

**Workforce Development Board  
Meeting Minutes  
May 8, 2020**

**CALL TO ORDER** - Workforce Development Board Chair, Randall Hazelbaker, called the virtual meeting to order at 9:01 a.m.

Randall Hazelbaker welcomed everyone. He requested that if attendees have questions and/or comments to please enter them into the chat box and they would be addressed during the meeting. He also requested that attendees keep their microphones muted unless they are speaking. He reminded attendees to unmute their microphone when speaking and to begin by stating their name. For items that require a vote, Roll Call Voting will be used. Kathy Olsen will read the name of each member and record the votes for each item requiring a vote.

**INTRODUCTIONS** – Kathy Olsen read the names of individuals who were connected to the meeting at this time.

**WDB Members Present:**

Morris Applebey (Labor)*	Lisa Godfrey (PS)*	Frank Tecumseh (PS)*
Allen Balog (PS)	Randall Hazelbaker*(PS)	Elizabeth Van Dussen (PS)
Adrien Bennings (Educ)	Kris Jenkins (Educ)*	Ken Willcutt (Labor)
Jill Bland (Econ Dev)	David Maurer (PS)*	*Exec Committee
Dan Dunn (PS)	Chantal Paxton (PS)	
John Fiore (MRS)	Windy Rea (Job Corps)	

**WDB Members Absent:**

Richard Anderson (Labor)	Lisa Johansen (MDOC)	Eva Tobolic (PS)
Trevor Bidelman (Labor)	Derek King (PS)	Mike Wilson (CBO)
Karen Doubleday (DHHS)	Mike Quinn (PS)	.
Jessica Eyster (PS)	David Sutherland (PS)	

Other individuals in attendance at the meeting included:

**Michigan Works! / Upjohn Institute Staff:**

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

**Michigan Works! Services / Program Staff Present:**

Sam Dougherty (WDI)	Jennifer Klemptow (WEUI/PATH)	Eric Stewart (YOU/KRESA)
Paige Farrell (YOU/KRESA)	Dallas Oberlee (WEUI/PATH)	Amanda Sutherland (YOU/KRESA)
Amy Holman (WEUI/PATH)		

**Guests Present:**

Paul Aivars (GOCC)	Mike Horrigan (WEUI)	Chris Roach (MI LEO)
Sue Houseman (WEUI)	Don Reid	

**PROGRAM -Upjohn Institute Research & Policy Briefs in Response to COVID-19**

Mike Horrigan, President of the Upjohn Institute for Employment Research, gave a presentation on Unemployment Insurance data before and throughout the pandemic, as well as the current status.

Susan Houseman, Vice President and Director of Research at the Upjohn Institute highlighted the research and policy papers authored by staff at the Upjohn Institute. The research and policy papers are posted on the Upjohn Institute website at <https://www.upjohn.org/research-highlights/upjohn-staff-proposals-and-responses-understanding-ongoing-economic-crisis>

## **TRANSPARENCY AND INTEGRITY OF WDB DECISIONS**

### **Conflict of Interest and Disclosure**

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 Morris Applebey and supported by Frank Tecumseh to approve the Workforce Development Board Executive Committee meeting minutes of April 10, 2020.**

### **ROLL CALL VOTE:**

**AYES: Morris Applebey, Allen Balog, Adrien Bennings, Jill Bland, Dan Dunn, John Fiore, Lisa Godfrey, Kris Jenkins, Dave Maurer, Chantal Paxton, Windy Rea, Frank Tecumseh, Elizabeth Van Dussen, Ken Willcutt**

**NAYS: None. MOTION CARRIED.**

### **CITIZENS' TIME**

None.

