

**BUSINESS SOLUTIONS COMMITTEE MEETING**  
Partners for Performance, 920 Water St, Ste 32B, Meadville, PA 16335  
Monday, July 22, 2019  
1:33 pm

**ATTENDANCE**

Caryl Unseld ☎  
Jody Dixon ☎  
Larry Fannie ☎  
County Executive Dahlkemper ☎  
Steven Davis ☎

**ABSENT**

Dr. Lisa Miller  
Gary Shaw

**GUESTS**

Sara Dodeci ☎  
Carm Camillo ☎  
Fadhail Ibraheem ☎

**STAFF**

Deb O'Neil  
Erin Shaffer  
Ramon Rodriguez  
Jackie Hamilton

**WELCOME/ROLL CALL**

In Ms. Unseld's momentary absence, Ms. O'Neil called the meeting to order at 1:33 pm. Roll call was taken. It was noted that there was a quorum.

**VISITOR RECOGNITION/PUBLIC COMMENT**

Visitors introduced themselves. There was no public comment.

**APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES – MARCH 25 & JUNE 5, 2019**

The minutes dated March 25, 2019 and June 5, 2019 were presented for approval.

**MOTION**

It was **moved** by Mr. Fannie and **seconded** by Ms. Dixon to approve the Business Solutions Committee meeting minutes dated March 25, 2019 and June 5, 2019 as presented. All were in favor. **Motion passed and carried.**

**REVIEW OF PREVIOUS ACTION ITEMS**

None.

**EDUCATION DISCUSSION**

**ASSESSMENTS UPDATE**

Ms. Unseld explained that implementation of the CASAS assessment continues to progress. The assessment is better aligned with college and career readiness goals. IU5 conducted training sessions in Erie and Oil City for PA CareerLink® staff. Ms. Amanda Kimmy continues to field calls from Title I and state case managers and provide support. Staff is expected to attend training on online delivery of assessments soon. While September is the expected timeline of the first online assessment, specific timing will be discussed with partners.

**INCUMBENT WORKER TRAINING UPDATE**

Ms. Dodeci explained that in PY18/19, \$30k was earmarked for an incumbent worker training pilot program. Companies engaged for this program included Green Line in Clarion County and Great Lakes Automation Machining in Erie County. So far, \$22,240 has been reimbursed for training, but

some employees are still in training. A comprehensive update will be provided when training is concluded. This effort will help to retain 41 full-time equivalent employees. One challenge Ms. Dodeci identified is gathering information from the employer. Staff endeavors to be patient while moving employers forward. The impact of this effort includes raises for the incumbent workers up to \$2/hour, college credits, and/or promotions within 12 months. More definitive outcomes will be reported once all training has concluded.

Mr. Fannie noted another benefit of incumbent worker training is the backfilling of positions that employees were promoted from. County Executive Dahlkemper asked when the full report will be available. Ms. Ibraheem explained that the last training concludes at the end of August. Ms. Dodeci offered to send a final report after the last training has concluded.

**\*\*ACTION\*\***

- **A final Incumbent Worker Training Report will be provided after the last training has completed.**

**ACTION PLAN FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND EDUCATION**

**COORDINATE REGIONAL AND LOCAL WORKFORCE ACTIVITIES**

Ms. O'Neil explained that the HPO petition period concluded without any submitted petitions. The state is currently finalizing the HPO lists which are in effect starting August 1.

**WORKFORCE RESEARCH AND LABOR MARKET ANALYSIS**

Ms. O'Neil explained that she has read articles that claim a drop in manufacturing tied to new tariffs is significantly affecting the CDL industry. This would affect local operations as a significant amount of ITA clients are trained to be CDL drivers. With further research, Ms. O'Neil determined that this does not appear to be the case locally. In fact, national carriers are also experiencing difficulty finding qualified individuals due to their stringent requirements. Board staff thought it would be beneficial to keep the committee informed in case they saw the same articles.

Mr. Camillo agreed and noted no need to adjust the local strategy as there is still a significant interest in hiring CDL drivers locally. Mr. Fannie noted that many local CDL positions require manual loading and unloading, and some training participants are not aware of this expectation.

**EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT**

**YOUTH YEAR END UPDATE**

**WORK EXPERIENCE**

Ms. Dodeci noted that 110% of PY18/19 youth funding was expended across the six counties offering WIOA enrollment, career plans, ITAs, supportive services, and work experience for youth clients aged 16-24. In PY18/19, 114 youth were engaged in work experiences with 25 employers in the six-county area. Employers included schools, community centers, retail, labor, construction, manufacturing, and the service industry. There have been 24 new work experience enrollments since July 1 of PY19/20.

