

**Workforce Development Board, Inc. Meeting  
of Mahoning and Columbiana Counties – Area 17**  
October 15, 2024  
Best Western Plus Dutch Haus Inn & Suites  
8:00am

**Workforce Development Board Members Present:**

Courtney Amendola for Rachel Ketterman, Theresa Berkenyi for Joe Caruso, Kim Berry, Tyler Chaboudy, Kelly Darney for Jeremy Corbisello, Deann Davis, Ed Emerick, Brian Eskridge, Joe Fiumara, Amber Fomenko for Chuck Kokiko, John Frankovitch, RJ Fryan, Bryan Higgins, Lindsay Hildreth for William Moore, Brenda Linert, Lori Murphy for Audrey Morales, Mark Nicasro, Meribeth Noble, Marcy Patton, Mark Ragozine, Puella Stoddard for LaMont English, Susie Wickline, and John Zehentbauer.

**Workforce Development Board Members Absent:**

Tom Andrews, Ralph Blanco, James Ford, Matt Golladay, Cody Hilliard, Marty Loney, Julie Needs, Julie Rupert, Jason Schnabl, Marion Sweely, Randy Swogger, and Arisha Williams.

**Board Staff Present:** Mary Ann Kochalko and Sharlene Senediak.

**MCTA Staff Present:** Barb Bush, Lynn Esposito, and Leigh Samargia-Pflug.

**Guests:** Ishmael Brown (Choffin), Matt Falter (Lake to River – JobsOhio), Jennifer Gray (Compass), and Michael McGiffin (Lake to River – JobsOhio), and Mary Mihalopoulos (MCCTC).

Ms. Davis called the meeting to order at 8:05am after verification of a quorum, and introductions took place. Although new member Chuck Kokiko from the Jefferson County Educational Service Center was not in attendance, Amber Fomenko attended as his proxy; both were welcomed to the Board.

**Review and Approval of Consent Agenda Items**

Motion: To approve the consent agenda items as prepared.  
Motion made by: Mark Ragozine  
Seconded by: Mark Nicasro  
Discussion: None  
Motion approved.

**Election of 2025-26 Area 17 WDB Officers**

Based on the Area 17 WDB bylaws, the election of WDB officers must be held every two years. Nominations for WDB officers were requested on September 16, 2024, and were accepted through October 4, 2024. All three of the current officers were nominated for their same positions: Deann Davis – WDB Chair, Mark Nicasro – WDB Vice-Chair, and Mark Ragozine – WDB Secretary. No additional nominations were made.

Motion: To accept the nominees as the 2025-2026 Area 17 WDB officers as presented.  
Motion made by: Lori Murphy  
Seconded by: Meribeth Noble  
Abstentions: Dean Davis, Mark Nicasro, and Mark Ragozine  
Discussion: None  
Motion approved.

**Revisions to WDB Program Policies**

WDB Program Policy 12 – *Youth Work Experience*: Language was added to clarify and foster the completion of work experience. Changes include:

- The duration of work experience shall not exceed a cumulative total of 1,040 hours per calendar year;
- Proof of completion of a job readiness curriculum within the 90 days preceding the initial work experience must be in the participant’s file; this excludes an employer-referred OJT, and;
- Paid work experience, excluding OJTs, is a one-time service, and should not exceed 500 hours. If subsequent paid work experience is considered, a justification must be submitted to the WDB Director outlining the reasoning.

The proposed effective date for the policy changes is October 1, 2024.

WDB Program Policy 9 – *Adult and Dislocated Worker Work Experience*: Language was added to match the updates made to the State’s work experience policy for adult and dislocated workers.

Motion: To accept the changes to WDB Program Policy 12 and WDB Program Policy 9 as discussed.

Motion made by: Ed Emerick

Seconded by: Lori Murphy

Discussion: None

Motion approved.

**Fiscal Agent Report**

The PY24 Financial Report through September 30, 2024, was provided for review. The total amount available in each funding stream, with end dates, has been added to the report. Total funds available for PY24 is approximately \$11.2 million; total funds spent or obligated to date is \$5.2 million, which is mostly PY23 carry-in funds. The remaining \$6 million available includes PY24 WIOA and CCMEP funds. Efforts are being made to carry-in most of this funding for PY25.

**Balanced Scorecard**

The 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter PY24 (July 1, 2024 – September 30, 2024) Balanced Scorecard was reviewed. Lines 1-9, 15, and 17 met and/or exceeded the targets for the quarter.

