazelbaker, Jared Hoffmaster, Dave Maurer, Jose Orozco, Mike Quinn, Ken Willcutt.

NAYS: None. ABSTENTIONS: None. MOTION CARRIED.

CITIZENS' TIME

None.

COMMITTEE REPORTS.

None.

NEW BUSINESS

WDB Plans

Amy Meyers requested Board consideration and approval for two workforce development plans for Michigan Works! Southwest.

PY2021 High Concentrations of WIOA Eligible Youth (Exhibit B1)

Amy Meyers reported Michigan Works! Southwest was allocated \$14,218 which is the same allocation received last year. These funds are to provide additional assistance to local areas that have high concentrations of Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) eligible youth (ages 14-24). The WIOA eligibility is outlined on the plan document as well as services to be provided with this funding (Exhibit B1). These services include preparing individuals for postsecondary education and employment. Both the services and the eligibility align with the WIOA Youth services and eligibility that were reviewed at last month's meeting.

PY2021-22 Barrier Removal Employment Success (BRES) (Exhibit B2)

Amy Meyers reported Michigan Works! Southwest received an allocation of just over \$236,000 to support the employment and reemployment of at-risk individuals and the removal of barriers to employment. This is the first time this funding has been awarded. This funding may be used to serve at-risk populations including, but not limited to, individuals served through the Healthy Michigan Plan (HMP), the Clean Slate Pilot (CSP) Program, the Employer Resource Network® (ERN®), and Michigan Reconnect, as well as serving the Asset Limited Income Constrained Employed (ALICE) population. Other funding guidelines were outlined on the plan document included in the agenda packet (Exhibit B2). They include the ability to support activities that are not eligible or feasible under another funding source. Funding allowability also includes a comprehensive list of support service options which were also listed on the plan document.

Motion made by Dan Dunn and supported by Jose Orozco to approve the PY2021 High Concentrations of WIOA Eligible Youth and the PY2021-22 Barrier Removal Employment Success (BRES) Plans.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

AYES: Dan Dunn, Lisa Godfrey, Randall Hazelbaker, Jared Hoffmaster, Dave Maurer, Jose Orozco, Mike Quinn, Ken Willcutt.

NAYS: None. ABSTENTIONS: None. MOTION CARRIED.

WDB Appointment (Exhibit C)

Kathy Olsen requested Board consideration and approval of the appointment of Brian O'Donnell, Business Manager for the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) Local 131, representing the labor sector and apprenticeship training in Kalamazoo County, for the balance of a two-year term vacated by Morris Applebey, that began on October 1, 2020 and which ends on September 30, 2022 and to appoint Fritz Tull, Business Development Manager for IBEW Local 131, as his alternate for the same time period.

Motion made by Dan Dunn and supported by Ken Willcutt to approve the appointment of Brian O'Donnell, Business Manager for the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) Local 131, representing the labor sector and apprenticeship training in Kalamazoo County, for the balance of a two-year term vacated by Morris Applebey, that began on October 1, 2020 and which ends on

September 30, 2022 and to appoint Fritz Tull, Business Development Manager for IBEW Local 131, as his alternate for the same time period.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

AYES: Dan Dunn, Lisa Godfrey, Randall Hazelbaker, Jared Hoffmaster, Dave Maurer, Jose Orozco, Mike Quinn, Ken Willcutt.

NAYS: None. ABSTENTIONS: None. MOTION CARRIED.

STAFF REPORTS

Business Services Activities

Ashley Iovieno reported on business services operations that included the Career Right Here workshop, Going PRO Talent Fund (GPTF) and Business Services Project Proposals.

Career Right Here Workshop - Ms. Iovieno reported she was not in attendance at the July WDB meeting because she was attending a 3-day workshop called Career Right Here with area employers that included Bronson and Stryker. The process introduced in the workshop breaks down and explores issues that affect the way employers hire, from Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion to what the hiring process looks like including job descriptions. It seeks to identify root causes and how we as a community can begin to address them. This journey involves engaging with partners from the community to get feedback on issues they hear or see to gain a better understanding on how to solve them. The initiative revolves around helping to serve the historically excluded job seekers who could be excellent employees but never get the chance. It was a long but exciting three days with very open conversations around what struggles exist. A follow-up meeting where participants were asked to join committees to help further the work being done was held. She reported that she has joined the initiatives group and will provide updates as available.

