

**Workforce Development Board  
Meeting Minutes  
February 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. Randall Hazelbaker was participating from Branch County Board of Commissioners, and Jared Hoffmaster was participating from St. Joseph County Board of Commissioners.

**WDB Members Present:**

Zach Bauer (CBO)	Lisa Godfrey (PS)*	Kris Jenkins (Educ)*
Trevor Bidelman (Labor)	Randall Hazelbaker (PS)*	Jackie Murray (PS)
Kathi Cain-Babbitt (Labor)	Windy Rea (Job Corps)	Frank Tecumseh (PS)*
Dan Dunn (PS)*	Dave Maurer (PS)*	Mike Wilson (Veterans)
John Fiore (MRS)	Jared Hoffmaster (PS)	* Exec Committee

**WDB Members Absent**

Richard Anderson (Labor)	Lisa Johansen (DOC)	Brianna Underwood (PS)
Morris Applebey (Labor)*	Derek King (PS)	Elizabeth VanDusen (PS)
Adrien Bennings (Educ)	Ana Martinez (CBO)	Ken Willcutt (Labor)
Jill Bland (Econ Dev)	Chantel Paxton (PS)	Angila Wilson (PS)
Karen Doubleday (DHHS)	Mike Quinn (PS)	* Exec Committee
Jessica Eyster (PS)	David Sutherland (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:**

Dawn DeLuca (YOU/KRESA)	Paige Daniels (YOU/KRESA)	Amanda Sutherland (YOU/KRESA)
Sam Dougherty (WDI)	Jennifer Klempnow (PATH/WEUI)	
Blaine Farr (WDI)	Eric Stewart (KRESA)	

**Guests Present:**

Paul Aivars	Jeffery Dickerson, office of	Don Reid (Daily Reporter)
Heather Baker	Rep. Jim Haadsma	Rep. Julie Rogers
	Shabaka Gibson	Audrey Tappenden

**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.

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## **APPROVAL OF MINUTES (*Exhibit A*)**

**Motion made by Lisa Godfrey and supported by Kathi Cain-Babbitt to approve the WDB Executive Committee meeting minutes of January 21, 2021.**

### **ROLL CALL VOTE:**

**AYES: Trevor Bidelman, Kathi Cain-Babbitt, Dan Dunn, John Fiore, Lisa Godfrey, Kris Jenkins, Randall Hazelbaker, Jared Hoffmaster, Dave Maurer, Jackie Murray, Windy Rea**

**NAYS: None. ABSTENTIONS: None. MOTION CARRIED.**

### **CITIZENS' TIME**

Frank Tecumseh reported the first public comment section on the agenda is intended for citizens to provide comment on agenda items prior to the taking of a vote. The second public comment period on the agenda is an opportunity for citizens to provide comment on non-agenda items. Speakers, other than members, after being recognized by the Chairperson, shall identify themselves and limit comments to no more than 4 minutes.

### **COMMITTEE REPORTS.**

No reports.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

#### **WDB Policies**

#### **WDB Policy 5 Rev 05 – Supportive Services and Needs Related Payments (Exhibits B1-B3)**

Kathy Olsen reported changes to WDB Policy 5 Rev 05 – Supportive Services and Needs Related Payments included the deletion of one sentence under section A.6. that conflicted with the order of precedence that appears at the beginning of all WDB policies; and the addition of a clause under section A.7. to clarify that local policy can be more restrictive than State and Federal policy. Additional edits included updating State references throughout the document and the attachment, and updating column headings on the attachment, as well as adding two footnotes to align with the recently updated PATH Manual.

**Motion made by Randall Hazelbaker and supported by Dave Maurer to approve WDB Policy 5 Rev 05 – Supportive Services and Needs Related Payments.**

### **ROLL CALL VOTE:**

**AYES: Trevor Bidelman, Kathi Cain-Babbitt, Dan Dunn, John Fiore, Lisa Godfrey, Kris Jenkins, Randall Hazelbaker, Jared Hoffmaster, Dave Maurer, Jackie Murray, Windy Rea**

**NAYS: None. ABSTENTIONS: None. MOTION CARRIED.**

### **STAFF REPORTS**

#### **Business Services Activities**

Ashley Iovieno reported on business services operations that included updates pertaining to the employer newsletter, the Going Pro Talent Fund, and the Michigan Industry Cluster Approach (MICA) 2.0 best practices.

*Employer Newsletter* – Ashley Iovieno reported the first issue of the employer newsletter was released on January 29, 2021. The newsletter will be used to share valuable information to area employers and partners with content covering vital area data, upcoming events, and featured stories. The newsletter also serves as an additional platform for the Business Services team members to connect with employers for sharing important information. All Board members should have received a copy of this communication, if not, please let us know so your organization can be added to the distribution list. The [link to sign up for the](#)

[employer newsletter](#) was also included in the virtual meeting chat and it was sent to members following the meeting.

