

**WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD, INC.  
OF  
MAHONING AND COLUMBIANA COUNTIES**

Individuals with Disabilities Committee Meeting  
October 10, 2024  
9:00am  
OhioMeansJobs Center Mahoning County

Committee Members Present: Shirley Bowald, Christi Dunlap for Alex Hertzler, Ed Emerick, Brian Eskridge, Dawn Haines for Joe Caruso, Brenda Linert, Marcy Patton, Julie Rupert, and Susie Wickline  
Committee Members Absent: Matt Golladay and Brenda Heidinger  
Adjunct Members: Jack Hile and Carol Ramsay-Loomis  
Board Staff: Sharlene Senediak  
Guest: Troy Rhoades

Mr. Eskridge, Committee Chair, called the meeting to order at 9:05am after verification of a quorum.

**Approval of July 11, 2024 Meeting Minutes**

Motion: To approve the July 11, 2024 meeting minutes as prepared.  
Motion made by: Shirley Bowald  
Seconded by: Ed Emerick  
Discussion: None  
Motion approved.

**Approval of 2025 Meeting Schedule**

Due to known scheduling conflicts, the 2025 meeting schedule was not approved. The alternative days being considered are the 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesdays or the 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesdays of January, April, July, and October; the time will remain at 9:00. The committee agreed to hold the next meeting on Wednesday, January 8, 2025, and the annual schedule will be discussed at that time.

**Accessible Ohio Conference and Expo: Keynote Address by Rosemarie Rosetti, “Why Accessibility Matters” (video)**

Accessible Ohio is a new division at OOD which assists businesses and venues with accessibility and ADA compliance resources; specialists are available in each area of the state to provide assistance. This new division hopes to address the perceived fears employers have in making their workplaces accessible.

In the video, Dr. Rosemarie Rosetti shared how she acquired her disability and went on to talk about her experiences of dealing with inaccessible places. She showed how many areas of her home were inaccessible after her disability and how it was rebuilt to become a “universal design” home. She also gave multiple examples of venues that exhibit a universal design. Individuals may acquire a disability due to aging, have a non-physical disability, a undiagnosed disability, which is why it is important to implement a universal design from the beginning.

She encourages people to advocate for policies that support making accessibilities happen, invest in accessible design from the beginning of development, raise awareness when you see an accessibility issue, and listen to people with disabilities. Additional information about Rosemarie Rosetti can be found at [www.rosemariespeaks.com](http://www.rosemariespeaks.com) and the Universal Design Living Laboratory can be accessed at [www.udll.com](http://www.udll.com).

An “Accessible Ohio” tab is located on the homepage of OOD’s website, [www.ood.ohio.gov](http://www.ood.ohio.gov). The tab will direct you to additional resources, videos, webinars, and contact information for specialists.

October is National Disability Employment Awareness month. An article was distributed which shows the percentage of people with disabilities in the workforce has been increasing, however, it remains a largely untapped resource for the workforce. The article also mentions the cost of making accommodations is minimal; small adjustments do not have to be expensive, yet they can have a huge impact for new/current employees and customers.

The Job Accommodations Network ([www.askjan.org](http://www.askjan.org)) is also a good resource for accommodations.

### **Grant Updates:**

#### *Justice Involved Individuals (JII) Grant*

The JII grant continues to make progress. Individuals who have been involved with the justice system in any way can be referred to MCTA.

### **Member Updates**

#### *Regional Chamber*

The Regional Chamber and Goodwill Industries recently partnered together to conduct a community needs assessment pertaining to the workforce. The Regional Chamber will be hosting a Public Policy Conference tomorrow, and the results from the assessment will be released at the event. One of the barriers identified through the assessment was the lack of resources for individuals with disabilities. In the upcoming weeks and months, action plans will be created, and stakeholder groups will be formed to implement solutions to decrease the identified barriers.

#### *Columbiana County Mental Health and Recovery Services Board*

A grant application has been submitted to RecoveryOhio for a proposed initiative in Salem. The initiative seeks to establish resource hubs to assist individuals with substance use disorders. Additional applications have been submitted to other grant opportunities to further address substance use disorders.

### **Guest Invite Ideas – next and future meetings?**

The suggestion to invite Shelley Murray, CEO at Goodwill Industries of Youngstown, to discuss the results of the community needs assessment will be revisited for the January meeting.

Additional suggestions can also be emailed to Brian Eskridge at [brian.eskridge@ood.ohio.gov](mailto:brian.eskridge@ood.ohio.gov).

### **Other Business – topics for discussion?**

No other business was discussed.

### **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 10:10am.