Going PRO Talent Fund (GPTF) – Ms. Iovieno announced that plans are underway for Going PRO Talent Fund FY22. Over the last few weeks, staff have been receiving updated material from the State regarding the program. State partners are cautiously optimistic that there will be a budget by mid-September. In the meantime, staff are preparing employers to apply. Two virtual information sessions are scheduled for August 26 and 27, 2021. Following those events, staff will conduct additional outreach as needed. The MW! Southwest Business Services Team will have a busy fall working to close out FY21 awards and guiding employers through applying for FY22.

Project Proposals - One area of work that isn't reported on often due to confidentiality reasons is the topic of Business Services Project Proposals. Ms. Iovieno explained a Project Proposal is when a company is either looking to locate in the MW! Southwest area or they are already located here and looking to expand. Economic Development partners typically lead and organize these efforts. When a company goes through this process, the information is highly confidential to help combat competition and keep incentives in play. MW! Southwest Business Services helps by submitting workforce development information that often results in providing a proposal of services that can be offered to the Economic Development partner. The proposal of services is combined with an overall package that is presented to the company. During the past year, there have been many companies looking to expand or move to the area, and in the last several weeks many deals for which staff have written proposals have come to fruition garnering media attention. The first one Ms. Iovieno reported on is a company expansion in Sturgis that will support two RV companies, adding approximately 450 jobs over the next few years. The second is a project just announced in Battle Creek regarding a company that builds snowplow and ice control equipment, bringing 91 jobs to Battle Creek over the next couple of years. Links to both articles were provided in the virtual meeting chat box. The links to the articles are: "[Grants to support RV manufacturers in Sturgis](#)" and "[New Snowplow Factory could Bring 91 Jobs to Battle Creek](#)". The links were also emailed to members following the meeting. Ms. Iovieno reported efforts such as those reported on at today's meeting are ongoing projects with economic development partners; however, this work is happening in the background and not often discussed.

Labor Market Information (*Exhibit D*)

Michigan's Labor Market News – Ms. Bibb reported the [August issue of Michigan's Labor Market News](#) provides employment data through June. The featured article in this publication explores the regional employment projections through 2028. This edition also includes an article called “Ask the Economist” which discusses how inflation is measured and looks at inflation trends. Also, in this edition, the national unemployment rate was reported to be at 5.9%, the Michigan unemployment rate was at 5%, and the four counties in the MW! Southwest area ranged from 5.1 – 6.8%. These percentages were reported to be very similar to the previous month for the MW! Southwest area. The July updates for state and national numbers were released late yesterday afternoon showing Michigan at 4.8% and the national rate to be at 5.4%. The link to the August edition was sent to attendees following the meeting.

Job Demand Dashboard - Ms. Bibb reported the [Job Demand Dashboard for Region 8](#) continues to show many online job postings with a very slight decrease in postings from the previous month. The top occupations showing up on the list are Registered Nurses (RNs), retail sales workers, frontline supervisors of retail sales workers, and truck drivers. Following the meeting, the link to the Job Demand Dashboard was sent via email to attendees.

Burning Glass Analytics and Real Time Jobs Data (*Exhibit D*) - In addition to the verbal report, the website link to the labor market reports generated from Burning Glass Analytics and Real Time Jobs Data (*Exhibit D*) 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 Michigan Works! Southwest area for the period June 1 through July 31, 2021 was included in the agenda packet notice.

Operations Update

Jakki Bungart-Bibb reported that in Michigan, registering for work at a Michigan Works! service center has historically been a required component of the unemployment process. That part of the unemployment process brought thousands of people into the Service Centers every month, giving staff the opportunity to engage with the claimants and get them connected to employment and training opportunities quickly. It also allowed staff to assist employers with accessing that talent pool. The register for work requirement was waived during the pandemic. Since then, there have been conversations about changing the requirement and even permanently removing the requirement. Last month, the Governor signed Senate Bill 501 to strengthen Michigan manufacturing. This bill included the register for work requirement as part of the unemployment process. The Michigan Works! directors, the Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity (LEO), and the Unemployment Insurance Agency (UIA) have been meeting regularly and are working together to confirm the process flow and to set a date for implementation for that requirement. Conversations will continue and staff will keep Board members posted on the progress.

