



NWPA JOB CONNECT BOARD MEETING
Friday, March 8, 2024
8:30 AM – 11:00 AM

ATTENDANCE: Bobbie Jones, Grainne Blanchette, Larry Fannie, Juanice Vega, Brad Tisdale, Andrea MacArthur, Jack Hewitt, Jessica Hansford, Will Price, Kirk Shimshock, Shane Kline, Jill Foys, Kathryn Schaaf, Brandon Schmitt

ABSENT: Karen Thomas, Travis Crytzer, TJ Sandell, Heather Frazier, Jim Decker

BOARD STAFF: Lisa Miller, Lisa Stalnaker, Deb O’Neil, Susan Richmond, Emily Cozzens, Juanet Shefchunas, Carrie Symes, Nancy Wisgirda

VISITORS

Erie County Alternate Charlie Bayle
Anita McCoy, GECAC
Diona Brick, Fiscal Agent
John Spence
Christine Grigsby
Beverly Rapp
Kerrie DeChurch
Loretta Lininger
Elizabeth Wilson
Attorney Joe Keebler
Nancy Sabol

Bob Cardamone, Community Action
Commissioner Wayne Brosius
Letty Acosta
Attorney Robert Vernon
Brenda Connelly
Ben Wilson
Deb Lutz
Brad Williams
Commissioner Chip Abramovic
Marybelle Martin
Nick DePlacido

WELCOME/ROLL CALL/VISITOR RECOGNITION/PUBLIC COMMENTS

Bobbie Jones called the meeting to order at 8:45 a.m. Roll call was taken. It was noted there was a quorum. Visitors were recognized. It was noted that the meeting was being recorded and a link to the agenda was posted in the chat and also shared on the screen. Kathryn Schaff stated during the public comment segment that she may consider abstaining from voting on some agenda items due to being out for maternity leave.

CONSENT AGENDA

The consent agenda portion of the meeting included the following:

Approval of January 12, 2024 Meeting Minutes

Common Measures PY23 Q2

Lisa Miller reported that this report was received on February 14, 2024 for PY23 second quarter. We are surpassing all of our goals except for Youth. The actual performance is not as high as it should be and this is not uncommon in other local areas as well. We have been working heavily with the youth on executing on spending and providing services and will continue to do so to achieve a green checkmark by the end of the fourth quarter.

The Procurement Policy Revised

Susan Richmond reported that the only revision to the local board procurement policy is increasing the thresholds for all purchases to align with those of our fiscal agent, County of Venango, per state COLA adjustments. Purchase thresholds under \$2,500 remain the same; purchase thresholds from \$2,500 - \$20,900 have been increased to \$23,200; and the threshold for purchases that require a formal bid process was raised from \$20,900 to \$23,200. The revisions to this policy are provided and we are asking for a motion to recommend this policy to the board.

The PA CareerLink® Staff Grievance Policy Removal

Susan Richmond reported that the PA CareerLink® Staff Grievance Policy was developed to provide a process for PA CareerLink® staff grievances. In 2021, the Office of Equal Opportunity required changes to our previous General Complaint Policy to better identify that it did not include EO complaints, as those are covered under a separate EO Policy. Therefore, there is some duplication between the staff complaint policy and the Non-discrimination/General Complaint Policy, so we plan to recommend that the grievance language specific to PA CareerLink® staff be added to the existing Non-discrimination/General Complaint Policy and eliminate the duplicative PA CareerLink® Staff Grievance Policy.

The PY 22 Monitoring Letter and Report

Lisa Miller reported that the PY 22 State Monitoring Letter and report that are linked to the agenda are a reflection of the way the money was spent in Program Year 22. Areas of monitoring include fiscal and procurement systems, LWDB compliance and oversight functions, LWDB policies/agreements, service delivery, Sunshine Act, administrative, performance, fiscal integrity, audit requirements, and one stop operator. The review found no issues of concern or corrective actions. The board staff have worked very hard, and we thank the fiscal staff for their hard work as well. She reported that state monitoring of the board has been going well.

The PY23 Q1 Participant Satisfaction Survey Summary

Carrie Symes reported that participant satisfaction surveys are sent out every quarter. During quarter I, the operator emailed 412 job seekers that had not previously received services. Nineteen of those came back as undeliverable; thirteen participated in the survey. Of those, four were first-time visitors; nine were returning for a new service. The percentage of very satisfied and neither satisfied nor dissatisfied is around 69%. Satisfied and very dissatisfied were around 31%.