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**Monitoring & Evaluation Committee** – Dave Maurer thanked the Michigan Works! administrative staff for preparing everyone for the Monitoring Committee online meeting and for orchestrating the participants, the employer and the service provider staff entering and leaving the virtual meeting. He reported one employer was interviewed. The employer was fairly new to her position and although she had not experienced a depth of experience working with Michigan Works!, what she had experienced so far was positive. Two participants were also interviewed, one had experience as a truck driver, however he was struggling with getting enough steady work. The second participant had enrolled in welding classes and although he finished the first class, the campus closed due to COVID-19 and he was unable to continue. Both had been impacted by the effect that COVID-19 has had on the economy. The service providers shared a presentation pertaining to the Certified Nurse Assistant(CNA) training that included video testimonials from former participants and partners. Mr. Maurer reported a former participant was hired by Workforce Development, Inc. (WDI) and is now coordinating the referrals and partner collaboration for the CNA training. WDI staff also reported on updates specifically to their organization that included the recent name change from HRDI to WDI, staff changes within the organization, and professional development. Michigan Works! administrative staff reviewed 26 participant files for in-depth monitoring as well as 84 files for desktop monitoring. Mr. Maurer reported that when staff are so focused on providing services, the documentation can be challenging and two recommendations for continuous improvement were made that included accuracy of processing supportive services; and when appropriate, accessing additional activities to better support the customer needs. Corrective actions for the review included documenting barriers that are address in each participant's Individual Service Strategy (ISS) as well as the descriptions in the case notes that align with each.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **CEAC Appointments – (*Exhibit B*)**

Kathy Olsen reported changes to the Career Educational Advisory Council (CEAC) require approval of the Workforce Development Board. Four appointments to be effective July 1, 2020 were presented for Board consideration and approval. They included:

- Request to appoint Cameron Buck, CEPD Director, Kalamazoo RESA, to represent Career and Technical Education for Kalamazoo County, replacing Deb Miller, for the balance of a term that ends on June 30, 2021. Deb Miller is retiring June 30, 2020.
- Request to appoint Eric Stewart, Assistant Superintendent of Career and Talent Development, as an Alternate appointment for Cameron Buck, also representing Career and Technical Education for Kalamazoo County, for the balance of a term that ends on June 30, 2021.

- Request to appoint Diane Owen-Rogers, Southwest MiSTEM Regional Director, representing STEM education, for the balance of a term that ends June 30, 2021. Ms. Rogers is replacing Jason Luke as the regional STEM representative.
- Request for Jason Luke to continue as a CEAC member, representing KRESA's career awareness and exploration for K-12 instead of STEM education, for the balance of his current term which ends June 30, 2021. Mr. Luke's new role as the Career Awareness and Exploration Director at Kalamazoo RESA begins July 1, 2020.

**Motion made by Kris Jenkins and supported by Dave Maurer to approve four CEAC appointments effective July 1, 2020 which include Cameron Buck, CEPD Director, Kalamazoo RESA, representing Career and Technical Education for Kalamazoo County, replacing Deb Miller, for the balance of a term that ends on June 30, 2021; Eric Stewart, Assistant Superintendent of Career and Talent Development, as an Alternate appointment for Cameron Buck, also representing Career and Technical Education for Kalamazoo County, for the balance of a term that ends on June 30, 2021; Diane Owen-Rogers, Southwest MiSTEM Regional Director, representing STEM education, for the balance of a term that ends June 30, 2021, replacing Jason Luke as the regional STEM representative; and the continuation of Jason Luke as a CEAC member for a term that ends June 30, 2021, representing KRESA's career awareness and exploration for K-12 instead of STEM education.**

#### **ROLL CALL VOTE:**

**AYES: Morris Applebey, Allen Balog, Adrien Bennings, Jill Bland, Dan Dunn, John Fiore, Lisa Godfrey, Kris Jenkins, Dave Maurer, Chantal Paxton, Windy Rea, Frank Tecumseh, Elizabeth Van Dussen, Ken Willcutt**

**NAYS: None. MOTION CARRIED.**

#### **STAFF REPORTS**

**Business Services / Talent Fund / Labor Market Information (LMI)** – Ashley Iovieno reported on business services operations that included updates pertaining to employer outreach, Unemployment Insurance (UI), layoffs and employers who are currently hiring.

*Employer Outreach* – Ms. Iovieno reported, similar to what was reported at last month's Board meeting, the Business Services team remains busy as they navigate resources and provide support to employers during the pandemic. The team has sent two rounds of a short survey to employers to gather feedback as to how COVID-19 is affecting their businesses; as well as asking if they are laying off any employees, and if they are hiring, what needs do they have. The survey has served as an opportunity for the Business Services team to have further conversations with employers as to how to best provide services. The survey was sent to 598 employers and so far, 96 have responded. Of the responses received, 46 employers have hiring needs and 36 employers have requested further assistance and guidance from the business services team. Team members have been reaching out to those employers to assist with addressing those needs.

