

**Workforce Development Board Executive Committee
Meeting Minutes
March 18, 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.

WDB Executive Committee Members Present:

Morris Applebey (Labor) Lisa Godfrey (PS) Dave Maurer (PS)
Dan Dunn (PS) Kris Jenkins (Educ) Frank Tecumseh (PS)

WDB Executive Committee Members Absent

Randall Hazelbaker (PS)

Oher WDB Members Present

Jared Hoffmaster (PS and St. Joseph County Commissioner) Chantel Paxton (PS) Mike Quinn (PS and Kalamazoo County Commissioner)
John Fiore (MRS)

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:

Paige Daniels (YOU/KRESA) Sam Dougherty (WDI) Cheryl Sanford (WDI)
Dawn DeLuca (YOU/KRESA) Jennifer Klempnow (PATH/WEUI) Amanda Sutherland (YOU/KRESA)

Guests Present:

Terra Bielby Karen Todd Jeffery Dickerson,
(office of Rep Julie Rogers) (office of Senator John Bizon) (office of Rep Jim Haadsma)
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 Kris Jenkins to approve the WDB Full Board meeting minutes of February 18, 2021.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

AYES: Morris Applebey, Dan Dunn, Lisa Godfrey, Jared Hoffmaster, Kris Jenkins, Chantel Paxton NAYS: None. ABSTENTIONS: None. MOTION CARRIED.

CITIZENS' TIME

No comments.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Monitoring Committee

Dave Maurer reported the Monitoring Committee met on January 26, 2021 to review the WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker program and services. The format of the staff monitoring report was to first review the findings from the previous year's monitoring report. There had been some concerns regarding the appropriate documentation on all levels of the Individual Service Strategy (ISS). Mr. Maurer explained that members from the private sector understand that it is often difficult to appropriately document things in any kind of contact management system and that seems to be the case in this situation as well. The intent of admin staff was to review this mid-year; however, due to the pandemic and all the complexities associated with the pandemic orders, the mid-year review of the progress on that particular deficiency did not occur and the same deficiency was noted in this year's monitoring. Training has occurred in order to re-emphasize the importance of documentation and that it includes information pertaining to the multiple barriers being addressed. The written Monitoring Report includes the required corrective actions as well as recommendations for continuous improvement. The committee also interviewed three participants, two who had enrolled in training to earn a Commercial Driver's License (CDL) and one who enrolled in Certified Nurse Assistant (CNA) training. All three participants provided very positive feedback regarding the process, system, and staff. Overall, committee members agreed that although the service provider has opportunities for improvement, they are doing a good job.

Disability Awareness Resource Team (DART)

John Fiore reported DART members discussed issues and barriers individuals with disabilities are experiencing as it relates to the COVID vaccine at its most recent meeting. A summary of that discussion includes a general fear of getting the vaccine and uncertainty as to the safety and long-term impacts. Other challenges for individuals with disabilities pertained to their experiences in scheduling the vaccine. Committee members discussed using/distributing vaccine fact sheets to help alleviate fear and committee members shared actions their agencies were taking to help address the identified barriers. The Bureau of Services for Blind Persons (BSBP) reported they are working on getting the Kalamazoo training center site approved as a site to distribute the vaccine.

The most recent desktop training module, Disability Awareness and Etiquette, was undergoing a final review at the time of the DART meeting. It has since been released to service center staff and it is posted on the Michigan Works! Southwest website. The committee is also looking at information related to the long-term impacts that COVID has had on individuals and families. General agency updates were also shared at the DART meeting. Disability Network of Southwest Michigan provided tips for making online meetings accessible and inclusive. Many of the DART members reported that there are still individuals who do not feel safe returning to work; however, for those who do, there have been many entry-level employment opportunities. The Bureau of Services for Blind Persons (BSBP) and Michigan Rehabilitation Services (MRS) are activity working to safely re-open training centers following all COVID safety protocols. Many community agencies are still providing most services virtually and are also exploring options for expanding in-person services as the vaccine roll-out ramps up.

NEW BUSINESS

WDB Plans

Amy Meyers requested board consideration and approval of three workforce development plans.