Jill Foys asked if any follow up is conducted with the respondents who indicated dissatisfied or very dissatisfied, beyond what is indicated in the comments section of the survey. Carrie Symes stated that if the respondents provide contact information, follow up is conducted. We discuss the issues identified with Title I. Larry Fannie noted that these could be related to UC claimants and not the PA CareerLink® service side.

The PY23 Q1 Business Satisfaction Survey Summary

Carrie Symes reported that business satisfaction surveys were also sent out. 219 surveys were sent out; of those 63 were undeliverable. Nine participated in the surveys, which is a normal response amount. 73% were satisfied, very satisfied or somewhat satisfied. 27% were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied.

MOTION

It was moved by Jack Hewitt and seconded by Kirk Shimshock to approve the consent agenda as a whole. All were in favor. Motion passed and carried.

REVIEW OF PREVIOUS ACTION ITEMS

In Process: Lisa Miller will add timetables for the ongoing and persistent issues regarding Title I into the PY24 statement of work.

In Process: Lisa Miller will implement accountability timetables to the statement of work regarding the staffing concerns and will update the board on this issue on a regular basis.

UPDATES FROM THE CHAIR

Bobbie Jones noted that Archie Graham has resigned from the board due to his retirement. She thanked him for his service. Brandon Schmitt has been appointed to represent labor from Venango County and gave a brief introduction. His role with the Union Local 66 includes workforce outreach, engaging youth with workforce, job development, and career fairs.

It was also noted that the PA Department of Labor and Industry is moving local board membership monitoring to CWDS.

Reappointment Plan:

- Complete: Bobbie Jones, Jill Foys, Juanice Vega
- In Process: Heather Frazier (formerly Moles)
- Won't Be Seeking Reappointment After June 30:
 - Karen Thomas (Warren): Seeking Warren Business Representative
- Erie Members CE Davis Still Considering For Reappointment: Andrea MacArthur, TJ Sandell

c) The new CLEO Slate of Officers has been appointed and the WDB is being made aware of the following:

- | | | |
|------------------------------|----------------|-----------------------------|
| -Chair: | Chip Abramovic | Venango County Commissioner |
| -Vice Chair: | Wayne Brosius | Clarion County Commissioner |
| -2 nd Vice Chair: | Tricia Durbin | Warren County Commissioner |

- They will each have a one year term.
- The signatory will remain Sam Breene, Venango County Commissioner
- The CLEO Chair's contact information: cabramovic@co.venango.pa.us

APPROVAL OF FISCAL REPORT

Fiscal Report: Diona Brick referred to the December 2023 fiscal report that was included in the meeting packet.

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- WIOA Formula Dollars:
 - Adult and Dislocated Worker expenditures were reviewed. The total Title I Adult and DW allocation for 23-24 is \$2,053,046. Through December, we expended \$1,310,977 of this amount or 64%. It is important to remember our 30% training requirement for the current year. We are at 15% excluding additional sources and 23.4% including additional resources. We are anticipating a funding transfer will be needed from Dislocated Worker to Adult, which is allowable up to 100%.
 - Youth expenditures were reviewed. It is important to monitor the youth percentages to ensure compliance with the spending requirements. The total Youth budget for 23-24 is \$1,357,517. Through December, we have expended \$795,859 or 59% of the allocation. Key benchmarks include a requirement to spend at least 75% of the allocation on Out of School Youth and at least 20% must be spent on work experience for youth. We are currently at 100% and 18% respectively. She noted that we are meeting monthly with Title I to review the Youth program expenditures; work experience is on track.
- Administrative Expenses - (Includes all Program Oversight and Fiscal Agent Costs)

- Overall, the administrative budget is 45%, which is slightly under budget. All monies are used on the FIFO or first in first out basis so that no funding will be forfeited.
- EARN Program Expenses – On track, we are at 56% of the budget through December.
- Infrastructure Funding Agreements (IFAs) – Each of our IFAs have finished at budget as follows:
 - Erie County comprehensive site = 43% of budget
 - Oil Region comprehensive site = 63% of budget
 - Mobile Delivery of Service = 53% of budget

Diona noted that the Oil Region IFA is slightly above budget for this point in the year due to the timing of some annual expenditures, with no concerns noted.

