

ATTENDANCE: Tyrone Clark, Mike Chevalier, Dr. William Clark, Monica Daquilante, Jody Dixon, Brittany Eisenman, Larry Fannie, Dr. Ray Feroz, Dave Henderson, Jack Hewitt, Dr. Lisa Miller, Erin Sekerak, Gary Shaw, Bradley Tisdale, Elizabeth Wilson **ABSENT:** Steven Davis, Jim Decker, Jill Foys, Dr. Aldo Jackson

BOARD STAFF: Janet Anderson, Deb O'Neil, Erin Shaffer, Julie Price, Carrie Symes, Jackie Hamilton

VISITORS

Commissioner Wayne Brosius, Clarion County
Commissioner Eric Henry, Crawford County
Commissioner Robert Snyder, Forest County
Commissioner Chip Abramovic, Venango Cty
Diona Brick, County of Venango
Attorney Joe Keebler, Solicitor
Bridget Wolf, Equus
Carm Camillo, PA CareerLink®/Title I
Benjamin Wilson, PA CareerLink®/Operator

Georgia Del Freo, GECAC
Nancy Sabol, St. Benedict Education Ctr/EARN
Beverly Rapp, PA L&I BWPO, Rapid Response
Deb Lutz, SVA/SEWN
Anita McCoy, GECAC
Abigail Trypus, IU5
Jamie Woods, IU5
Lance Hummer, Keystone CEC

WELCOME/ROLL CALL/VISITOR RECOGNITION

Mr. Clark called the meeting to order at 8:33 am. Roll call was taken. It was noted there was a quorum. Visitors introduced themselves.

CONSENT AGENDA

The consent agenda portion of the meeting included the following:

- a. Approval of May 8, 2020 Meeting Minutes
- b. Approval of Revised Individual Training Account Policy
- c. Approval of System of Record/File Management Policy
- d. Approval of Updated Partner MOU

MOTION

It was **moved** by Mr. Henderson and **seconded** by Dr. Clark to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. All were in favor. **Motion passed and carried.**

APPROVAL OF PY20/21 BUDGET

Ms. Brick referred to the attachment provided with the fiscal packet. The contract for the Program Year 2020/2021 is for a total of \$4,535,703.37 across all WIOA and TANF funding streams, and is provided by allotment from the state. The budget includes slight differences in Youth and Adult funding streams, a small decrease for Dislocated worker and a slight increase for TANF. Overall, there is a difference of \$600k from the last program year for the Title I contract. Ms. Brick noted that the administrative budget figure is \$760k which accommodates a cost of living wage increase for staff that the PFP board will consider at their meeting later that morning. Ms. Brick added that about \$1M is available for the administrative budget, but there is no concern if it is not all spent in one year due to the 2-year life on funding and her practice of first-in-first-out spending. Ms. Brick noted that staff continues to look for additional funding in the way of grant funding, as program funding demand is expected to ramp up at the end of the month with an increase in participants due to the conclusion of the pandemic unemployment benefit.

Ms. Brick noted that the PA CareerLink® operating budgets are at the state with Mike White for review. To her knowledge there are only a few outstanding questions and she expects the budgets will be approved relatively quickly. Ms. Anderson noted that the operating expenses have significantly increased due to the requirements for additional janitorial and security services during the pandemic. Staff and partners are looking for ways to help cover those additional costs to avoid a negative impact on individuals that need PA CareerLink® support going forward. Additionally, staff continues to review funding opportunities where they make the most sense and would create opportunities to help serve clients with the largest need.

Ms. Brick was asked how the Title I shortfall would affect service delivery and she noted that to her knowledge no Title I positions would be affected, but open positions may not be filled.

MOTION

It was moved by Dr. Feroz and seconded by Mr. Henderson to approve the Program Year 2020/2021 budget as presented. All were in favor. Motion passed and carried.

Ms. Brick noted that she will prepare the contracts for Title I and EARN and ask the CLEOs to execute them.

APPROVAL OF THE CAREER PATHWAYS VENDOR

Ms. Anderson referred to the attachment regarding the career pathways RPF and vendor recommendation. The project will create career pathways for out-of-school youth and adults and be an extension of those offered to in school youth. The pathways would be completed by September and will be a part of the local planning process as it is a required component. The review committee recommended Erie Together's proposal as the best fit for the project and noted that additional negotiations be explored to develop career ladders for select occupations. The funds for the project will come from PY19/20's administrative budget.

