

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

January 16, 2024

Best Western Plus Dutch Haus Inn & Suites

8:00am

**Workforce Development Board Members Present:**

Courtney Amendola for Rachel Ketterman, Sheryl Bailey for Matt Golladay, Kim Berry, Kelly Darney for Chuck Adkins, Deann Davis, Dominic Donofrio, Ed Emerick, Joe Fiumara, James Ford, John Frankovitch, Bryan Higgins, Mary Mihalopoulos for John Zehentbauer, William Moore, Lori Murphy for Audrey Morales, Julie Needs, Marcy Patton, Julie Rupert, Brianna Sullivan for Brian Eskridge, Randy Swogger, Susan Tracy for Jason Schnabl, and Susie Wickline.

**Workforce Development Board Members Absent:**

Ralph Blanco, Joe Caruso, Art Daly, David Deibel, LaMont English, RJ Fryan, Cody Hilliard, Marty Loney, Melissa Maiorano, Marilyn Montes, Mark Nicastro, Meribeth Noble, and Arisha Williams.

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

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

Ms. Davis called the meeting to order at 8:05am after verification of a quorum, and introductions took place.

**Review and Approval of Consent Agenda Items**

Motion: To approve the consent agenda items as prepared.  
Motion made by: Ed Emerick  
Seconded by: Julie Rupert  
Discussion: None  
Motion approved.

**PY23 WDB Monitoring Report**

Based on WDB Administrative Policy 6 – *Monitoring and Oversight*, monitoring must be completed on subrecipients and contractors on a yearly basis. WDB staff complete the monitoring on behalf of the Board, and although some monitoring is conducted throughout the year, a desk review is usually conducted mid-year to review performance and allow time for improvements if necessary. Since the program year begins July 1<sup>st</sup>, the desk review began in November and took approximately a month to complete. Programmatic, fiscal, and OJT information was reviewed, and there were no significant findings.

Motion: To approve the Area 17 PY23 WDB monitoring report as presented.  
Motion made by: Mark Ragozine  
Seconded by: Lori Murphy  
Discussion: None  
Motion approved.

Monitoring for the One-Stop Operator and youth service provider contracts will be completed later this month.

**Fiscal Agent Report**

The PY23 Financial Report through December 31, 2023, was provided for review. Area 17 has \$4,431,299.84 available in PY23. Given the uncertainty in Congress related to the federal budget and WIOA reauthorization, Area 17 is taking a very conservative approach on spending for participants and staff. At this time, the deadline for Congress to approve the federal budget is March 8<sup>th</sup>; if nothing is finalized, then sequestration will be instituted, which will result in a 1% decrease across all programs. In addition to operating in priority status, funding for training was reduced from two-years to a one-year limit to control costs.

**Balanced Scorecard**

The 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter PY23 (July 1, 2023 – December 31, 2023) Balanced Scorecard was reviewed. Four items not on target this quarter include: Line 7 – Total New One-Stop Visits, Line 9 – # of New OJT Participants PY23, Line 13 – # of CCMEP Youth IOPs (WIOA & TANF) New PY23, and Line 15 – PY23 WIOA Funds Spent &/or Obligated. These measures were not met due to the limited funding and precautionary measures being taken due to the uncertainty of future funding levels. Line 16 – % of One-Stop Partners Contributing to Cost Sharing is making progress, and the remaining measures were met or exceeded.

**Program Operator Report***Operator's Report*

The 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter PY23 (July 1, 2023 – December 31, 2023) Operator's Report was reviewed. During this time, 175 individuals were enrolled in training services, compared to 291 this time last year. Being in priority status, along with the reducing funding for training to only one year, has impacted the number of individuals in training services. Total individuals receiving services is higher due to people carried in from last year and in follow up. As those individuals move through the program, the numbers will eventually decrease. Efforts are still being made to reach out-of-school youth who are TANF-eligible. to track virtual visits better. Based on the latest data, virtual visits are now at 35% compared to 25% previously.

*Previous Meeting Evaluation*

On the last meeting evaluation, someone requested resources for hiring and onboarding VISA workers. A list of various websites was provided as a reference, and members were reminded the BRN can assist employers with additional resources. A BRN interview can be scheduled with Cyndy Bresnahan.

Another comment on the evaluation inquired about the placements of individuals who utilize the OMJ centers. If a customer only receives basic career services, tracking employment is difficult since they are not enrolled in registered or training services; the only way to know is if the customer comes in to inform a staff member that they gained employment. Employment for customers who are enrolled in registered or training services can be tracked, which is used for the area's federal performance measures.

In PY22, OJTs were primarily in the manufacturing, health care, and IT industries; classroom training was primarily for healthcare and CDL-A licenses.

OJT testimonials from employers were requested on the evaluation, and they were shared with members. Many employers have been very pleased with the OJT program and appreciate MCTA's support, assisting them with their hiring needs.

*Grant Update*

MCTA is still participating in the Fresh Start grant and will be submitting information for Quarter 8 reports. The grant can serve individuals who have been directly involved with opioids or know someone involved with opioids. The grant is scheduled to end March 31<sup>st</sup> unless there is another extension.

MCTA also received its request of \$184,500 for a Justice Involved Individuals (JII) grant from the State. The grant will be used to offer ITAs, OJTs, supportive services, and individualized career services to individuals who are involved with the justice system and re-entering the workforce.

## **Director's Report**

### *WDB Recertification*

Area 17 will be submitting its application for WDB recertification to the State at the end of the month. Information will be compiled to show that WDB member composition and the nomination process comply with WIOA legislation.

### *WIOA Reauthorization*

WIOA was due to be reauthorized in 2020, but it has been operating under a continuing resolution. As an unauthorized appropriation, funds can be taken away for other programs; if reauthorized, funding can at least be secured. WIOA was designed to meet and reinforce workforce needs in established industries and does not address the new industries being developed at a rapid pace. The challenge for Congress is determining how to validate spending on new industries while being flexible enough to meet workforce needs. HR6655 – A Stronger Workforce for America Act has been proposed in the House of Representatives. If passed in the House, it will be forwarded to the Senate. The expectation is that HR6655 will be modified from its original version, but it seems to be a promising starting point.

HR6655 proposes 50% of funding is used towards training, which is currently undefined. The Senate is questioning this amount and what the funding would cover. It also proposes states to set aside additional funding to establish a critical industry skills fund.

### *WDB Subcommittees*

In response to a comment on the last meeting evaluation, subcommittee reports are provided as a consent agenda item on the WDB website and emailed to members a week before the meeting. If any member has questions about the information, they can contact the WDB director.

Each WDB member is also expected to be a member on a subcommittee. Descriptions of the subcommittees and the frequency they meet were reviewed. Members can change subcommittees at any time and can serve on more than one committee.

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

No updates were reported.

## **Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 8:50am.