Line 16 will still be reported, but not measured since the goal is to carry-in more funds next year due to the decreasing funding levels.

Line 11 was not on target due to starting the program year in priority and customers have been placed on a wait list. Line 13 was not on target due to the limited number of dislocated workers coming in since the unemployment rate is low. Line 14 was not met due to restrictions on the WIOA youth funds. Currently, WIOA in-school youth are on a wait list; CCMEP and WIOA out-of-school youth can be served.

**Program Operator Report**

*Operator’s Report*

The 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter PY24 (July 1, 2024 – September 30, 2024) Operator’s Report was reviewed. Information from PY23 has been included for side-by-side comparison. Total training enrollments are down 39%, which is due to the decrease in funding levels. The average cost per participant is \$7,921 compared to \$7,627 last year. Total customers served increased slightly to 3,045 from 3,003. During this quarter, 3,045 customers were served, which is slightly higher than last year. Although fewer customers are enrolled in training, customers are still coming into the centers for basic services.

*Mahoning County TANF Youth Summer Program*

The Mahoning County TANF youth summer program began on June 10<sup>th</sup>. The program served 360 youth participants who worked approximately 30 hours per week. The program was extended by two weeks and ended on August 16<sup>th</sup>.

*CCDJFS Active Shooter Training*

On October 3<sup>rd</sup>, CCDJFS hosted an active shooter training for the agencies located in the Columbiana County Government Service building. MCTA staff attended the training, and a safety review was conducted through was conducted throughout the facility. Areas of improvement are being reviewed to determine what can be implemented now, based on the current budget.

*New Start – Justice Involved Individuals (JII) Grant*

MCTA received \$450,000 from the New Start – JII Grant, which can serve 55 justice-involved individuals. Customers eligible as an adult, dislocated worker, or youth can be placed in work experience, classroom training or OJTs. The business services team was also incorporated into the grant to provide follow-along services for customers who may need assistance with job search or placement.

**Director’s Report**

*Status of Funding*

The federal budget remains under a continuing resolution through December 20<sup>th</sup>. No further action has been taken on WIOA reauthorization, and it most likely will not be considered until after the new Congress is in place.

*PY22 WIOA Performance*

For PY22, Area 17 successfully met the 12 applicable WIOA performance measures. The “measurable skills gain” metric remains non-applicable since the way to measure it has not been determined.

*One-Stop Operator RFP*

WIOA legislation requires One-Stop operators to be competitively procured. The Area 17 One-Stop Operator RFP will be issued this December. A one-year contract will be awarded, with the option to renew up to three times, which is contingent upon performance. The Executive Committee will serve as the proposal review committee and make its recommendation for the One-Stop operator at the April 2025 WDB meeting.

*Labor Market Information Request*

On the meeting evaluation from the July meeting, someone requested labor market information and coordination of exploring demographics and market trends with schools and future market availability. Additional clarification is needed to move forward with the request.

*WDB Presentations*

If your organization would like to present at a WDB meeting, you can contact Mary Ann Kochako or Sharlene Senediak.

**Presentation: Lake to River Ohio**

Michael McGiffin, VP of Engagement and Investor Relations, provided background information about JobsOhio. In 2011, JobsOhio became the economic development department of the State, to primarily address transparency and efficiency concerns. Jobs Ohio originally had 6 partner regions, however, the Lake to River Ohio region was added in 2023.

Lake to River is comprised of Ashtabula, Trumbull, Mahoning, and Columbiana counties. It was created as a economic development region based on its border economy with Pennsylvania, the logistical opportunities

it has with deep water ports and the Route 11 Corridor, and its own media market. This region will specifically focus on incentives and business deals for the four counties.

Matt Falter, Director of Talent Engagement, provided information about the State initiative, Find Your Ohio, to reach out to individuals to return or relocate to Ohio for employment. The industries being focused on include manufacturing, healthcare and IT.

**Meeting Evaluation**

WDB members were reminded to complete the meeting evaluation.

**Partner and Business Member Updates/Good of the Order**

*Regional Chamber*

The results from the community needs assessment conducted by the Regional Chamber and Goodwill Industries of Youngstown were released last week. The main barriers to employment were identified and include, but not limited to, transportation, childcare, and mental health/substance use disorders. A task force will be created to convene meetings and determine ways to overcome the barriers for people to enter the workforce.

*Compass Family and Community Services*

October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month. Compass can offer education and support to companies in Mahoning County, to inform their employees about resources available for those who may be impacted by domestic violence.

**Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 9:05am.