Service Center Update – As mentioned last month, Ms. Bibb reported MW! Southwest Service Centers are fully open to the public, including walk-ins during the standard operating hours in all four centers. Staff continue to provide virtual services as needed and when it makes sense. Due to the increase in COVID-19 cases and the Delta variant, a mask requirement for staff was recently implemented. The centers remain open to the public with COVID-19 safety precautions in place. She noted that the customer traffic at the centers is not what it was pre-pandemic. Three out of four centers in the MW! Southwest service area are seeing low numbers and staff have been marketing on social media in hopes of increasing the traffic. Staff have also been participating in community events and brainstorming ways to engage job seekers and get the word out about services. The Kalamazoo Service Center has the most traffic, most likely due to having UIA staff on site. However, that has also brought some angry and frustrated customers into the center. In those situations, staff have taken immediate and appropriate action and for those reasons, and as a safety precaution, the presence of security guards continues at the Kalamazoo Service Center.

Expungement Clinic – Ms. Bibb reported the City of Kalamazoo, Kalamazoo Defender, and Michigan Works! Southwest are partnering to offer an expungement clinic. It is scheduled for tomorrow, August 20,

2021 from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. in Bronson Park in Kalamazoo. To kick off the event, several elected officials will be speaking. They include Representative Julie Rogers, Senator Sean McCann, Representative Christine Morse, Attorney General Dana Nessel, and Kalamazoo Mayor David Anderson. Representatives from the Kalamazoo Defender are also speaking along with MW! Southwest Director, Ben Damerow. The Foundation for Excellence will fund the expungement costs for the City of Kalamazoo residents, the Kalamazoo Defender will cover other expenses related to qualifying for expungement, and Michigan Works! Southwest has a clean slate team on board to assist with the process and to assist with any employment needs after the process. She reported that with so many community partners and wrap-around supports, staff expect this to be an amazing event. The event and these services will directly impact the people in our communities and their families by giving them a clean slate and easing the path to employment opportunities. She gave a special shout out to the MW! Southwest Special Initiatives Manager, Jennifer Klemptow, and her team and noted that they have worked hard to help make this event a successful one. She also expressed thanks to the elected officials who continue to be amazing partners and advocates for the communities.

Board member Jose Orozco thanked Ms. Bibb for the report on the Expungement Clinic and reported that he participated in a similar event in the Grand Rapids area. He noted that a line of approximately 100 individuals formed even before the event opened. More than 10 lawyers were available to assist at the event. He shared feedback that included a suggestion not to videotape and photograph attendees. He also suggested having language supports available at the event and to please let him know if his assistance is needed.

Director's Report (Exhibit E)

Ben Damerow added to the Business Services report given by Ashley Iovieno. He reported that when a request comes in for a business services proposal, staff have 24 to 48 hours to respond, and must make the gathering of information for the proposal a priority. He expressed appreciation to Ms. Iovieno and her staff for the team's flexibility and their ability to meet our economic development partners' needs.

He then reported on the Director's Report (Exhibit E) that was emailed to members prior to the meeting.

Federal Updates - Last week, the Senate passed a \$1.2 trillion infrastructure package with a bipartisan vote. The package includes an additional \$580 billion to be spent on roads, bridges, airports, ports, broadband, electric vehicle charging, and water projects over the next 5 years.

- Governor Whitmer and MDOT estimate this legislation would bring an additional \$7.26 billion to Michigan for traditional infrastructure projects.
- There is very little direct workforce development funding in the legislation.
 - There is dedicated funding through the Department of Energy related to clean energy apprenticeships/home energy auditors.
 - There are several connected transportation workforce studies mentioned throughout the bill.

House Speaker Nancy Pelosi is not planning to vote on the infrastructure deal until the Senate passes a broader budget reconciliation package, making the next steps and timeline more indefinite.