- TANF Youth – The total budget for 23-24 is \$702,671. To date, we have spent 51% of the allocation. Contracts have been awarded and subcontractors are expending funds.
- Grant Updates:
 - Rapid Response (RR): All Rapid Response monies have been spent and all proper closeouts completed. No additional rapid response funds are needed at this time due to the decrease in Dislocated Worker participants.
 - Other Grant Updates: We have NOOs currently for the following:
 - BEP (Business Education Partnership) - \$150,000 - This is an allocation with an end date of 6/30/24. To date, very little has been spent. It is currently encumbered and we are hoping for an extension.
 - Statewide Activities - \$28,000 Website Updates – the website contract will carry into 23-24. All other funding has been closed out to stay in compliance with state regulations. In addition, we received \$32,619.76 for PA CareerLink® updates and security. To date, through December, there is approximately \$18,000 remaining; however all is encumbered. We expect the remaining balance to be spent by the end of March.
 - Apprenticeship Expansion-Total award is \$183,333. To date, \$12,267 has been spent. Bills are coming in slowly; we may request an extension at the end of the program year.
- Other Updates:

Diona Brick noted that we received final approval and acceptance from the state for the 2022 County of Venango audit.

MOTION

It was moved by Jill Foys and seconded by Will Price to approve the Fiscal Report as presented. All were in favor. There were no abstentions. Motion passed and carried.

VOTE TO ACCEPT NWPA JOB CONNECT SLATE OF OFFICERS FOR PY24

NWPA Job Connect Slate of Officers For PY24:

Chair	Travis Crytzer, Business, Crawford
Vice Chair	Brad Tisdale, Apprenticeship, Forest
Treasurer	Jim Decker, Business, Warren
Secretary	Juanice Vega, Higher Ed, Clarion
County Rep	Andrea MacArthur, Business, Erie
County Rep	Bobbie Jones, Business, Venango

MOTION

It was moved by Jill Foys and seconded by Kathryn Schaaf to accept the slate of officers as presented. All were in favor. There were no abstentions. Motion passed and carried.

ACCEPT THE MONITORING Q2 PY 23 REPORTS

Enrollment Process

Carrie Symes reported that she and Juanet Shefchunas conducted the Quarter 2 monitoring of Title I on December 13, 2023. Title I Operations Manager selected staff that would participate. The staff included 1 Talent Development Specialist (TDS), 1 Youth Talent Development Specialist (Youth TDS), 1 Manager, 1 Quality Assurance staff member (QA) and 1 Temporary Assistance for Needy Families staff member (TANF). Overall staff seemed very knowledgeable in the enrollment process as they were posed with the question “What does the approval process look like for enrollments and services?” and Walk us through an enrollment.”. However, four out of the five that were interviewed stated that the enrollment process is very lengthy due to the peer review process. Currently, TDS’s will enroll the participant, a peer has 24 hours to review the file, goes to the supervisor to review, supervisor gives to the manager to review, which can take a few days since the manager is only in the office 1-2 days a week. Once the manager reviews and signs off on it, the file goes to QA to review on Wednesdays. If QA finds any error, the file is sent back to the TDS with a Formstack note to fix the file and go through the entire process again. If the issues persist, the file goes back to the manager to fully review. Often files must continually go back to the manager to review even after it was sent to the manager already. The TDS, manager and QA manager can see the emails and the Formstack of the issues.

Monitoring Findings

With regard to the enrollment process, findings included that there were inconsistencies with the process and staff were not following their standard operating procedures. There were also participants lost due to the lengthiness of the requirements of the Title I process.

Concerns

Concerns identified included what type of information is being sent through Formstack; when errors persist, the application is canceled; and communication between all staff seems to be an issue.

Recommendations

There should be a full review to streamline the process to better serve participants in a timely manner. Also, SOPs need to be updated to properly reflect the process. Corrective actions on both of these issues is forthcoming.

Tracking & Monitoring Follow-Up

The Title I SOP outlines what needs to occur and when things need to happen. However, it was discovered that there is no formalized way for Title I staff to track the follow-up that needs to be conducted.

Concerns

No standardized system/process exists on how to effectively track follow-ups.

Recommendations

Title I should put in place a more standardized system that utilizes the system of record and its functions for follow up. Managers should be monitoring staff to ensure that follow-up is being conducted in a timely manner. Title I will submit an updated procedure by the beginning of the fourth quarter.

