

**Workforce Development Board
 Meeting Minutes
 November 13, 2020**

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

Kathy Olsen introduced everyone in attendance. County Commissioner Michael Quinn was participating from Kalamazoo County and County Commissioner Allen Balog was participating from St. Joseph County.

WDB Members Present:

Morris Applebey (Labor)*	Randall Hazelbaker (PS)*	Mike Quinn (PS)
Allen Balog (PS)	Kris Jenkins (Educ)*	Windy Rea (Job Corps)
Dr. Adrien Bennings (Educ)	Cathy Knapp, alternate for	Frank Tecumseh (PS)*
Kathi Cain-Babbitt (Labor)	Jill Bland (Econ Dev)	Brianna Underwood (PS)
Karen Doubleday (MiDHHS)	Ana Martinez (CBO)	Elizabeth Van Dussen (PS)
Dan Dunn (PS)*	Dave Maurer (PS)*	Ken Willcutt (Labor)
John Fiore (MRS)	Jacqueline Murray (PS)	*Executive Committee Members

WDB Members Absent

Rick Anderson (Labor)	Lisa Johansen (MiDOC)	Angila Wilson (PS)
Trevor Bidelman (Labor)	Derek King (PS)	Michael Wilson (CBO)
Jessica Eyster (PS)	Chantal Paxton (PS)	
Lisa Godfrey (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:

Paige Daniels (YOU/KRESA)	Amy Holman (PATH/WEUI)	Amanda Sutherland (YOU/KRESA)
Dawn DeLuca (YOU/KRESA)	Jennifer Klempnow (PATH/WEUI)	
Sam Dougherty (WDI)	Dallas Oberlee (PATH/WEUI)	

Guests Present:

Paul Aivars (GOCC)	John Curran (office of	Don Reid (Daily Reporter)
Senator John Bizon	Senator McCann)	Karen Todd
	Mike Horrigan (W.E. Upjohn)	

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.

PROGRAM: ECONOMIC OUTLOOK

Ben Damerow opened the program portion of the meeting by reflecting on the fact that one year ago he had the pleasure of introducing Mike Horrigan to the Workforce Development Board as the new President of the W.E. Upjohn Institute for Employment Research. Throughout the past year there have been many positive changes under his leadership including the start of a strategic planning process. Like most things

in 2020, due to the pandemic, this was put on hold for a few months. However, Mr. Horrigan has spent many hours meeting with the Michigan Works! Southwest leadership on a weekly basis during the past two months for brainstorming and refining strategies for Michigan Works! Southwest and the Employment Management Services Division (EMSD) of the Upjohn Institute. Currently strategy teams are being developed and staff are looking forward to the implementation of the strategic plan.

Mr. Horrigan's economic outlook presentation included a look at national trends, as well as the Michigan Works! Southwest service area, that includes Branch, Calhoun, Kalamazoo and St. Joseph Counties. The presentation also included a look at a variety of different indicators to give the members a sense of the state of the current economy, as well as projections. Data shared included recent trends in employment and unemployment for the national economy with a closer look at gender, minority and education status. The regional data shared included unemployment rates for each of the counties in Southwest Michigan; total projected employment; and the projected employment in goods producing, business services, and personal services industries. Information was also included for the projected recovery of multiple industry sectors in each of the four counties in the MW! Southwest area. Mr. Horrigan offered his availability to provide economic outlook presentations to other groups. Following the meeting, the electronic version of the presentation was emailed to members along with Mr. Horrigan's contact information.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

WDB Full Board September 11, 2020 Meeting Minutes – *Exhibit A1*

Motion made by John Fiore and supported by Cathy Knapp to approve the September 11, 2020 Workforce Development Board meeting minutes.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

AYES: Morris Applebey, Allen Balog, Dr. Adrien Bennings, Kathi Cain-Babbitt, Karen Doubleday, Dan Dunn, John Fiore, Randall Hazelbaker, Kris Jenkins, Cathy Knapp, Dave Maurer, Jacqueline Murray, Mike Quinn, Windy Rea, Brianna Underwood, Elizabeth Van Dussen, Ken Willcutt

NAYS: None. MOTION CARRIED.