*Going Pro Talent Fund (GPTF)* – An update was provided by Ashley Iovieno on the Going Pro Talent Fund grant awards that were reported on at the January Board meeting. The total grant award amount to the Michigan Works! Southwest area is approximately \$2.7 million dollars which will be used for training and upskilling for 2,013 employees who will receive training over the next 12 months. Of this number, 193 individuals will be a part of an apprenticeship program, as either a new or an incumbent worker. Additionally, there are approximately 800 positions to be filled over the next 12 months. The State in total awarded approximately \$39 million dollars in funding to over 850 companies statewide. The Business Services Team members are currently working on training agreements with these employers so that training can begin. She shared two employer quotes to demonstrate how these funds would be assisting two businesses.

The first quote was from Bronson Healthcare, an employer with the largest application covering two counties. Paula Kizer is the lead business service representative for this application.

*“Bronson Healthcare is proud to be a first-time recipient of a GoingPRO Talent Fund grant that will allow us to train new employees as PCA/CNAs, MAs, and Surgical Technicians on the job, using an apprenticeship model. These funds will help provide more living-wage jobs and significant development opportunities for our workforce across southwest Michigan, and further our mission to advance the health of the communities we serve.”*

The second quote was from Prairie Farms, a first-time award recipient in Calhoun County in which Charlie Zigler is the lead business services representative.

*“Prairie Farms is committed to continued growth and education of our associates as seen in our training development programs. A grant such as the Going Pro Talent Fund will play a crucial role in allowing us to continue our skill level training and we are very grateful to have our application awarded by the State.”*

*MICA 2.0 Best Practice* – Ashley Iovieno further reported that she was asked by State partners to present on the work of Michigan Works! Southwest pertaining to the career exploratory videos that were completed in the fall of 2020. The videos were part of the Michigan Industry Cluster Approach 2.0 grant (MICA 2.0) that Michigan Works! Southwest received. Her short presentation will be a part of the best practice segment at a Statewide virtual conference called Sector Strategies Learning Network scheduled for Friday, February 19, 2021. She also announced that due to the positive response received from the five videos, a second round of videos is being created that will focus on the industries of public safety, hospitality, healthcare, education, and finance. The new videos are scheduled for release over the next month with one video being released each week. The public safety video was released last week and so far, has received over a thousand views on Facebook. Following the meeting, a [link to the career videos](#) already produced was sent to Board members.

### **Labor Market Information (Exhibit C)**

The website link to the labor market reports generated from Burning Glass Analytics and Real Time Jobs Data (*Exhibit C*) 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 December 1, 2020 through January 31, 2021 was included in the agenda packet notice.

Jakki Bungart-Bibb reported the monthly [Michigan's Labor Market Newsletter, February 2021 issue](#) published by the state is a publication that highlights employment trends, it provides a statewide overview of these trends but also has a break down by prosperity region. It typically provides a feature article with a specific occupation focus. This month, the feature article is: Remote Work Across Michigan and the occupational focus is: Market Research and Marketing Specialists.

The Michigan Women's Commission (MWC) released the results of a statewide survey on "childcare use during the pandemic." The results indicate childcare is one of top reasons women are leaving the workforce at such an alarming rate. It was also noted that high quality affordable childcare is critical to the success of the economy and the results of this survey show that there will soon be an even more dramatic and immediate surge in demand for childcare options. The survey findings may be beneficial to future conversations about childcare and the workforce. The link to the MWC [Survey of Child Care Use During the Pandemic](#) was sent to members following the meeting.

### **Michigan Works! Southwest Operational Update**

Jakki Bungart-Bibb provided an update on Service Center operations. She reported Service Center staff continue to work from home and provide services virtually. There has been one change to operations since the last Board meeting. That is, assessments related to employment or program enrollment are now being provided in person, by appointment only. This service is offered on limited days to a limited number of people per day. This service is being offered in person because it is not a service that can be provided virtually.

The leadership team continues to meet weekly to discuss plans for a safe reopening of the centers. May 3, 2021 has been set as a target date to return to in-person services. This date is in alignment with the State's tentative timeline for their return to offices. However, she noted the date is tentative and is subject to change. Current plans are to reopen in phases similar to what occurred in July 2020 which means that in office schedules will most likely start with part-time hours, partial staff, and by appointment only. A lot can change between now and May, thus staff will continue to monitor the situation and adjust plans accordingly. As mentioned at previous meetings, changes have been made to the facilities in preparation for reopening and a comprehensive safety plan is in place.