FY2021 Healthy Michigan Plan Navigator (Exhibit B1)

Amy Meyers reported Michigan Works! Southwest was allocated \$48,493 for the Healthy Michigan Plan (HMP) Navigator (*Exhibit B1*) for the four-county service area and that this is the second year MW!

Southwest has received this funding. The intent of the program is to assist Medicaid beneficiaries that receive Healthy Michigan program assistance. The program intends to help individuals navigate Michigan Works! for employment and training related services to reduce their dependency on Medicaid. The Healthy Michigan Plan Navigator(s) will assist participants, who are between the ages of 19 and 62, address barriers to employment, assist with training placement and prepare individuals for employment and job placement. Another important role of the navigator(s) is to build relationships with community partners to assist HMP participants through appropriate referrals.

FY2021 Going PRO Talent Fund (*Exhibit B2*)

Amy Meyers reported the Going PRO Talent Fund provides opportunities through competitive awards to employers to assist in training, developing, and retaining new and current employees. The allocation for this plan (*Exhibit B2*) for MW!SW totals nearly \$3 million (\$2,793,738). Michigan Works! Areas receive an award of Talent Fund funding based on the total number of company applications approved for funding. This funding allocation represents individual company awards; however, companies may also apply for funding as part of an Industry Led Collaborative (ILC), at a later date. This award also reflects the training of over 2,013 local residents at 43 companies. Training funded by the Talent Fund must fill a demonstrated talent need experienced by an eligible participating employer. Training must lead to a credential for a skill that is transferable and recognized by the industry. Allowable training includes classroom or customized training for new and current employees, on-the-job training for new employees, and apprenticeships for first-year United States Department of Labor (USDOL) registered apprentices (new and current employees).

FY2021 Learn Earn and Provide (LEAP) Program (*Exhibit B3*)

Amy Meyers reported the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) Office of Child Support (OCS) was awarded an allocation in the amount of \$970,588 along with a waiver for a pilot project called Learn Earn and Provide (LEAP) that is focused on employment opportunities for non-custodial parents who are ordered to pay child support. Michigan Works! Southwest and the Friend of the Court offices (FOC) in Branch, Calhoun, Kalamazoo and St. Joseph counties will be participating in the pilot that strives to provide a structure for employment opportunities to assist parents who pay child support who have lost employment, are underemployed or are in need of training to obtain-employment. A Judge/Referee may require a child support payer to participate in the LEAP program as part of a court order, or a child support payer may voluntarily agree to participate in the LEAP program. The services are listed on the plan document (*Exhibit B3*) and they align with many of the MW!SW services offered across all programs including providing supportive services and incentives as appropriate, resume writing, and employment readiness skill building.

Motion made by Kris Jenkins and supported by Morris Applebey to approve the FY2021 Healthy Michigan Plan Navigator, the FY2021 Going PRO Talent Fund Plan and the FY2021 Learn Earn and Provide Program Plan.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

AYES: Morris Applebey, Dan Dunn, John Fiore, Lisa Godfrey, Jared Hoffmaster, Kris Jenkins, Dave Maurer, Chantal Paxton, Mike Quinn. NAYS: None. ABSTENTIONS: None. MOTION CARRIED.

WDB Policies

WDB Policy 18, Rev 06 Monitoring (*Exhibit C*)

Kathy Olsen reported changes to the WDB Policy 18 Rev 06 Monitoring (*Exhibit C*) includes

- References to Michigan's workforce development policies and MW!SW Workforce Development Board policies were updated.
- Under Section II.B.4. - Monitoring Committee was added.
- Under Section III.A. - Financial Compliance Monitoring - stipend payment procedures and payments were added to (d)(vi) the components of financial monitoring.

- Under Section III B. Program/Service Compliance Monitoring - the deadline for setting the annual schedule for program/service compliance monitoring was clarified and performance and stipend payments were added to (5)(e) evaluation of work-based learning.
- Under Section IV. Service Provider Internal Monitoring - Performance Payments (#6) and Stipend Payments (#7) were added.