WDB Executive Committee October 9, 2020 Meeting Minutes – *Exhibit A2*

Motion made by Kris Jenkins and supported by Morris Applebey to approve the October 9, 2020 Workforce Development Board Executive Committee meeting minutes.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

AYES: Morris Applebey, Dan Dunn, Randall Hazelbaker, Kris Jenkins, Dave Maurer

NAYS: None. MOTION CARRIED.

CITIZENS' TIME

No comments.

COMMITTEE REPORTS.

Monitoring & Evaluation Committee

Dan Dunn reported the Monitoring and Evaluation Committee recently met to review Employment Services, the Trade Adjustment Assistance Act and the One Stop Operations. One employer and two participants were interviewed during the meeting and each shared information about their experience receiving services and working with Michigan Works! staff. All of the individuals interviewed provided many positive comments regarding their experience and the staff. The meeting ended with a great presentation provided by staff from KRESA, the service provider for these programs and services.

Disability Awareness Resource Team (DART)

John Fiore reported the Disability Awareness Resource Team (DART) also recently met. Most members of the committee represent agencies that support individuals with disabilities and their successful employment. Most of the DART meeting was focused on a discussion as to how COVID-19 has impacted

each of the agencies and their provision of services. All of the organizations reported they have continued to provide services; mostly virtual with some in-person by appointment. Most recently, many of the organizations have reverted back to more remote services due to an increase in COVID-19 numbers. He further reported Project SEARCH continues to operate in the schools with 11 students currently enrolled in Kalamazoo. Due to COVID-19, although it has been somewhat of a challenge, the program adjusted to using multiple sites for the students. Michigan Rehabilitation Services (MRS) is moving forward with another Certified Nurse Assistant (CNA) training, however it will be a challenge to overcome the lack of locations for clinicals. The Michigan Career Technical Institute (MCTI) re-opened with a reduced number of students. MCTI staff have implemented a process to keep a safe environment which has allowed them to continue training for the students and so far, there has not been any reported cases of COVID-19 among the 80 students on campus. Integrated Services of Kalamazoo (ISK) reported at the DART meeting that they are seeing a striking increase in the need for services due to increased anxiety, depression, loneliness, etc. He also highlighted that there are services and supports for the business community and their employees who may be experiencing these types of challenges. Mr. Fiore recognized that Veterans Day is celebrated this week and there are several organizations doing specific outreach to veterans. One such organization, Disability Network has been providing benefits planning for veterans. Lastly, he noted there are currently quite a few job openings for entry level positions, and MRC Industries is working with individuals who are interested in employment and able to enter the workforce safely during this time.

Veterans Committee

Kathy Olsen reported for Mike Wilson on the activities of the Veteran Engagement Team (VET) Southwest Michigan. At the most recent meeting, members decided to move ahead with plans to hold the VETFEST Southwest event on July 24, 2021 in Decatur, Michigan. The first of a series of one-minute videos that will lead up to the event were released; they can be viewed via the [VET Southwest Michigan Facebook page](#). Mike Wilson is planning to meet with the web designer to discuss other ways to share the information. VET Southwest Michigan is continuing to build steam for the veteran owned business three-phase project that includes working on building a relationship with a national veteran owned business directory that the committee hopes to partner with. They also hope to cultivate responses with local veteran owned businesses. Further information will be shared as this project develops. The VET Southwest Michigan group plans to hold a strategy session in late January if the pandemic allows for doing so. Mike Wilson was not available to attend today's meeting because he was busy assisting a veteran in need.

NEW BUSINESS

WDB Plans

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

AY20 - WIOA National Dislocated Worker Grant (NDWG) Disaster Recovery Project - Exhibit B1

Amy Meyers reported Michigan Works! Southwest was awarded \$152,130 in Disaster Recovery National Dislocated Worker Grant (DWG) funding. This funding is in response to a COVID-19 project proposal submitted to the State of Michigan during the past summer. Funding awarded through this policy can be used to

- Support technology upgrades for the local MW! System;
- Assist participants in obtaining Disaster-Relief Employment (DRE) - examples were listed on the plan summary document included in the agenda packet;
- Providing participants career services; and
- Training and work-based training models.