*Unemployment Insurance* – Many of the employers have requested assistance with the Work Share program. Ms. Iovieno noted that although Michigan Works! is separate from the Unemployment Insurance Agency (UIA), staff still wanted to assist with getting questions from employers answered. To do this, staff partnered with UIA to provide a virtual Work Share session for employers. This virtual event took place on April 30, 2020 with 41 attendees, and during the hour-long session, 46 questions from employers were addressed. Staff are continuing their work with the employers to assist them with getting answers to additional questions related to Unemployment and the Work Share program.

*Layoffs* – Staff continue to see layoffs occurring, both permanent and temporary, and have been reaching out to the affected employers to check-in and offer assistance. Although outreach is being conducted with all of those affected, staff have prioritized the permanent layoffs that so far is affecting approximately 500 individuals. She added that one of the employers counted in that number announced their closure long before the pandemic, therefore not all the permanent layoffs are a direct result of the pandemic. Staff continue to monitor the situation and provide assistance as needed.

*Employers Hiring* – Many employers are still hiring, and staff are maintaining a list of those employers and pushing the information out to job seekers in efforts to make connections. Although outreach to employers has been widespread, Ms. Iovieno asked members to please let Michigan Works! know if their company, or if they are aware of another company, that could use assistance from Michigan Works!.

**Michigan Works! Operational Update** – Jakki Bungart-Bibb reported that in lieu of the dashboard report at last month’s WDB Executive Committee meeting, she provided an operational update that summarized a timeline of activities that occurred since early March. She provided a recap of that timeline for those who were not in attendance last month as well as an update as to where we are now and where we are headed in the near future for service center operations.

As the COVID-19 situation developed in early March, the operations team came together to develop a plan of action. The operations leadership team consists of lead representatives from the service providers which included KRESA/YOU, WDI (formerly known as HRDI), PATH direct services, business services, and administrative leadership. The first plan of action was to implement mitigation precautions. Social distancing was put in place by making sure customers remained at least six feet apart while in the service centers, group activities were limited, and extra sanitizing was added at the Service Centers. A communication plan was implemented that included daily conference calls with State partners and with the local operations team. A COVID-19 response web page was created on the Michigan Works! Southwest website. This page houses community, job seeker, employer, and unemployment resources. On March 18, 2020, the service centers began operating by appointment only, so that services could continue to be provided while decreasing traffic and limiting in person contact. A centralized call-back system was developed and implemented and members from all providers and programs were deployed to meet the call demands while also adjusting their specific program service delivery to virtual means.

On March 24, 2020, all staff began working remotely to provide services by virtual means only. Since implementation of this service delivery model, staff have fielded thousands of phone calls, hosted over 1,600 one-on-one appointments, and hosted and attended countless Zoom and GoToMeetings. These numbers are estimates from the Service Centers and do not include the calls and appointments of the business services and the admin team. There has not been a break in services for the Michigan Works! Southwest service area. The teams are working diligently to stay connected to each other and to the customers. Staff are in the process of developing virtual workshops and videos in order to continue to provide valuable services to customers while also keeping customers and staff safe.

The centers have always played a key part in the unemployment process. Prior to COVID 19, an in-person visit to a Michigan Works! service center was required as part of the unemployment approval process. This has been a good and logical partnership between UIA and Michigan Works! as it has allowed people to engage in reemployment activities quickly; however, it also had its downside. Historically, Michigan Works! staff have not been allowed to answer specific unemployment questions. That distinction makes sense to UIA and MW but to job seeker it can be confusing as they do not always understand the difference between the two agencies. Ms. Bibb reported she was highlighting this specifically because when the pandemic hit and the unemployment claims soared, the service centers and staff felt it. With the number of people filing claims in the past seven weeks, and the electronic system issues that were occurring, there were desperate calls made to the service centers and staff became the ‘punching bag’ for many of those desperate callers. She added that Michigan Works! staff are problem solvers and they are accustomed to helping people remove barriers and resolve issues. The inability to answer unemployment questions or provide technical assistance to the callers during this time was against everything that staff takes pride in. Michigan Works! teams from around the State approached State partners and requested that they be able to help. During the week of March 30, 2020, MW staff were asked to assist UIA and began the training process to assist with technical issues related to filing claims. She noted that MW staff are not responsible for making monetary determinations; however, they are able to assist in handling issues that are slowing the process down and leaving customers in limbo. It took some time to get staff trained and to get the technical issues resolved. A group of staff from MW Southwest began assisting with UI customer calls the last week in April.