**APPRENTICESHIPS**

Mr. Rodriguez noted the State Apprenticeship Expansion (SAE) grant awarded to the area aims to increase awareness of apprenticeships. Thomas P. Miller and Associates was awarded a grant for Ambassador Network which has been coordinating with board staff's SAE grant effort. The overall anticipated outcome is to entice businesses to implement apprenticeships.

### **DASHBOARD (ITA/OJT)**

Ms. Dodeci noted that the committee had seen a version of the dashboard created for ITA and OJTs. Currently, there are 11 ITAs being completed this month. Last year, ITAs mostly supported nursing and CDL occupations. So far this year, office occupations & clerical services, electricians, and computer technologist have also been of interest.

Ms. Unseld thanked the Business Solutions Team for inviting the committee to see the dashboard and meet the team for a better understanding of the work they do. At the meeting, it was discussed that another function of the dashboard could be to identify the skills-deficient so that partners can help them upskill while they job search.

### **SLIP UPDATE**

Mr. Rodriguez noted 25 interns aged 17-23 are working at 16 companies through the State Local Internship Program (SLIP) grant. A LinkedIn group has been created to interface with the interns and that information has offered a new perspective on the program.

## **OTHER BUSINESS**

### **LAYOFFS**

#### **PERKINS**

Ms. Dodeci explained that Perkins layoffs are not yet determined. Several lawsuits regarding franchises and ownership are ongoing. The Rapid Response Coordinator has reached out to them with information and is ready to move forward with services if their employees need them.

#### **ERIE COKE**

Mr. Camillo noted that approximately 150 employees may be affected by layoffs at Erie Coke. About two weeks ago, Title I and state staff worked with union officials to hold six sessions over two days for potentially affected employees at their union hall in downtown Erie. This proactive effort would establish participant presence on PA CareerLink® website and offer other services like uploading a resume and completing initial paperwork in case of a layoff. Only 15 people took advantage of the opportunity. It was not understood why there was a low turnout. Mr. Camillo stated that there is a good relationship with the union president, who was also discouraged by the situation. However, PA CareerLink® stands ready to meet again when there is more interest.

### **RESCARE UPDATE**

#### **BUSINESS TEAMS EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT**

Ms. Dodeci noted that Ms. Ibraheem and her team continue to work hard to coordinate all staff partners. Ms. Dodeci informed the committee that she has accepted a position elsewhere, and Ms. Bridget Wolf is working on filling the Project Director position permanently. In the interim, Mr. Camillo will be working closely with Ms. Dodeci as acting Project Director. Ms. Dodeci will be in the area through the end of July, then will be in the area occasionally and communicating daily with Mr. Camillo.

### **PA CAREERLINK® HOURS DISCUSSION**

Ms. Shaffer explained that she reached out to all local areas about best practices regarding hours for their PA CareerLink® operations and 13 out of 22 areas had responded. None of these areas close early on Fridays and some offices have evening hours. In contrast, Northwest comprehensive centers close at 2pm on Fridays and do not have evening hours, though mobile operations continue in

conjunction with client requests. Northwest PA CareerLink® comprehensive sites have historically utilized the time on Friday afternoons for professional development; however, it is not mandatory for staff to attend, and Fridays near holidays are especially affected with low attendance. It was not clear if there was a demand for more evening hours in the Northwest. It had been discussed previously that the centers may pilot an effort to stay open in conjunction with an event, such as a workshop. The committee expressed interest in seeing the responses from other local areas before they recommend any adjustments. The committee was also interested in additional info from other local areas that stay open late. Ms. Unseld and Ms. Dodeci noted that Title I mobile staff are already conducting operations in the evening as needed. Ms. Dodeci stated that there have not been any requests from clients to keep the comprehensive sites open later. Ms. Unseld suggested further discussion is needed regarding other opportunities for staff training that do not require the closing of centers. The committee asked for more time to review the information from other areas and continue this discussion at the next meeting. Other committees had requested this as well.

### **OTHER**

Mr. Fannie added that the Operator held interviews for the Site Coordinator position and he was able to sit in on the interviews, which went well. The position is expected to help with coordination, communication, and consistency. Also, the state's upgrade to the Oil Region Skype phone is ongoing. There are some issues, but they continue to work through them.

### **NEXT MEETING: SEPTEMBER 23 @ 1:30PM**

### **REPORT FOR THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

None.

### **REVIEW OF ACTION ITEMS**

- 1. A final Incumbent Worker Training Report will be provided after the last training has completed.**

### **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 2:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Jackie Hamilton  
Senior Administrative Assistant  
NWPA Job Connect