Eligibility for an individual to receive services with this funding was outlined in the plan summary (*Exhibit B1*). She noted it does include being temporarily or permanently laid off as a consequence of the pandemic. Locally, plans are to upgrade technology throughout our service centers as well as serve approximately 17 individuals with training opportunities and placement in Disaster Relief Employment.

FY2021 Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) - Exhibit B2

Amy Meyers reported the Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) is a federal program that assists U.S. workers who have lost their jobs as a result of foreign trade. The program seeks to provide adversely affected workers with opportunities to obtain the skills, credentials, and support necessary to becoming reemployed. As noted in the plan summary (*Exhibit B2*), the planned allocation for the period October 1, 2020 through September 30, 2021 for Michigan Works! Southwest is \$682,688. This represents an increase in TAA funding in comparison to last year's allocation of \$435,920. The Trade services that will be available to workers over the course of their participation in this program include case management activities such as comprehensive assessments, employability skills assistance, and career counseling. TAA program funds can also be used to fund classroom, on-the-job, and registered apprenticeship training.

Motion made by Randall Hazelbaker and supported by Cathy Knapp to approve the AY20 - WIOA National Dislocated Worker Grant (NDWG) Disaster Recovery Project and the FY2021 Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) Program Plans.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

AYES: Morris Applebey, Allen Balog, Dr. Adrien Bennings, Kathi Cain-Babbitt, Karen Doubleday, Dan Dunn, John Fiore, Randall Hazelbaker, Kris Jenkins, Cathy Knapp, Dave Maurer, Jacqueline Murray, Mike Quinn, Windy Rea, Brianna Underwood, Elizabeth Van Dussen, Ken Willcutt
NAYS: None. MOTION CARRIED.

Request for Proposal (RFP) Update

Amy Meyers reported as a follow up to the Request for Proposal (RFP) announcement at the October Executive Committee meeting, GreenStreet Design & Marketing was selected to work with the Michigan Works! Southwest business services team and the healthcare consortium members on the development of a healthcare career pathways marketing campaign. Planning meetings have already started and GreenStreet is planning to present at the upcoming December Healthcare Consortium meeting.

WDB 2021 Schedule

Kathy Olsen reported WDB members were surveyed to see what day of the month would work best for changing the WDB meetings from the second Friday of the month. Based on the survey results, the third Thursday of the month from 9:00-10:30 a.m. is being recommended for 2021 WDB meetings. No objections to this change were raised at the meeting.

The consensus of members present was to change the Michigan Works! Southwest WDB meetings to the third Thursday of the month from 9:00 – 10:30 a.m. for calendar year 2021.

STAFF REPORTS

Business Services Activities

Ashley Iovieno reported on business services operations that included updates pertaining to Apprenticeships, Manufacturing Day and the Going Pro Talent Fund.

Apprenticeships -- Ashley Iovieno wished everyone a happy National Apprenticeship Week and noted that locally, staff are celebrating for longer than a week. Last week, staff hosted a virtual Apprenticeship 1.0 session for employers and a second Apprenticeship 1.0 event is scheduled for November 17, 2020. This will be followed with an Apprenticeship 2.0 session on December 2, 2020 that will be a deeper dive into the apprenticeship details for employers.

Manufacturing Day – As previously reported at the October WDB Executive Committee meeting, Michigan Works! Southwest will be celebrating Manufacturing Day throughout the month of October. Through the Michigan Industries Cluster Approach (MICA) 2.0 grant and the partnership with Battle Creek Unlimited, a series of videos were created to highlight different job categories within

manufacturing. The career exploratory videos feature Charlie Zigler from the Business Services Team and industry professionals discussing their job functions within manufacturing. There are five, 2- to 3-minute videos highlighting the areas of business administration, logistics, production, engineering and IT. One longer video that is a compilation of all five of the shorter videos was also created. She announced that every Wednesday, throughout the month of November, a new video will be released via social media. Plans are to show a video at a future board meeting. The videos can also be viewed on the [Michigan Works! Southwest](#) or the [Battle Creek Unlimited](#) Facebook pages. So far, two videos have been released. Links to the videos were sent to members following the meeting.

