

BUSINESS SOLUTIONS COMMITTEE MEETING
Partners for Performance, 920 Water St, Ste 32B, Meadville, PA 16335
Wednesday, June 5, 2019
3:04 pm

ATTENDANCE

Caryl Unseld ☎
Dr. Lisa Miller ☎
Larry Fannie ☎

ABSENT

Gary Shaw
County Executive Dahlkemper
Jody Dixon

STAFF

Janet Anderson
Deb O'Neil
Erin Shaffer
Ramon Rodriguez
Jackie Hamilton

WELCOME/ROLL CALL

Ms. Unseld called the meeting to order at 3:04 pm. Roll call was taken. It was noted that there was no quorum.

VISITOR RECOGNITION/PUBLIC COMMENT

Visitors introduced themselves. There was no public comment.

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES – MARCH 26, 2019

The minutes dated March 26, 2019 were presented for review. As there was no quorum, the minutes will be presented for approval at the next meeting.

REVIEW OF PREVIOUS ACTION ITEMS

- 1. Ms. Hamilton will coordinate a meeting of the Business Services Team and the Business Solutions Committee.** Ms. Hamilton reported that she is working with Ms. Ibraheem to schedule the meeting.
- 2. Board staff will reschedule the May Business Solutions Committee Meeting via Doodle.** Complete.

EDUCATION DISCUSSION

ASSESSMENTS UPDATE

Ms. Unseld reported that partners unanimously decided to move forward with CASAS over TABE 11/12 due to reasons related to cost and efficiency. The TABE 9/10 will no longer be an eligible youth assessment after June 30, 2019. Two attachments explaining test content and grade level equivalency were provided to the committee prior to the meeting. Assessments at PA CareerLink® are used to ensure clients have the ability to successfully complete training, prior to taking advantage of their lifetime allowance for training. Ms. Unseld explained that on June 21, her staff will conduct introductory training and both PA CareerLink® comprehensive sites to introduce everyone to CASAS and teach them how to use the information from the assessment when working with clients. PA CareerLink® will begin using CASAS prior to July 1 in an attempt to avoid the need for clients to complete two assessments. TABE scores will not be accepted after June 30.

Ms. Unseld explained that the local area is piloting a web version of the assessment. This version takes a little less time to administer and offers a more detailed assessment of knowledge by analyzing the time needed to complete parts of the exam. Tests are otherwise hand-scored. A scantron option is available, but is costly. Ms. Unseld estimated the cost to be around \$5k.

INCUMBENT WORKER TRAINING UPDATE

Ms. Anderson reported that she and Ms. O'Neil met with Ms. Ibraheem about several waivers for Incumbent Worker Training, about a week and a half ago. Board staff continues to research to remain compliant with all regulations as well as local policy. ResCare is working hard to spend the \$30k earmarked for incumbent worker training but ran into issues as part of the implementation process, prompting review by board staff. Board staff continues to work through concerns and may identify revisions for policy language in the future.

ACTION PLAN FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND EDUCATION

COORDINATE REGIONAL AND LOCAL WORKFORCE ACTIVITIES

WORKFORCE RESEARCH AND LABOR MARKET ANALYSIS

There was no specific update for these regular agenda items, however Ms. Shaffer was asked to provide an HPO/ETPL update. Ms. Shaffer explained that on June 4, an ETPL Resource Session was held at Crawford CTC and fifteen representatives of training providers attended. The session is usually held in the fall, but was moved up due to new required information. Ms. Anderson explained that the HPO petition period closed locally on May 31. No petitions were received, but discussions took place and board staff expects several petitions to be submitted next year. Mr. Fannie noted that he is aware that a local training provider worked with North Central WDA to become an approved training provider with an EMT program. Since the ETPL is a statewide list and local policy does not prohibit using funding to support HPOs recognized in nearby areas, local clients are able to be trained in the program. Ms. Anderson confirmed the partnership and noted that a group inquired about petitioning EMT as an HPO on the local list, but was unable to provide the needed documentation at this time.

EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT

YOUTH

WORK EXPERIENCE

Ms. Anderson explained that there has been a significant uptick in serving out-of-school youth since January, including the funding of 47 work experiences. Committee members were encouraged to speak with employers about partnering with PA CareerLink® through providing work experience opportunities. This is a great way to expose out-of-school youth able, eligible, and wanting to work in real work environments.

ITA PLACEMENTS

Ms. Anderson noted that many out-of-school youth are in short-term training supporting CNA and CDL occupations, so committee members were encouraged to put interested employers in touch with the Business Solutions Team to connect businesses with available talent.