Motion made by Dan Dunn and supported by Jared Hoffmaster to approve the WDB Policy 18 Rev 06 Monitoring,

ROLL CALL VOTE:

AYES: Morris Applebey, Dan Dunn, John Fiore, Lisa Godfrey, Jared Hoffmaster, Kris Jenkins, Dave Maurer, Chantal Paxton, Mike Quinn. NAYS: None. ABSTENTIONS: None. MOTION CARRIED.

STAFF REPORTS

Business Services Activities

Ashley Iovieno reported on business services operations that included updates pertaining to the Healthcare Consortium Marketing campaign, MiCareerQuest Southwest, and the State Apprenticeship Expansion Grant. The report was emailed to members following the meeting.

Healthcare Consortium Marketing Campaign – Ms. Iovieno provided an update on the Healthcare Consortium marketing campaign. The Michigan Works! Southwest Regional Healthcare Consortium expressed a need to educate job seekers about all the different career options available in the healthcare arena. To address this need, a Request for Proposal (RFP) as part of the Michigan Industry Cluster Approach (MICA) 2.0 grant, was released. From the responses received, a marketing firm was selected to develop and launch a campaign to help raise awareness regarding the opportunities and pathways. The campaign has gone live and various ads in the form of digital and radio are appearing on platforms such as Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram, Spotify, and Snapchat in an effort to appeal to all job seeker generations. A new page has also been created on the Michigan Works! Southwest website to help job seekers discover resources, training opportunities, and employment options. The link to the new web page is <https://www.michiganworkssouthwest.org/healthcare-pathways/>

MiCareerQuest Southwest – Ms. Iovieno reported as the pandemic continues and many schools are not yet back to in-person instruction, the MiCareerQuest Southwest planning committee made the decision to hold this year's event virtually. A virtual platform called VFairs will be used to host the career exploratory event for students in Kalamazoo and Calhoun Counties on May 12, 2021. In the past, two days were needed for the event in order to schedule all the students; however, since it is virtual, this can be accomplished in just one day. Staff are actively recruiting employers to participate in the areas of Health Sciences, Information Technology, Manufacturing and Professional Trades. Although it will be virtual the site has many interactive features that will help with student engagement such as a virtual backpack where students can gather digital materials from employers to view during and after the event is over. Anyone interested in participating should contact Ms. Iovieno at iovieno@upjohn.org.

State Apprenticeship Expansion (SAE) Grant – Ms. Iovieno further provided an update pertaining to the grant application for expanding youth Apprenticeship opportunities across our four-county Michigan Works! Southwest region. In writing the response to the State's RFP for this grant, staff worked with several partners such as Career Tech Education (CTE) programs, community colleges, and local employers. In early March, Michigan Works! Southwest received notice that the proposal submitted was selected. The grant award is for \$528,000 to be used to in implementing the work proposed and to assist in training 176 apprentices over a two-year period. The focus will be to create more apprenticeship opportunities in the areas of Manufacturing, Healthcare, and IT. To further support registered apprenticeship expansion efforts in Michigan, a new-state level Apprenticeship Advisory Board has been

established and Ben Damerow has been selected to serve on it. The Board consists of members from across multiple industry sectors, labor, secondary and postsecondary education, workforce development, and the U.S. Department of Labor Michigan Office of Apprenticeship. The Apprenticeship Advisory Board will provide guidance on innovation and implementation strategies to expand Registered Apprenticeship programs statewide.

Labor Market Information (*Exhibit D*)

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 MW! Southwest Area for the period January 1, 2021 through February 28, 2021 was included in the agenda packet notice.

Jakki Bungart-Bibb reported this is the time of year that the departments that provide LMI reports go through a benchmarking process, thus their typical reports are a bit delayed. Regular reporting is expected to be back on track in the immediate future and she will report the most current available data at next month's meeting. According to the last available reports, local unemployment rates for the MW! Southwest area ranges from 4.5% to 5.8%. Although the overall unemployment rates appear to be improving, the decrease in unemployment is not all due to employment recovery, and the recovery that is happening is not equal across the labor force. Employment data is worse for minority groups, particularly for women, and even more for women of color.

