

**Workforce Development Board, Inc. Meeting  
of Mahoning and Columbiana Counties – Area 17**

April 20, 2021  
Zoom Meeting  
8:00 am

**Workforce Development Board Members Present:**

Roger Beltz, Ralph Blanco, Jim Burgham, John Dance, Deann Davis, Dominic Donofrio, Brian Eskridge, Joe Fiumara, James Ford, Bryan Higgins, Kyle Kiraly for Steve Kiraly, Jim Klingensmith, Susie Kooser, Mary Mihalopoulos for John Zehentbauer, William Moore, Lori Murphy for Audrey Morales, Rakia Naze, Julie Needs, Mark Nicastro, Erich Offenburg, Marcy Patton, Mark Ragozine, Troy Rhoades, Julie Rupert, Arisha Williams, and Sharon Woodberry.

**Workforce Development Board Members Absent:**

Chuck Adkins, Sarah Boyarko, Joe Caruso, Art Daly, David Deibel, John Dyce, Ed Emerick, Rick Fryda, Matthew Golladay, David Hughes, LaTasha Johnson, Rachel Ketterman, and Danielle Mulligan.

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

**MCTA Staff Present:** Cyndy Bresnahan, Barbara Bush, Lynn Esposito, Jack Hile, Gloria Mathews, Carol Ramsay-Loomis, and Leigh Samargia-Pflug.

**Guests:** Ashlee Iannucci (OOD) and AJ Sumell (YSU).

Ms. Davis called the meeting to order at 8:00am after verification of a quorum. Mary Ann Kochalko was introduced as the new Area 17 WDB Director. Susie Kooser was also introduced as the new MCTA COO and WDB member.

**Review and Approval of Consent Agenda Items**

Motion:	To approve the consent agenda items as prepared.
Motion made by:	Jim Burgham
Seconded by:	James Ford
Discussion:	None
Motion approved.	

**Approval of One-Stop Operator**

The RFP for the Area 17 One-Stop Operator was issued on December 7, 2020, with proposals being due by January 29, 2021. Two proposals were received – one from Mahoning and Columbiana Training Association, the other from Hightower Workforce Initiatives. The proposals were scored by the Executive Committee members individually and discussed at the February 18<sup>th</sup> Executive Committee meeting.

Both proposals met the minimum requirements, and the budgets were within the funding amount available. One major difference between the proposals involved on-site versus off-site management. Hightower Workforce Initiatives is headquartered in Lexington, Kentucky and would manage the centers off-site, with monthly on-site meetings; MCTA would provide on-site management on a daily basis. MCTA also proposed its services at a lower cost.

After discussing the proposals, the individual scores were compiled to determine an average score for each proposal, and only one proposal was acceptable for recommendation, which was from MCTA.

Motion: To accept the recommendation from the Executive Committee that MCTA be awarded the contract for the Area 17 One-Stop Operator commencing on July 1, 2021.

Motion made by: Sharon Woodberry

Seconded by: Jim Burgham

Abstention: Susie Kooser

Discussion: None

Motion approved.

**East Ohio Regional and Local Plan**

Area 17 is part of the East Ohio Workforce Development Region, which is also comprised of Area 6 (Stark and Tuscarawas Counties) and Area 18 (Trumbull County). The region developed a new 4-year regional plan, along with local plans for each workforce area. The plan was distributed to WDB members and posted on the website for a 30-day public comment period, which ended on April 14<sup>th</sup>. No comments were submitted, it and will be considered the final draft for submission upon the Board’s approval.

Motion: To accept the plan as developed for submission to the State by May 28, 2021.

Motion made by: Troy Rhoades

Seconded by: Dominic Donofrio

Discussion: None

Motion approved.

**Fiscal Agent Report**

The PY20 Financial Report through March 31, 2021 was provided for review. One quarter remains in the program year, and it is projected that all overhead and PY19 funds will be spent, with most of PY20 funds being spent.

**Balanced Scorecard**

The 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter PY20 (July 1, 2020 – March 31, 2021) Balanced Scorecard was reviewed. Out of the 11 active measures, 4 have met or exceeded the year-to-date target, 4 measures are making progress and within 10% of the year-to-date target, and 3 measures (# of employer with staff-assisted job orders, # of dislocated worker in WIOA registered services, and PY20 WIOA funds spent &/or obligated) are behind target.