- Following passage of the infrastructure package, the Senate passed a \$3.5 trillion budget resolution in a strictly partisan vote (50-49).
 - This sets out the instructions for each committee, including the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions (HELP) Committee, to draft legislation funding several priorities including workforce development and job training.
- The basis for this package is President Biden's American Jobs and Families Plans which proposed a \$100 billion investment in workforce development over the next 10 years.
 - Senate Stabenow joined 12 of her Senate Democrat colleagues in support of this workforce investment in a letter to Senate leadership.
- The Senate Committees will need to release their legislative proposals by September 15, 2021 before full Senate consideration.

- The House is coming back into session during the week of August 23, 2021 to consider the budget resolution which would then start its committee drafting process.

PATH Reengagement - Due to COVID-19, the State of Michigan allowed flexibility with participation in the Partnership.Accountability.Training.Hope. (PATH) Program over the past year and a half. Beginning September 1, 2021, full participation with PATH will again be mandatory. Individuals receiving cash assistance will be required to participate for up to 40 hours a week in work search activities. The Department of Health and Human Services, the Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity and Michigan Works! continue to meet on a regular basis to analyze barriers that are limiting individuals from reemployment opportunities and participating in the program. Mr. Damerow recognized Sarah Pohl, Quality & Performance Monitor for Michigan Works! Southwest, for her contributions to a subcommittee at the State level that developed materials and worked on policies for PATH reengagement. She has done a wonderful job and her contributions to the PATH reengagement process are greatly appreciated. He also noted that Ms. Pohl was acknowledged at the Statewide Director’s Council meeting last week.

Mr. Damerow also reported of receiving an invitation late yesterday for a meeting with the Governor’s office to discuss the State’s priorities for the American Rescue Plan funding. The confidential briefing will take place this afternoon and when allowed, information will be shared.

One member noted that he attended a meeting in Battle Creek for business leaders to provide feedback on the State’s priorities for the American Rescue Plan; however, over an hour of the meeting was listening to presentations from the State and not a lot of time was devoted to gathering feedback from the attendees. Business leaders did let the State know that getting a workforce was a top priority that industries are struggling with and moving as much funding as possible to Career Technical Education (CTE) was another area of focus that is important to business. Mr. Damerow thanked Dave Maurer for his attendance and participation at meetings such as the business roundtable in Battle Creek.

Mr. Damerow reported that he too participated with a small group of Michigan Works! directors to provide feedback on the State’s initial recommendations. He reported that there are several policy items that could influence workforce participation.

Mr. Damerow reported Ryan Hunt began last Monday as the new CEO for the Michigan Works! Association. Mr. Hunt comes from the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC). He is looking forward to Mr. Hunt’s leadership at the Association.

Lastly, Mr. Damerow reported the MW! Southwest Board meetings are moving back to being held virtually. Mask requirements have been reinstated and it was noted the masks do make it difficult to communicate, especially when giving lengthy reports. The City of Kalamazoo also extended their state of emergency through the end of this year and recommended that boards and committees move to virtual meetings. Staff will continue to assess the situation and follow CDC guidelines.

OLD BUSINESS

None.

MEMBERS’ TIME

Dave Maurer reported the Steering Committee for the Career Technical Education (CTE) curriculum in Kalamazoo has held a couple of meetings. Isaac Carter, from Chicago Public Schools, has been hired as the principal for the Kalamazoo area CTE facility. Mr. Carter already has an extensive working relationship with the Kalamazoo Public Schools Superintendent, and this will be very helpful.

CITIZENS’ TIME

None.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

Frank Tecumseh reminded members of upcoming meetings and noted members will be notified of the location and /or virtual link.

- The next meeting of the full WDB is scheduled for Thursday, September 16, 2021 from 9:00 – 10:30 a.m. This meeting will be held virtually via Zoom.
- The next WDB Executive Committee meeting is scheduled for Thursday, October 21, 2021 from 9:00 – 10:30 a.m.

Other upcoming committee meetings were listed on the agenda. They included:

- The Monitoring and Evaluation Committee meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, October 26, 2021 from 8:00 – 9:30 a.m.
- The Career Educational Advisory Council (CEAC) meeting is scheduled for Monday, September 20, 2021 from 1:00-3:00 p.m.
- The Disability Awareness Resource Team (DART) Committee is scheduled for Tuesday, September 14, 2021 from 2:00-4:00 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no other reports or business for the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 9:32 a.m.

Kathy Olsen

Date

Frank Tecumseh

Date