Areas of improvement were identified through interviews with Title I staff, along with concerns and recommendations by the local board monitor. Additional details on these can be found in the report linked to the meeting agenda.

Jill Foys asked where we are in the Title I contract. Lisa Miller stated that the contracts expire on June 30, 2024. The board voted in November 2023 to renew the contract. The board's approval at that time was for a one-year contract.

Title I Post Exit Follow Up Gains and Credentials Monitoring

Susan Richmond reported that she reviewed 50 participant files that would have been receiving their first quarter through fourth quarter post exit follow up.

50 participants from 1st quarter through 4th quarter post exit follow up were reviewed in CWDS. The review included service records and case notes.

In Adult, 17 CWDS participant records were reviewed; looking at the service record and case notes, 5 had no follow up attempts and 6 had complete follow up. Six had some quarters missing, or only 1 or 2 attempts, and other quarters were complete.

In Dislocated Workers, 17 CWDS participant records were reviewed; looking at the service record and case notes, 5 have no attempts, 4 had complete follow-up, and 8 had some quarters missing and some quarters complete.

In Youth, 16 CWDS participants were reviewed; looking at the service record and case notes, 4 had no follow up attempts, 8 had complete follow up, and 4 were missing some quarters or not all three attempts were made.

Overall Summary

Out of 50 participants reviewed, 14 had no follow-up attempts made; 18 had some follow-up attempts with some quarters complete; 18 had complete and accurate post exit follow-up.

Expectations: Title I has a Post Exit Quarterly Follow Up Standard Operating Procedure for Adult/Dislocated Worker and Youth Programs. Title I also includes follow-up cases in their quarterly file monitoring. NWPA Job Connect recommends that Title I review the closed cases to ensure staff is following the Post Exit Quarterly SOP.

Susan Richmond added that for the credentials and gains, the credentials are based on past data and cannot be fixed if missed, added late, or the participant left. Gains are based on current data and can usually be fixed. The state allows data entry to be added for 10 days following the announced data entry cut-off date.

MOTION

It was moved by Brad Tisdale and seconded by Grainne Blanchette to accept the monitoring reports as presented. All were in favor. There were no abstentions. Motion passed and carried.

FOLLOW UP: RISK ASSESSMENT DISCUSSION: EQUUS STAFFING CHANGES

Bradley Williams, the Equus Vice President Business Development and Chief Customer Officer, stated that they have 10 vacancies out of a 37-employee staffing model for the region. Of those 10 vacancies, four offers are going out, which will hopefully reduce that number to 6. They also have 2 finalist interviews forthcoming, which might reduce that number to 4. He offered to answer any questions from the board.

Jill Foys asked if Equus conducts exit interviews. Mr. Williams said they do. They also conduct 30, 60 and 90-day check-ins ~~reviews~~ with new staff. Corporate HR is reaching out to each Equus employee within the project as well.

Will Price asked if the exit interviews have provided any insight on the current exodus. Mr. Williams stated that travel requirements to the rural areas seems to be an issue, as well as frontline staff not meshing well with supervisors. Those supervisors have been held accountable and/or replaced.

RATIFY EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE DECISION LETTER

Bobbie Jones stated that this letter represents the decision made by the Executive Committee regarding the grievance brought by a training provider regarding the ETPL process. Per the local board's Nondiscrimination/General Complaint Policy, the complainant met first with the one stop operator and then requested a hearing with the Executive Committee. Lisa Miller elaborated, stating that the Executive Committee identified some areas for process improvement going forward.

MOTION

It was moved by Jill Foys and seconded by Kathryn Schaaf to ratify the decision letter. All were in favor. There were no abstentions. Motion passed and carried.

WEBSITE UPDATE

Emily Cozzens stated that we have been working with the web developer in drafting the first pages of the new website. We have been working with the Communications Committee to get feedback and insight into the development of the site. The developer feels confident that the website will be completed by the June 30th deadline when the grant expires.

The Communications Committee has set up recurring meetings to review the design elements as they are created and is seeking approval to finalize all designs from the web developer until the site is complete. Lisa Miller stated as a reminder that the Communications Committee is a recommending committee only, not a voting committee.

MOTION

It was moved by Kathryn Schaaf and seconded by Shane Kline to allow the Communications Committee to finalize all website design from the web developer. All were in favor. There were no abstentions. Motion passed and carried.