Dr. Miller noted that she was at the local cable access channel studio in Erie and there were three out-of-school youth from PA CareerLink® working there for the summer. The staff was thrilled with the extra hands. Dr. Miller reported that she had reached out to other companies who have contacted Ms. Misty O'Connor and they are seeing results as well. Ms. Unseld noted that adult education has had a great experience with the youth program in the second half of the program year, the team is very responsive. Ms. O'Connor and her team work to create individual relationships that have lead to client involvement and enrollment.

INDUSTRY PARTNERSHIPS

Ms. Shaffer explained that manufacturing partnership meetings took place the day before. The team working on “manufacturing to career” implemented a spreadsheet to capture career opportunities in schools. However, they are exploring designating a contact for each county to help connect with schools to keep the list current. Another subcommittee working on promoting and branding the region has teamed up with the Clarion University Computer and Science Department to create a fall project with students. The project will compile stories from residents who moved away and eventually returned, revealing their reasons to return. Ms. Shaffer noted that the West Central Job Partnership has been working on the industry partnership’s Industry Needs You website as well. Board staff is in the process of sole sourcing for a facilitator for the Manufacturing and Building & Construction industry partnerships. The Building & Construction industry partnership meetings aren’t expected to start until fall; participation is not likely during the business season for construction.

APPRENTICESHIPS

An update on several apprenticeship-related grants was provided. The State Apprenticeship Expansion grant is expected to wrap up in September. Related to pre-apprenticeships, NPRC, Perseus House, Warren Career and Technical Center, and Northwest Tri-County IU5 have put together a pre-apprenticeship program for individuals in manufacturing and healthcare. The manufacturing curriculum will be borrowed from the Northwest’s regional partner, West Central. At this time, board staff is working through challenges to bring multiple groups together. Students are expected to be able to begin studies next Spring. NWP Job Connect continues to work with the Ambassador Network for apprenticeships to increase the number of opportunities in Pennsylvania.

Ms. O’Neil explained that she expects an apprenticeship policy to be required as part of the next Regional and Local Plan assurances. Ms. Anderson added that apprenticeships are permitted on the ETPL for consideration by PA CareerLink® clients.

DASHBOARD

Ms. Anderson explained that through the employer dashboard, the Business Services Team has been able to better match available clients with employers looking for workers. The team also reaches out to individuals at the end of employment or completing training as part of a proactive approach.

SLIP UPDATE

Mr. Rodriguez reported that 25 interns have been placed with 16 companies across all six counties. Board staff will reach out to board members for volunteers to conduct visits on July 25 for National Intern Day. A LinkedIn group has been set up for the interns which will ask one question per week for eight weeks. If any committee members are interested in joining the group, they may reach out to board staff.

OTHER BUSINESS

LAYOFFS

WABTEC

Ms. Anderson reported that 90 days of negotiations concluded Monday night without an agreement. The groups are back at the negotiation table today. No outcome has been reported yet. If Wabtec closes or lays off workers, up to 1700 people could be affected. It would take a significant amount of time to enroll everyone, so several partners met last week to begin the planning process in case the layoff becomes a reality.

GECAC

Ms. Anderson reported that GECAC has lost their Head Start contract and their Rapid Response process starts on Monday. The Title I and State front line staff are engaged in the process.

Ms. Anderson thanked Mr. Fannie for providing the weekly Rapid Response reports from the state. Ms. Hamilton has been compiling them for board meetings, but if board members are interested in interim updates, they are encouraged to reach out to board staff.

RESCARE UPDATE

BUSINESS TEAMS EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT

Ms. Ibraheem reported that her team will be part of GECAC's Rapid Response workshop. She noted that the team recently met with Bliley Technologies, who was recently awarded a large grant for restructuring and expanding. They have reached out to PA CareerLink® for training as well as funding for training. Ms. Ibraheem stated that the team gave a presentation on attracting, training, and retaining employees at the Small Business Association in Clarion. A couple new employer contacts requested services as a result. The team continues to take advantage of opportunities to rebuild the local PA CareerLink® reputation by educating the business community. Ms. Ibraheem reported that this month, 28 placements, including 6 veterans, have been made, including 17 in Erie County. She has provided connections to businesses for apprenticeship expansion efforts.

NEXT MEETING: JULY 22 @ 1:30PM

Ms. Anderson reported that she does not expect to be able to attend the July 22 meeting, but one of the staff members will be able to support the meeting if they would like to avoid rescheduling. The committee voiced no concerns.

REPORT FOR THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

None.

REVIEW OF ACTION ITEMS

None.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 4:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Jackie Hamilton
Senior Administrative Assistant
NWPA Job Connect