Michigan Works! Southwest Operational Update

Jakki Bungart-Bibb also provided an update on Service Center operations. She reported that a target date of May 3, 2021 has been set to return to in-person services and noted that this is a tentative date and subject to change based on many factors including MDHHS orders. Staff are planning to open in phases starting with part-time hours, partial staff, and by appointment only. Staff plan to monitor the situation closely, paying attention to many things including COVID numbers, and pandemic orders, and of course the needs of customers. Staff will adjust plans and navigate through phases accordingly.

She also shared another success story and began by stating this one is a bit different and is not one that was written by staff or officially submitted to the state about a specific program. This story came from an employee at Congressman Upton's office. The story happened quite a while ago and was recently brought to our attention. The staff at Congressman Upton's office was speaking with a veteran and when the staff mentioned employment opportunities, the veteran told her a story about a time he visited the Michigan Works! office in Kalamazoo. He told her that he was really at rock bottom and went to the Michigan Works! office desperate, frustrated and angry and admitted that he wasn't really friendly or easy to work with, he even admitted to being rude and getting a little loud with the person at the front desk. He said that a gentleman named Sam came up to see what was going on, noticed he was struggling to communicate and took him back to his office to try to talk to him. He said their conversation led Sam to call the Veteran Services Rep and the rep was able to resolve some of his issues immediately. Sam was also able to share a lead with the individual that ultimately led to a full-time job. Ms. Bibb reported this type of situation happens daily as all of our staff assist desperate job seekers every day. This veteran told the staff at Upton's office that he is forever grateful for walking into the Michigan Works! office that day because his life was changed. He said Sam saved his life that day. Success stories come in many forms throughout our network, typically they are about a job seeker who obtained a high paying job or bought their first home or something along those lines. Although we know Michigan Works! offers critical services and staff change lives every day, it's not that often that we get to hear this kind of feedback about our impact, especially with our walk-in customers who do not enroll in a specific program. She acknowledged Sam Dougherty for his work with this particular customer and once again offered a huge thanks to all staff who continue to be a lifeline for the customers and the community. She further stated that workforce programs are great opportunities; however, it's the staff who make a difference and the Michigan Works! Southwest service

providers and staff truly make that difference. Frank Tecumseh reported that he enjoys hearing the success stories and that he appreciates the work that staff are doing.

Sam Dougherty reported the customer referred to in the story was a veteran and since he is also a veteran, he had something in common and was able to sit down and talk with the customer who was in a pretty tough place and dealing with a lot of issues. Using available connections, he was able to connect the customer to resources available through the Veterans Administration (VA). He credited the Michigan Works! partners for working as a team to assist the customer. Ben Damerow expressed appreciation for the excellent customer service that was provided and the ability to make a difference in an individual's life. He also pointed out, as Ms. Bibb did, that this was not a 'typical' story and credit will not appear in the performance measures.

Director's Report (*Exhibit E*)

Ben Damerow reported on the Director's Report (*Exhibit E*) that was emailed to members prior to the meeting.

Federal Updates - Last week the House and Senate passed the \$1.9 Trillion American Rescue Plan and it was signed by the President on Friday, March 12.

- Stimulus Checks – The income eligibility phase out for the \$1,400 stimulus checks has been lowered from \$100,000 to \$80,000 for individuals and from \$200,000 to \$160,000 for joint filers.
- Unemployment Insurance – The federal unemployment 'boost' was reduced to \$300 per week (down from \$400/week in the House passed version) and extended through September 6, 2021. (The deadline had been August 29th in House passed version.)
 - The first \$10,200 in unemployment benefits have been deemed non-taxable income for households with income under \$150,000.
- State and Local Funding - The Senate created an additional \$10 billion Capital Projects fund for infrastructure or broadband investments.
 - Direct aid for cities, counties and smaller units of local government would be reduced to finance the capital projects fund.
 - Funding for counties is \$65.1 billion.
 - Metropolitan cities would get \$45.6 billion.
 - Non-entitlement units of local government, or the smallest cities and counties, would get \$19.5 billion.