Although the # of staff-assisted job orders has been behind most of the year due to the pandemic, staff-assisted job orders are beginning to increase. The # of dislocated workers is also beginning to increase as more dislocated workers are inquiring about services and considering their options. Expenditures and obligations of PY20 WIOA funds remain behind target due to the higher receipt of allocations from special grants for adults and dislocated workers than originally anticipated. There was also a slower pace of spending youth funds due to the pandemic, however, youth are finally being placed into work experience. Not meeting the current funding benchmarks will not impact Area 17 receiving future funding. PY19 funds are expected to be fully spent by June 30, 2021, and PY20 funds can be used through June 30, 2022.

**Program Operator Report**

The 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter PY20 (July 1, 2020 – March 31, 2021) Operator’s Report was reviewed. Area 17 has experienced an increase in on-the-job training and long-term training. The planned average cost per participant remains consistent compared to this time last year. Total new adult and dislocated

enrollments since July 1<sup>st</sup> is 388. 4,051 individuals have been served, which is a 6% increase compared to last year, with 1,912 of those individuals being served virtually.

Area 17 OMJ centers are currently open 5 days a week by appointment-only; this allows 200 customers to be seen per week between both counties. During March, 75% of services was virtual, however, in-person services have slightly increased during April. Some OMJ partners are also beginning to resume on-site services. Although more services will eventually resume onsite, virtual services will continue to remain an option. It is still too early to determine if participant levels are trending back towards pre-COVID19 levels. Customer information collected is limited only to individuals receiving services at the centers; unemployment information for all individuals in the area may be attained from the State.

### **Director's Report**

*Funding* – Funding still remains available to provide individualized and training services to eligible individuals, and referrals are encouraged. This month typically begins the enrollments for fall semester classes, and it is expected to have approximately the same number as last year. As mentioned previously, youth funding is available, and focus will be directed on reaching out-of-school youth, particularly high school graduates who may still be deciding between training or employment opportunities. The number of dislocated workers that may seek services remains uncertain, especially given the number of fraudulent claims reported over the past several months, however, Area 17 has the funding for these individuals who choose to seek services.

*American Job Plan* – At the federal level, the American Jobs Plan is being proposed and in early discussions. One potential component of the plan includes a new dislocated worker program, as well as a focus on manufacturing and healthcare. Updated information will be shared when it becomes available.

*Special Grants* - The Opioid Emergency Relief (Opioid 3) grant is a National Dislocated Worker grant which was scheduled to end on March 31, 2021, however, was recently extended for another year. Area 17 received additional funding, making the total amount received approximately \$344,000. The intent of this grant is to reintegrate those impacted by the opioid crisis back into the workplace and to encourage employers to become recovery-friendly workplaces. Under this grant, Area 17 has been able to assist 90 individuals with career services, 50 with training, and 50 with supportive services; 144 employers have also been provided business services. The established goals have been exceeded and will be reevaluated accordingly for the upcoming year.

Area 17 has also participated in the RETAIN grant, which focuses on a return-to-work/stay-at-work strategy for employed individuals who were injured off-the job. Mercy Health is a partner in the grant and has served as a liaison to encourage employers to utilize the strategies being proposed under the grant. Phase 1 of the grant has been completed. Eight states participated in Phase 1, and five will be approved to participate in Phase 2. Ohio applied to participate in Phase 2 and expects to be approved.

*Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) Program* – The RESEA program is a federal program specifically for unemployment claimants who will unlikely return to work. The program was previously administered by the State and is now being administered by the local area staff. Training began in January and remains ongoing. Participants are beginning to be seen, and the State will be requesting additional funding for next year.

*A-133 Audit* – The MCTA A-133 audit for July 1, 2019- June 30, 2020 has been accepted and certified by the Auditor of State. There were no administrative or financial findings.

Discussion regarding how OMJ customers are made aware of available services was held. When individuals visit the OMJ centers/website, they are encouraged to complete a self-assessment. Based on the answers from the completed self-assessment, the individual is provided with recommendation for services that are offered by various OMJ partners. Referrals for services can also be made among partners.

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

*ODJFS* – The PCs for People program is available in Ohio. Under this program, the State donates computers for individuals who are unable to afford their own. In the Mahoning Valley, Goodwill Industries is the organization individuals can contact to inquire about the program. Additional information can be accessed on the website [www.pcsforpeople.org](http://www.pcsforpeople.org).

*MCCTC* – MCCTC is offering a technical training instructor course to help address the staffing shortage being experienced by industry credentialing training programs.

*CCMHR SB* – The social services field is experiencing a significant employee shortage at all levels, as many jobs are going unfilled. Employers are offering bonuses and training opportunities as incentives to address the shortage. The concern is also being discussed at the State level.

**Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 8:50am.