Lisa Miller invited any interested board members-and CLEOs to join the Communications Committee to actively participate in the website changes.

RFP AD HOC COMMITTEE RECONVENING

Lisa Miller stated that the process of running an RFP for the Title I or Operator contracts can be complicated and typically only occurs every four years for the operator RFP and every five years for the Title I RFP. We are recommending that we conduct an annual RFP review to maintain familiarity with the process. She noted that this will keep the board apprised of the RFP process and will assist the Ad Hoc RFP Committee in better understanding the RFP scoring process, resulting in an overall more effective RFP process for the board.

MOTION

It was moved by Will Price and seconded by Kirk Shimshock to reconvene the Ad Hoc RFP Committee at least annually. All were in favor. There were no abstentions. Motion passed and carried.

REVIEW OF PY24 MEETING SCHEDULE DRAFT

Lisa Miller stated that the meeting schedule for next program year is being drafted and is included in this agenda. There will likely be some scheduling conflicts due to Labor Day, Election Day, Thanksgiving and Christmas. There were no objections to moving the schedule as needed to accommodate these conflicts. Lisa

Miller noted that we would like to recommend changes to the committee meetings including scheduling Governance as needed, rather than on a regular schedule; alternate Workforce Solutions and Business Solutions by having Workforce Solutions in one committee meeting cycle and then Business Solutions in the next committee meeting cycle. Also, we are recommending that we may need to move some of the committee members from Workforce Solutions, Business Solutions, and Governance committees and onto planned recurring committees such as the Ad Hoc RFP Committee and Ad Hoc SOW Committee. She asked the group for input, noting that the Executive Committee suggested that we could ask committee members and identify to them where our needs are, to get the best support on those committees by moving the members where needed. There was no opposition to implementing the proposed changes.

OTHER BUSINESS

Board Staff Report Highlights

Lisa Miller stated the WIOA Authorization continues to move through the House of Representatives. It mandates a 50% training requirement for adult and dislocated worker funds. That percentage does not include money for supportive services or staffing, which would lower the staffing numbers for Title I.

The governor has an opportunity to change the way the workforce areas are designated through the Stronger Workforce for America Act (ASWA). This is something to watch, as it could change the way local workforce boards operate.

ID.me kiosks will be installed at all PA CareerLink® sites and some UPS stores to assist with fraud prevention. Kiosks will be arriving in our area at the end of April.

EARN has received its PY22 monitoring report. We are working with them to review it.

Notice of Proposed Rulemaking from USDOL has been released that would significantly impact apprenticeships.

UC Connect continues, with a change forthcoming that Larry Fannie will discuss today.

The broadband initiative continues, and the infrastructure funds should be coming out soon. Jill Foys stated that the Northwest Commission continues to share information with the region.

Larry Fannie stated that the ID.me kiosks will provide another option for customers that will reduce the need for staff assistance. UC will be executing an outreach plan that will include television and radio spots advertising PA CareerLink®. UC Connect now provides a phone number for claimants having problems with their claims. They can now schedule their own appointments directly for one-on-one services with a UC Representative. He noted that there has been no movement on Trade funding.

Lisa Miller gave updates on several grant opportunities and invited board members to review the detailed information included in the agenda.

SOFIs are due by April 1, 2024. Please contact Nancy Wisgirda to submit those as soon as possible.

Lisa Miller will be off on leave starting March 25, 2024. She anticipates being off for several weeks. Please contact Lisa Stalnaker or Nancy Wisgirda for any issues.

Larry Fannie added that PA CareerLink® Days will be held in September. More funding is available this year, which will hopefully generate a more robust turnout.

Lisa Miller noted that we are working with USCRI to assist Afghan refugees with access to technology and ESL services.

OTHER ITEMS AS NEEDED

None.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

No Executive Session was needed.

REVIEW OF NEW ACTION ITEMS

None.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION

It was **moved** by Jill Foys and **seconded** by Jack Hewitt to adjourn the meeting. All were in favor. There were no abstentions. **Motion passed and carried.**

The meeting adjourned at 9:46 am. The next meeting is Friday, May 10, 2024.

Meeting Advertised in The Derrick		
Minutes Submitted	Nancy Wisgirda	3/8/24
Minutes Approved	NWPA Job Connect Board	5/10/24
Minutes Posted	https://www.nwpajobconnect.org/wdb/board-meeting-archive	5/15/24