Michigan Reconnect - The State of Michigan has received over 62,000 applications since the Michigan Reconnect program launched on February 2, 2021. The State had set an initial goal of 60,000 applicants by Memorial Day. To be eligible for Michigan Reconnect, an individual must be at least 25 years old when they apply, have lived in Michigan for a year or more, have a high school diploma and not yet completed a college degree (associate or bachelor's). The number of Southwest Michigan applicants are listed below along with the estimated number of eligible individuals in parenthesis:

Branch County:	146	(23,368)
Calhoun County:	732	(63,666)
Kalamazoo County:	1,896	(85,110)
St. Joseph County:	244	(30,224)
Totals:	3,018	(202,368)

Ben Damerow provided a few additional updates. He reported representatives from Michigan Works! have been meeting with legislators to discuss WIOA reauthorization. They recently met with Representative Heidi Stevens, who sits on the Health Education Labor and Pensions Committee where work on reauthorization would begin. He reported Representative Stevens was very receptive to the recommendations in moving forward.

Mr. Damerow reported that he is excited to be representing the Michigan Works! network on the Statewide Apprenticeship Advisory Board and the first meeting of the Board occurred yesterday. The agenda was mostly focused on organizational tasks for the Board.

Mr. Damerow further reported the new Michigan Works! Association Board held its first meeting and both Dan Dunn and he attended. The three-hour meeting included an orientation and general Board information. Dan Dunn reported the meeting was very informational and well run. He had an opportunity to get to know others on the Board, how long they have been in the Michigan Works! network and received information regarding the Board structure and rules. He is looking forward to the next meeting where they will actually begin working on a few things.

OLD BUSINESS

None.

CITIZENS' TIME

None.

MEMBERS' TIME

Dave Maurer reported on how the enhanced unemployment benefits are affecting some employers and their ability to fill open positions. He reported his company has a significant number of job openings that remain unfilled and this is preventing him from shipping product to customers. He is seeing a similar situation in the company's supply chain. As a result, he has had to reschedule a number of shipments to customers which obviously is having a significant impact on business levels such as profitability. He reported that in the last week, two employers reached out to him and expressed the same frustration. At an even higher level, he reported having conversation with his banker last week who also expressed that he has no fewer than ten clients who are in a similar situation and struggling to survive due to the fact that they can no longer find employees. He shared a recent experience where over a two-week period he was trying to fill eight positions, all good paying, fairly unskilled, direct hire jobs, and there was not a single application. This appears to be widespread and he is yet to talk to an employer who is not having this problem. He highlighted the fact that one can drive down Sprinkle Road and there are signs in front of almost every business asking for workers. Employers are experiencing significant damage with some of the current policy. Frank Tecumseh reported on a similar experience. His organization held a job fair last week that drew 42 people. In 2020, a similar job fair was held during the same time frame and that one drew 122 attendees. Ben Damerow reported this is very consistent with what Michigan Works! is hearing from employers and it is across all sectors and not specific to any one sector. Under the current unemployment rules, individuals are not required to search for work and register with Michigan Works! Staff have been advocating at the State level for changes to be made. Under normal situations, when individuals had to register for work, Michigan Works! staff would at least have customer contact information where they could proactively get information to them.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

Frank Tecumseh reminded members of upcoming meetings and noted that they may take place virtually or in-person depending on the COVID -19 situation at the time.

- The next WDB Executive Committee meeting is scheduled for Thursday, April 15, 2021 from 9:00 – 10:30 a.m.
- The next meeting of the full WDB is scheduled for Thursday, May 20, 2021 from 9:00 – 10:30 a.m.

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

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- The Monitoring and Evaluation Committee meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, March 23, 2021 from 3:30-5:00 p.m.
 - The Disability Awareness Resource Team (DART) Committee is scheduled for Tuesday, April 13, 2021 from 2:00-4:00 p.m.
 - The Career Educational Advisory Council (CEAC) meeting is scheduled for Monday, March 22, 2021 from 1:00-3:00 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no other reports or business for the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 9:40 a.m.

Kathy Olsen

Date

Frank Tecumseh

Date