Ms. Bibb further reported that service providers are asked to submit success stories for many reasons. This includes requirements attached to state and federal funding as well as the desire to hear about the impact that staff and the services they provide have on customers and the community. Stories collected are shared in reports to state and federal partners as well as with local partners including the Workforce Development Board. She reported one of the success stories submitted a couple of years ago is currently featured as the success story of the month on the U.S. Department of Labor website. The story is about an individual who was dislocated due to company downsizing from a job she held for over ten years. She received services through the Adult & Dislocated Worker program. Staff worked with the customer, provided job leads, application assistance, and mock interviewing. Staff submitted a resume on behalf of the customer to the Food Safety Director at Clemens in Coldwater. That submission resulted in several interviews including a panel interview at the Clemens plant in Pennsylvania. The customer obtained a job at Clemens in Coldwater as a Food Safety Quality Assurance Supervisor making over \$27 dollars per hour and at our last contact was still employed at Clemens over two years later. The success story included a quote from the customer in which she stated,

*"From the beginning, my experience with Michigan Works! Southwest was nothing short of empowering and positive, they were absolutely crucial and helpful during the entire process. Thanks to Michigan Works! Southwest, I am thriving along with my new employer. They were always encouraging and available for questions whenever I needed them. I could never imagine going through this experience without Michigan Works! Southwest and want to extend my sincerest appreciation for what they do."*

This success story is a perfect example of the entire network working together for a successful outcome. The customer received meaningful services through the Adult and Dislocated Worker Program; Employment Services staff assisted with mock interviews; and prior to the job readiness assistance, Michigan Works! Southwest had an entire team of individuals, including many business services staff working with Clemens to assist them in successfully staffing and opening their facility which ultimately created this job opportunity. It was great to see this story highlighted by the U.S. Dept of Labor and once again, Ms. Bibb expressed gratitude for the work of an amazing team of passionate service providers, career coaches and business services staff who help make these successes happen. Following the meeting, [the link to the USDOL success story](#) was sent to members.

### **Director's Report (Exhibit D)**

Ben Damerow reported on the Director's Report that was emailed to members prior to the meeting.

*Federal Updates* - Congress recently passed a \$1.3 trillion omnibus Appropriations bill which funds the federal government through September 30, 2021. The bill included increases to several workforce-connected programs:

- \$2.85 billion for WIOA - a \$25.5 million increase,
- \$670 million for Wagner-Peyser – a \$3 million increase,
- \$1.33 billion for CTE grants – a \$52 million increase, and
- \$688 million for Adult Education – a \$31 million increase.

The President and congressional leaders are prioritizing additional COVID-19 relief. The current American Rescue Plan is a \$1.9 trillion package with includes:

- \$350 billion for state and local governments
- \$170 billion for education
- \$160 billion for vaccine development and administration
- \$1,400 economic impacts payments for individuals (phase out at \$75,000 for single filers and \$150,000 for joint filers)
- \$400 per week federal unemployment insurance through August 2021

An amendment for \$500 billion in workforce funding did not pass; however, there is hope that it will be included in a future workforce bill.

Boston Mayor Marty Walsh has been announced as the Secretary of Labor nominee. On February 11, 2021 the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee voted to advance the nomination to a full Senate confirmation vote.

*State Update* - On February 11, 2021 the Governor released her proposed FY22 budget, workforce development items in the budget include the following:

- \$120 million for the Michigan Reconnect program to provide a tuition-free pathway to an in-demand industry certificate/credential or associate degree for Michigan adults age 25 and older.
- \$60 million for the Futures for Frontliners program to fully fund the first cohort of essential workers and expand the program to include individuals who became newly unemployed from November 2020 to January 2021.
- \$15 million one-time increase in Going Pro Talent Fund on top of \$28 million that was included in the budget, for a total of \$43 million to expand employer-based training grants that result in industry-recognized credentials and certificates.

- \$3 million for pre-apprenticeship/apprenticeship programs.

The Legislative and Executive branches of state government will work together to jointly develop a budget by July 1, 2021.

### **PROGRAM**

Audrey Tappenden, Economic Development Assistant, Coldwater Area Economic Development; Shabaka Gibson, Vice President of Battle Creek Unlimited; and Heather Smith-Baker, Managing Partner for Southwest Michigan First, each provided an update on economic development initiatives in the Michigan Works! Southwest service area that includes Branch, Calhoun, Kalamazoo, and St. Joseph Counties.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

None.

### **CITIZENS' TIME**

None.

### **MEMBERS' TIME**

None.

### **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 meeting of the full WDB is scheduled for Thursday, May 20, 2021 from 9:00 – 10:30 a.m.
- The next WDB Executive Committee meeting is scheduled for Thursday, March 18, 2021 from 9:00 – 10:30 a.m.

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

- The Career Educational Advisory Council (CEAC) meeting is scheduled for Monday, March 22, 2021 from 1:00-3:00 p.m.
- 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.

### **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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Frank Tecumseh

Date