Going Pro Talent Fund – The MW! Southwest business services team members have been busy discussing the Going Pro Talent Fund with employers. Five virtual information sessions were held two weeks ago and since then the team has been conducting one-on-one appointments with over 65 employers regarding the Talent Fund. In addition to the outreach, the open application period began on November 2, 2020 and staff are also guiding employers through the application process. New this year, is a question for employers to describe how COVID-19 has impacted their business. On a recent call with Pfizer, when the team was reviewing this section, the contact at Pfizer asked, “Are we supposed to say how has COVID impacted us or the impact we are going to have on COVID?” This discussion took place prior to the recent news that was announced this week regarding the vaccine that Pfizer is working on. Staff suggested that the company include both and are looking forward to reading their proposal.

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 September 1, 2020 through October 31, 2020 was included in the agenda packet notice.

Jakki Bungart-Bibb reported Mike Horrigan’s presentation provided at the beginning of today’s meeting thoroughly covered the labor market report that she normally would provide.

Michigan Works! Southwest Operational Update

Jakki Bungart-Bibb provided an operational update that included results of the Equal Opportunity monitoring, the One Stop Service Centers, the Future of Work Grand Challenge, and the award of another W.K. Kellogg grant for the Service Center Hub locations in Battle Creek.

Equal Opportunity Monitoring – Jakki Bungart-Bibb reported monitoring reports as to how the Michigan Works! Southwest administrative entity monitors the state and federally funded programs and services are provided at WDB meetings on a regular basis. She noted the administrative entity is frequently monitored by State and federal departments as well. One of many State monitoring visits is focused on Equal Opportunity. She reported Equal Opportunity requirements are embedded in all State and federal funding which includes all the programs and services. This requires identifying a local EO officer; having EO procedures in place; and including EO requirements in Requests for Proposals (RFPs), contracts, service center operations, etc. All staff must do their part in order to successfully pass this type of monitoring. The EO monitoring was conducted in September and results were received in October. There were no findings and no administrative recommendations. She extended a huge thank you to everyone in the Michigan Works! Southwest system.

Service Centers – Ms. Bibb reported that at the October WDB meeting she had reported that two more of the service centers in the Michigan Works! Southwest area were moving to the next phase of the COVID response plan which would have meant three centers would be open to in-person appointments one or two days per week, depending on the center. As everyone is aware, COVID cases have been steadily increasing over the last few weeks and recently skyrocketed, which resulted in this area of the State moving back to the red zone. The operations leadership team made the decision a couple of weeks ago to transition back to

100% virtual services with no in-person appointments at this time and this decision aligns with the updated guidance from MIOSHA that states if you can feasibly work remotely you must do so. This also aligns with what many other Michigan Works! and State agencies are doing to help prevent increased spread of the virus and to keep their customers and staff safe. The situation will continue to be monitored closely; however, at this time, the plan is to stay fully remote through the end of the year. She reassured the WDB that staff were well prepared to make the transition back to 100% remote work, much more prepared than in March. Processes are now in place to maintain quality virtual services and to ensure customer needs are met. Staff continue to adapt and test new software platforms to ensure they can make connections with customer to keep them engaged and meet their needs. She provided a couple of examples that included the TuaPath software platform that allows PATH participants to complete virtual orientations and other virtual services; the Brazen software platform that can be used for job fairs and also allows for employer/job seeker connections such as using virtual interview rooms; and PPE has been purchased for distribution to customers who may not have access to PPE. Although this is definitely not the ideal situation and staff were hoping to get back to some sort of ‘old normal’, staff continues to be flexible as they adapt to the situation at hand in order to be the best support for the customers in the communities served.

