

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD, INC.
OF
MAHONING AND COLUMBIANA COUNTIES
Executive Committee Meeting
May 19, 2022
OhioMeansJobs Mahoning County

Committee Members Present: Kelly Darney, Deann Davis, Brian Eskridge, Rachel Ketterman, Susie Kooser, Mark Nicaastro, and Mark Ragozine
Committee Members Absent: Ed Emerick and Audrey Morales
Board Staff: Mary Ann Kochalko and Sharlene Senediak

Deann Davis, WDB Chair, called the meeting to order at 12:00pm after verification of a quorum.

Approval of Consent Agenda Item

Motion: To approve the consent agenda item as prepared.
Motion made by: Kelly Darney
Seconded by: Rachel Ketterman
Discussion: None
Motion approved.

Youth Services Contractors

An RFP was developed and issued jointly by the Board and MCTA to procure the required 14 WIOA youth elements within the Comprehensive Case Management and Opportunity Program (CCMEP). The intent of the RFP is to purchase “off-the-shelf” services that are already available for youth on a cost-reimbursement basis. All 14 youth elements must be made available, however, not all participants need to receive all elements. MCTA determines what services a participant needs and refers them accordingly. Currently, Compass Family and Community Services and The Counseling Center of Columbiana County are the contracted youth services providers. Both Compass and The Counseling Center, as well as Academy for Urban Scholars, Columbiana County Educational Service Center, Junior Achievement, Techie Youth, and Utica Shale Academy, submitted proposals.

The proposal review committee met on March 3rd to discuss the proposals. Of the seven proposals, only one proposal was below the acceptable scoring range, which was Techie Youth. Techie Youth is based in New York City and did not indicate it had a knowledge of the local labor market. The services are also only offered online, which would make services contingent upon having internet and the appropriate computer equipment. The \$2,000/month cost with a minimum one-year contract was also a concern.

Through the remaining six proposals, all 14 youth elements will be provided in Area 17. A matrix was provided to show which organization can offer which element. Each provider offers more than one element, which can lead to more service availability for participants.

Motion: To accept proposals for youth services from Academy for Urban Scholars - Youngstown, Columbiana County Educational Service Center, Compass Family & Community Services, The Counseling Center of Columbiana County, Junior Achievement of Mahoning Valley, and Utica Shale Academy of Ohio, and to decline the proposal from Techie Youth due to reasons discussed.
Motion made by: Mark Nicaastro
Seconded by: Mark Ragozine
Discussion: None
Motion approved.

The approved contractors will be invited to participate in an all-day training to review WIOA-CCMEP requirements and local processes.

WDB Program Policy 12 – Youth Work Experience

WDB Program Policy 12 – *Youth Work Experience* was provided to discuss a potential wage increase for work experience under the CCMEP program. The current wage is \$10/hour, which is below many entry-level positions. 20% of youth funding must be spent on youth experience; if youth can earn higher wages on their own, there is no incentive to go through MCTA’s work experience program. Suggested wage rates were \$12/hour and \$14/hour. The county JFS summer work experience programs are \$13/hour. The \$13/hour would maintain consistency with the county JFS work experience programs and still remain competitive.

- Motion: To approve the revised work experience wage to \$13/hour in the WDB Program Policy 12 as discussed.
- Motion made by: Rachel Ketterman
- Seconded by: Mark Nicastro
- Discussion: None
- Motion approved.

Status of WIOA Funding and Special Grants

Preliminary WIOA funding levels for PY22 were recently provided by the State. Overall, Area 17 will experience a 11.7% decrease compared to the previous year. Given the projected PY22 WIOA funding and estimated carry-in funds, approximately \$7.3 million will be available next year. The CCMEP TANF funds are not allocated until October 1st, and local workforce areas do not receive advanced notice of the funding levels. On average, Area 17 has received approximately \$3 million in CCMEP TANF funds each year.

Although Area 17 will experience a decrease in PY22 WIOA allocations, the carry-in and special grant funding should minimize any financial impact. The PY21 WIOA carry-in totals are higher than normal due to the pandemic. WIOA funding is available for two years - the first-year funds can be carried over into the second year. During the pandemic, the State gave local areas an extra year to spend PY19 funds, anticipating that a higher number of unemployed individuals would seek services. The number of individuals seeking services has not been as high as expected, which has led to higher levels of carry-in funding. During PY21, Area 17 spent \$3.7 million WIOA funding, \$1.3 million CCMEP TANF funding, and nearly \$1 million special grant funding. Special grant funding includes Fresh Start, RESEA, BRN, and RETAIN. Some PY20 WIOA Youth funds may be returned to the State but spending efforts will continue through June 30, 2022.

Areas 17 and 18 have also applied for \$500,000 from a DOL Apprenticeship Grant. A decision is expected to be made by July 1, 2022. If awarded, the funding will be utilized for pre-apprenticeship programs in manufacturing, which will be sponsored through MVMC.

WIOA reauthorization is currently being discussed in Congress. The House passed a bill, which doubled the amount of funding for the existing workforce development system, and is on its way to the Senate. While some members want to increase the funding, others feel the workforce development system is ineffective and needs to change. Until its reauthorized, WIOA will operate under a continuing resolution.

Operations Update

All local signatures have been obtained for the PY22 Area 17 OMJ Partner MOU, and it has been submitted to the State for final signatures.

Outreach efforts for out-of-school youth continue to remain a strong focus. Billboards will be active May, June, and July, with a different training message displayed each month. Signage continues to be

displayed on WRTA buses and on CARTS vehicles. An 8-week radio campaign has been running on LOUD 102.3, and an outreach campaign through TV, apps, and streaming services is being researched. As individuals come in for services, they are being asked how they heard about CCMEP to track the most effective means for outreach. Some employers have been looking to hire young adults, which has led to more OJTs for youth.

Through Ohio to Work, the YouScience online assessment has been implemented at the OMJ centers. Customers can complete this assessment and receive a summary of their skills, suggestions for what skills they can include on a resume, and how their skills can be adapted and transferred to other jobs. YouScience may also identify local employers in need of those skill sets. YouScience was originally scheduled to end December 31, 2022, but may be extended to June 30, 2023. Students from two high schools (East and Chaney) visited the OMJ center in Boardman and completed the YouScience assessment, as well as CCMEP self-referral form, for themselves.

The plan and budget for Phase 2 of the RETAIN grant has been completed and submitted to the State.

WDB Meeting Attendance and Evaluation Summary

Per the suggestion at the March Executive Committee meeting, the attendance summary was calculated with and without the January 2022 meeting attendance. Under preliminary WIOA reauthorization discussions, changes to Board composition requirements have been proposed. With the uncertainty of new membership requirements, the suggestion was made to remain conservative in replacing WDB members, and to only replace members as needed to remain in compliance. Follow-up will be made with members who have an attendance rate of 50% or less to determine their interest to remain on the Board.

Discussion was held regarding the status of employment agencies on the Board. Based on past practice, the decision to exclude staffing agencies from WDB membership will be upheld. WDB members are supposed to be representatives of an in-demand industry in the area. There have also been concerns that staffing agencies would solicit employers for business opportunities.

The April 19th WDB meeting evaluation was reviewed. Comments and questions noted can be addressed by Susie and Mary Ann at the July WDB meeting. A representative from Mercy Health will present information about the RETAIN grant at the meeting.

Good of the Order

CCCTC – Beginning in September, CCCTC will offer a Police Academy program. An open house is scheduled next week, and all police departments in Columbiana County have been invited.

Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 1:05pm.