MOTION

It was moved by Mr. Tisdale and seconded by Mr. Hewitt to approve Erie Together as the career pathways vendor. All were in favor. Motion passed and carried.

UPDATES FROM THE CHAIR

REVIEW OF PREVIOUS ACTION ITEMS

None.

BOARD MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

Mr. Clark noted that Mr. Decker, Mr. Tisdale, and Dr. Feroz have both been reappointed to the board effective July 1, 2020 with appointments ending on June 30, 2023.

VIRTUAL MEETING EXPECTATIONS

Mr. Clark noted that there was an attachment regarding virtual meeting expectations and the document will become part of the Communications Protocol per his request. The intent of the document is to help communicate how interfacing will happen while under pandemic restrictions. He emphasized holding visual meetings as much as possible and avoiding speaking over others or being distracted by unrelated work or activities.

OTHER

Mr. Clark noted that there would be an executive session regarding personnel near the end of the meeting.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

PY18 MONITORING REPORT/TERMS DISCUSSION

Ms. Anderson referred to the attached report and noted that several committees have reviewed it. Though the state does not require any action as a result of this report, board staff has been addressing the findings and concerns to avoid future actions. The monitoring was conducted over a year prior to the receipt of the report. As a result of the report, amendments to the bylaws may be required.

Ms. Anderson noted that one finding in the report notes that term limitations, while not required, are not noted as such in the bylaws. This specifically addresses a limit to the number of terms served. When the Executive Committee reviewed this finding, they acknowledged that new membership brings new ideas; however, the workforce system takes a significant amount of time spent to become comfortable enough to give confident input and feedback.

MOTION

It was moved by Mr. Henderson and seconded by Ms. Dixon to note in the bylaws that there are no limit to the number of terms a board member may serve. All were in favor. Motion passed and carried.

Ms. Anderson also noted that the bylaws note that meetings will be advertised in newspapers; however, the Sunshine Act requires advertising in one publication. Making the plural “newspapers” singular will align the bylaws with the Sunshine Act.

MOTION

It was moved by Mr. Henderson and seconded by Dr. Feroz to advertise public meetings in one newspaper, The Meadville Tribune, and advertise all meetings one time per year unless there are changes to the schedule. Meetings will also be posted on the website. Board staff will align the bylaws with the Sunshine Act regarding meeting notices. All were in favor. Motion passed and carried.

Also included in the report was a finding about the Clarion County Housing Authority’s lack of participation in the Partner MOU. The agency is a recipient of Family Self-Sufficiency funding and according to WIOA, recipients of that funding stream are required to be included in the Partner MOU. Board staff are documenting attempts to formalize this partnership.

Ms. Anderson noted that another finding was related to ResCare Talent Market for job seekers. To ensure proper use of the state’s system of record, board staff has required that the use of the ResCare Talent Market be terminated, and that was confirmed by the Regional Manager, Bridget Wolf.

Finally, Ms. Anderson noted the report called out a disallowed cost for \$2.11 for a retirement card. The Fiscal Agent will ensure that the money is paid back and cards will no longer be provided. Mr. Hewitt suggested a monetary collection from willing board members to fund recognition cards and Mr. Clark agreed. Ms. Anderson noted that Ms. Brick should be engaged to ensure proper procedure is being followed, if any are needed.

****ACTION****

- **Mr. Hewitt will coordinate the possibility of a collection to fund recognition cards.**

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT DISCUSSION: REOPENING UPDATE

Ms. Anderson noted that PA CareerLink® staff continues to provide services since centers have closed because they had the equipment to do so. The pandemic has negatively impacted operations, and required security and janitorial costs present an increased cost to partners of about \$175k.

Partners are working together to ensure the system has the capacity to continue to work virtually. There has not been a huge demand for services since the reopening on June 8. Clients are seen virtually but there are opportunities to meet in the centers if they are unable to work with PA CareerLink® virtually. Staff awaits the end of the Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) benefit, which is separate from and not in addition to standard Unemployment Compensation, to affect the amount of people seeking services. In the meantime, a Lean Governance Council has been created including partner front line staff as well as Deb O'Neil from board staff to ensure compliance is maintained. The council's most recent recommendation is to resume regular hours by eliminating longer hours during the week and on Saturday.

Ms. Anderson noted that operations have also been affected by the requirements of conducting CASAS assessments while social distancing. While client numbers are low at this time, an uptick is expected once the UC and PUA benefits expire. To avoid a bottleneck, the ITA policy was revised and approved today to allow flexibility with CASAS assessments in extreme circumstances, such as a pandemic.