Future of Work Grand Challenge – Ms. Bibb also provided an update on the [Future of Work Grand Challenge](#) that was reported on at the October WDB meeting. Michigan Works! Southwest was invited to apply for this grant and in partnership with West Michigan Works and Kinexus, a joint application was submitted. The application was accepted and has moved forward in the grant process. [[View the Announcement](#)] Michigan Works! Southwest is currently working on the planning stage as to what this pilot project will look like. One feature that is known is that it will include cutting edge technology. Along with our partners at West Michigan Works and Kinexus, staff will be working with Jobs for the Future (JFF), New Profit, XPRIZE, and MIT Solve to utilize new technology for quickly training and placing dislocated workers. Staff are looking forward to this challenge and are excited to see what can be accomplished with this opportunity. Updates will be provided as this project moves forward.

W. K. Kellogg Foundation Grant - A grant from the W. K. Kellogg Foundation was awarded in 2017 to provide services at neighborhood employment Hubs in Battle Creek. That grant was a three-year, \$3 million dollar grant that was focused on serving over 1,400 individuals from the Battle Creek neighborhoods. The Michigan Works! Southwest Hub staff assisted many of those individuals with short-term training; assistance to remove employment barriers that included housing, childcare and transportation; and assistance with obtaining and maintaining employment. This type of funding is valuable because it helps to address unmet needs. With this funding, staff were able to help individuals who do not always qualify for federal and state workforce development programs. The grant allowed for the provision of support services that state and federal grants do not typically allow, such as paying fines and fees. She noted that not having a driver’s license due to outstanding fines and fees is a huge transportation barrier and being able to pay these fines and fees allows many individuals to obtain their driver’s license. Michigan Works! Southwest recently received award notification that just over \$5 million dollars was awarded to continue this work in Battle Creek for another four years. The grant specifically identifies Michigan Works! Southwest as the lead organization for coordinating and communicating workforce development services in Battle Creek as well as continuing to provide services at the neighborhood Hub locations. She recognized the Hub staff and noted they are an amazing team who work hard to assist some of the most vulnerable customers. She offered thanks to all who assisted with this project.

Director’s Report – Exhibit D

Ben Damerow reported that the *Future of Work Grand Challenge* award that Ms. Bibb spoke about is the only one in the nation that is in partnership with other workforce board and he thanked staff for all the time they spent on applying for the grant.

Mr. Damerow then reported on the Director’s Report that was emailed to members prior to the meeting.

Federal Budget 2021 - In late September, the House and Senate passed a continuing resolution bill that was signed by the President on September 30. The resolution extends approximately \$1.4 trillion in government funding until December 11. Both House and Senate leaders have said they intend to pass a bipartisan appropriations package by the December 11 deadline. Appropriation bills were released this week and a detailed report will be provided at the next meeting. He noted that the WIOA funding was recommended for flat funding for the next year.

State Budget 2021 – Mr. Damerow thanked Senator Bizon for his work on an unprecedented budget process. He highlighted three main programs in the budget which included \$69 million for the Partnership. Accountability. Training. Hope. (PATH) Program; \$30 million for the Michigan Reconnect Program which will be rolled out in February to provide free college tuition at community colleges for individuals who do not have an Associate’s degree; and \$28.6 million for the Going Pro Talent Fund. As Ashley Iovieno mentioned in her report, the business services staff have been very busy providing information sessions and meeting with employers and the comment received from Pfizer was enlightening. Applications are due at the end of November and the announcement of awards is expected in January 2021.

Executive Orders/Unemployment Insurance - On October 2, the Michigan Supreme Court ruled the Governor lacked authority to issue or renew executive orders under the Emergency Management Act after April 30, 2020 without concurrence by the legislature. The ruling impacted the extended and expanded unemployment benefits and the Workshare program. He reported that since the October Board meeting, the legislature did restore the extended and expanded unemployment benefits so that there is no impact on individuals. He extended thanks to legislative representative for that legislation. He also reported that the Michigan Unemployment Insurance Director, Steve Gray, resigned last week and as noted in today’s presentation, Unemployment Agencies throughout the country have been stressed. The State identified Liza Estlund Olson as the interim director of Michigan’s Unemployment Insurance Agency. He reported Ms. Olson previously worked with the Michigan Works! Agencies under the Granholm administration.