Although it may seem that staff are consumed by the Unemployment Insurance world, they also have many other things going on and staff are working in different areas within our system. Staff from PATH, Youth, Adult and Dislocated Worker services, the Neighborhood Employment Hubs, the Employer Resource Network, and the Business Services Teams all remain actively engaged with customers and are also working on enhancing services. They are developing ways to provide all of the essential services virtually and seeking ways to ensure equitable access for those virtual services.

In the last few weeks, aside from all of the virtual services, staff continues to provide other supports. Examples include housing assistance for a domestic assault victim who could not get into a shelter; assistance with obtaining a hot water heater for a participant who was laid off due to COVID 19 and who had not been able to file for unemployment yet; and assistance to another customer for a vehicle repair so she was able to start a job as an essential home healthcare worker.

Ms. Bibb further reported that the work does not end when the virus does. A lot of work lies ahead as staff prepare for what recovery will look like for both job seekers and employers. To prepare with all this uncertainty, staff are listening. The teams are reaching out to job seeker customers to assess their needs and reaching out to employers via surveys to also assess their needs. The MW administration and Upjohn Institute research teams are staying closely connected to our State and federal partners. Staff are aware that there is and will be uncertainty regarding the long-term impact and are putting plans in place in order to be prepared to address whatever that impact may be.

Staff are currently preparing for what it will look like to return to the service center buildings. A planning team is preparing a playbook for a safe return. Given the unknown of when that will be, that team is preparing several different scenarios that will include several different phases. The team is also planning for PPE needs, specific details around office layout and safe navigation throughout the centers. Once services return to being provided out of the service centers, staff will continue to utilize all recommended precautions including limiting traffic in the building, social distancing, extra cleaning, and limited in-person contact until it can safely be done otherwise.

Ms. Bibb reported that at last month's meeting she reported how inspiring the staff have been throughout this crisis; she repeated that acclimation for this meeting. The team of service providers, leaders, and frontline staff continue to step up and face the challenges that this crisis brings. She thanked all staff for their commitment and hard work over the last two months and gave a huge shout out and a special thank you to both Amy Meyers and Amanda Sutherland. She reported Ms. Meyers has been the lead on the admin side working with State partners to coordinate trainings and meetings for the UIA project and Ms. Sutherland has been the lead on the frontline side working with staff to coordinate and manage the callback system and the staffing schedule. Both have worked tirelessly, have been amazing, and stated that we cannot thank them enough. She then turned the meeting over to Amanda Sutherland.

Amanda Sutherland shared some of the successes related to the work staff has been doing to assist customers. She thanked WDI and PATH partners for their assistance to employment services and being able to assist unemployment customers. She noted that Ms. Bibb had already shared how several staff were trained to troubleshoot UI. She then shared three stories where staff were able to assist customers with their UI claims. She reported staff are assisting customers and transforming lives every minute and customers are very appreciative of the efforts. The MW organization is filled with compassionate and helping people. For some individuals it has taken 5-7 weeks to get their unemployment benefits and the guidance and reassurance that MW staff has been able to provide is very much appreciated by the customers.

**Director's Report (Exhibit C)** - Ben Damerow thanked Amy Meyers and Amanda Sutherland for their leadership in assisting customers with Unemployment questions. He stated that MW staff have been doing an amazing job assisting customers.

Mr. Damerow then referred attendees to the Director's Report dated May 8, 2020 (*Exhibit C*) that was emailed with the updated agenda packet prior to the meeting. He reported the Relaunching America's Workforce Act was introduced in the House on May 1, 2020 and that this legislation intends to provide immediate and long-term supports to America's workforce by keeping individuals in their current jobs and putting people back to work when necessary. 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 \$15 billion in workforce funding with individual amounts that include:

- \$2.5 billion State Dislocated Worker Grants
- \$2.5 billion Youth Workforce Investment Activities
- \$2.5 billion Adult Education and Training Activities
- \$2 billion Community College and Industry Partnership Grants
- \$1 billion Wagner-Peyser/Employment Services
- \$1 billion Adult Education and Literacy