Ms. Anderson noted that technology to ensure accessibility and collaboration continues to be implemented, such as the Ring video doorbell at the Warren Chamber and the Ring Central cloud-based phone system, which allows interaction with clients as well as secure sharing of documents. The local area continues to partner with ITDRC, a national non-profit that is working to boost wifi signals in the area that do not have data service. Ten new hot spots have been implemented so far. Virtual job/career fairs continue to be successful in recreating the job/career fair environment safely during the pandemic.

Dr. Miller noted it would be helpful to compare Title I numbers this year to performance prior to the pandemic to help gage the effectiveness of the virtual technology that is being utilized in service delivery. Ms. Anderson noted that the Operator is in the process of setting up a meeting to discuss data and which measures would be most helpful in driving future operations decisions. Mr. Fannie added that Trade is not waiving assessments but are being flexible on what counts as an assessment and may include work experience. BWPO has been assisting with registering employers participating in virtual job fairs as well as conducting outreach. Rapid Response and BWPO partners are conducting Trade BRI and Rapid Response events through virtual means like Skype, then following up via virtual appointments with those participants. State staff is also conducting outreach to previous Trade recipients as that benefit does not expire in the same manner as other assistance. RESEA has not yet been reinstated but staff continues to reach out to those in the pipeline waiting for the training. All partners on the Business Solutions Team are reaching out to the essential employers previously showcased in the Employer Spotlight portal to ensure PA CareerLink® services are offered to those businesses.

It was noted that a previous client that was served over 10 years ago left a voice message about his success that he owes to the PA CareerLink® system. He was assisted with his GED and had just finished his PhD. It was a great reminder that there are successes and not everyone calls to share them.

Ms. Anderson emphasized the collaboration Mr. Fannie alluded to earlier and noted that all of the partners are working really well together.

OTHER BUSINESS

SOLICITOR UPDATE

Ms. Anderson noted that Joe Keebler is the new solicitor for the board and CLEOs and has been great to work with so far. Mr. Keebler introduced himself and noted that he was excited to work with the workforce system.

GRANT UPDATE

Ms. Anderson referred to the staff report and noted that Ms. Price worked hard to place 40 interns with summer work opportunities with local employers while some workforce areas returned their funding in light of the pandemic.

WORKFORCE NEEDS ASSESSMENT UPDATE

Ms. Anderson noted that the Workforce Needs Assessment vendor, BCT Partners, hit a milestone in the project at the end of June and submitted a report to the team monitoring the project's progress. The assessment will supersede other assessments conducted in the workforce area and will cover all six counties. The project team has been cognizant of the slowdown and has adjusted the project timeline to reflect that so that the information is relevant.

OTHER

It was noted that no HPO petitions were submitted for consideration, and that Contact Tracers have been added to the HPO list by the state. Board staff will hold Technical Assistance sessions the following week with Title I to go over the expectations for this program year and answer any outstanding questions staff may have. Ms. Anderson noted that ResCare has been rebranded as Equus.

COMMENTS

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

There were no further board member comments.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

The board adjourned into executive session to discuss personnel at 10:02 am. All visitors were excused with the exception of the CLEOs present and the solicitor. The session concluded at 10:20 am.

MOTION

It was **moved** by Mr. Hewitt and **seconded** by Ms. Eisenman to adjourn the executive session and return to the meeting. All were in favor. **Motion passed and carried.**

It was **moved** by Mr. Fannie and **seconded** by Dr. Feroz to change the title of the "Director" position to "Executive Director." All were in favor. **Motion passed and carried.**

The board directed any technical changes to move forward, including but not limited to bylaws and the position description. The CLEOs, though present in the executive session, will be informed formally during their subsequent meeting.

REVIEW OF ACTION ITEMS

- 1. Mr. Hewitt will coordinate the possibility of a collection to fund recognition cards.**

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION

It was moved by Ms. Eisenman and seconded by Dr. Feroz to adjourn the meeting. All were in favor.
Motion passed and carried.

The meeting adjourned at 10:24 am.

Meeting Advertised in The Meadville Tribune on June 27, 2020		
Minutes Submitted	Jacqueline Hamilton	September 11, 2020
Minutes Approved	NWPA Job Connect Board	September 11, 2020
Minutes Posted	https://www.nwpajobconnect.org/wdb/board-meeting-archive	January 19, 2021