Michigan Works! Association – Mr. Damerow reported the Michigan Works! Association is in the process of restructuring the Board of Directors for 2021. Changes to the governance structure will allow for increased representation by key sectors and allow for new strategic partners. This will also ensure geographic representation from all parts of the State and include representatives from every Michigan Works agency. Each Michigan Works! Agency will have two representatives, that includes a key administrative staff member or director as well as another locally appointed Board member. He further reported that he presented the new Bylaws to the Association Board yesterday and they were approved to move forward for an official vote at the December meeting. He will be working with the Michigan Works! Southwest WDB chair and vice-chair and the Nominating Committee to identify a local representative to join him on the Association Board in 2021.

Other Updates - Ben Damerow reported that former WDB member, Julie Rogers was elected to the Michigan House, representing the 60th District which includes the City of Kalamazoo, Kalamazoo Township and part of the City of Portage.

Ben Damerow announced that this would be Dallas Oberlee’s last meeting as she has a great opportunity ahead of her with Social Policy Research Associates. He expressed his congratulations and thanked her for her years of service at the Upjohn Institute and Michigan Works! Southwest. He noted Social Policy Research Associates is the third party evaluation agency for the Kellogg Foundation Grant and looking forward, there may be opportunities to work together. He also announced that Amy Holman and Jennifer Klempnow were named as interim co-directors for PATH programs and services operated through the Upjohn Institute. Together they have a combined thirty years of experience in workforce development programs. Dallas Oberlee expressed her appreciation to everyone for the almost fourteen years at the Upjohn Institute. She stated that she enjoyed working with everyone and throughout the years she has had many great opportunities for growth.

OLD BUSINESS

None.

CITIZENS' TIME

None.

MEMBERS' TIME

One member inquired as to how the State uses COVID-19 data and whether or not, the State differentiates as to whether identified cases were the result of workplace spread or community spread that ended up in the workplace and if there are specific employers and/or industries affected. Based on discussions with other employers during the past couple of weeks, he noted that multiple local manufacturers reported to have had employees with COVID cases. However, none of those cases were due to workplace spread; they have all been individuals who contracted their infections, either from spouses or from social engagement, and the infections were appropriately contained in the workplace.

Senator John Bizon reported that the contact tracing oftentimes falls to the county health departments to be checking on positive cases, trying to figure out who they have been in close contact with and issuing isolation orders. He further reported that in a recent call he had with school superintendents, it was noted that the schools have some relatively rigid protocols and although there have been a number of students who have tested positive, the transmission also appears to be from social gatherings and does not appear to be happening in the classroom setting.

It was expressed that goods manufacturing cannot be done remotely and most of the support function within a manufacturing operation have some degree of on-site requirement, even if it is fairly minimal. Some of the remote work restrictions and policies are causing inefficiencies in the workplace that are leading to significant challenges in the supply chain. Other challenges in the hard goods manufacturing environment such as attracting workers and onboarding are exacerbated in a remote work environment. Members stressed that remote work is significantly different from industry to industry as there are some industries where remote work makes sense and other industries where it is not appropriate. Additionally, as noted previously, often the transmission of COVID-19 is due to an employee becoming infected through social activities outside of the workplace, which appears to be the case in regard to discussion with local colleagues in the manufacturing industry.

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 Friday, December 11, 2020 from 9:00 – 10:30 a.m.
- The next meeting of the full WDB is scheduled for Thursday, February 18, 2021 from 9:00 – 10:30 a.m.

Other upcoming committee meetings were listed on the agenda.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no other reports or business for the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 10:18 a.m.

Kathy Olsen

Date

Frank Tecumseh

Date