On April 29, 2020, Governor Whitmer announced the *Futures for Frontliners Program* to provide a tuition-free pathway to college or a technical certificate for essential workers who do not currently have a college degree. Individuals working in hospitals, nursing homes, grocery stores, childcare and delivery services will be eligible for this training program. The Governor indicated the program will also assist with the State's *Sixty by 30 Initiative* to have 60% of the population with an

associate degree or higher by 2030. He reported that both he and Michelle Miller-Adams from the Upjohn Institute's research side contributed information during the planning phase of this initiative. The initiative is expected to launch in January 2021 and further details will be provided as they become available.

The Governor has signed several Executive Orders to *expand unemployment benefits* for individuals impacted by the pandemic. The most recent Executive Order extends unemployment benefits to workers who have unanticipated family care responsibility, who are sick or quarantined and those who were unable to start a new job because of the pandemic. The order allows everyone with an active unemployment claim to receive up to 26 weeks of benefits.

The Governor also announced she is expanding the State's *Workshare Program* to allow employers to reduce employee hours to receive weekly unemployment insurance benefits as well as the addition Pandemic Unemployment Assistance weekly benefit. Through July, the program can act as supplemental pay for critical infrastructure workers. The application process is difficult for employers and MW business services staff are being trained to assist.

Mr. Damerow reported that it is expected there will be a \$2 billion shortfall in the State budget and the office of management and budget is looking at funding across all State departments. As a result, spending for the Jobs for Michigan Graduates (JMG) Program was halted two weeks ago. Staff were notified on a Thursday evening to stop the program the following day. Earlier this week, \$3 million in Statewide funding for PATH was de-obligated, the local de-obligation is \$125 thousand. PATH program staff are evaluating the program to see where cost savings can be implemented. Mr. Damerow expressed his appreciation to both program and management staff for their flexibility in responding to the changes that are taking place very quickly.

Mr. Damerow further reported that the State of Michigan applied for a National Emergency Grant (NEG). There will be \$350 million available to States and some of the funds can be used for contract tracing. Information from a policy paper authored by Brad Hershbein from the Upjohn Institute was included in the State's application.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

None.

## **CITIZENS' TIME**

None.

## **MEMBERS' TIME**

None.

## **UPCOMING MEETINGS**

Randall Hazelbaker referred attendees to page two of the agenda and highlighted the fact that all dates and locations for the upcoming meeting are yet to be confirmed, confirmations will be based on COVID-19 restrictions, and the meetings may take place using an electronic format or they may be cancelled.

The next **Executive Committee** is scheduled for Friday, June 12, 2020 from 9:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m. at the Upjohn Institute, 300 S. Westnedge Avenue, Kalamazoo, Michigan 49007. [Following the meeting it was decided that the June meeting would be held virtually.]

The next **Full Workforce Development Board** is scheduled for Friday, September 11, 2020 from 9:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m. at Glen Oaks Community College, 62249 Shimmel Road, Centreville, MI 49032.

The dates for the other committee meetings were noted as follows:

The next **Monitoring and Evaluation Committee** is scheduled for Tuesday, June 23, 2020 from 8:00-9:30 a.m. at the Michigan Works! Service Center, 1601 S. Burdick Street, Kalamazoo, MI 49001.

The next **Disability Awareness Resource Team (DART)** – Kathy Olsen reported that it has been decided that the DART Committee will meet virtually on May 26, 2020 from 2:00-3:30 p.m. via GoTo Meeting. [Following the WDB meeting, the date for the DART meeting was changed to June 2, 2020.]

The next **Career & Educational Advisory Council (CEAC)** is scheduled for Monday, September 21, 2020 from 1:00 – 3:00 p.m. at Kalamazoo Regional Educational Service Agency (KRESA), 1819 E. Milham Rd, Kalamazoo, MI 49002.

**Veterans Committee –**

- VCAT Region 8 Quarterly Meeting – Date and Time TBD
- VCAT Employment Sub-committee – Date and Time TBD
- VCAT Education Sub-committee – Date and Time TBD

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no other reports or business for the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 10:10 a.m.

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Kathy Olsen

Date

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Randall Hazelbaker, Chair

Date