



NWPA JOB CONNECT BOARD MEETING
Via Microsoft Teams
Friday, January 17, 2025
9 AM – 11:00 AM

ATTENDANCE: Travis Crytzer, Grainne Blanchette, Jack Hewitt, Jill Foys, Jen Gesing, Kirk Shimshock, Kathryn Schaaf, TJ Sandell, Brandon Schmitt, Will Price, Bobbie Jones, Juanice Vega, Jessica Hansford, Shane Kline, Kerrie DeChurch, Jeff Horneman, Chandler Mason

ABSENT: Brad Tisdale, Jim Decker

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

VISITORS

Brenda Connelly
Anita McCoy, GECAC
Diona Brick, Fiscal Agent
Commissioner Eric Henry
Shawn Waskiewicz
Beverly Rapp
Kristin Triana
Jamie Woods
Elizabeth Wilson
Deb Lutz
Matt Trott
Stephanie Fera
Commissioner Wayne Brosius
Commissioner Chip Abramovic
Commissioner Trisha Durbin
Erie County Executive Alternate Charlie Bayle

Mary Anderson
Attorney Joseph Keebler
Letty Acosta
Nolan Smith
Nancy Sabol
Ben Wilson
Brad Moore
Molly Bailey
David Miller
Sara Dodeci
Silvana Lavor
Sheila Sterrett
Nathan Pape

WELCOME/ROLL CALL/VISITOR RECOGNITION/PUBLIC COMMENTS

The meeting was held via Teams. Travis Crytzer called the meeting to order at 9:05 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. There was no public comment.

CONSENT AGENDA

Travis Crytzer asked if there was a request to sever any items from the consent agenda. No items were requested to be severed. He stated that approval of the consent agenda as a whole would include the following items: the November 1, 2024 NWPA Job Connect Board meeting minutes; Administrative Oversight Monitoring Report; Operator Survey Report; PY23 Data Validation Results and Analysis; PY24 Common Measures Q1 Report; PY23 Final State Monitoring Results; and Charging the Ad Hoc Statement of Work (SOW) Committee With Managing the SOW Process and Report/Recommend to the Board As Needed.

MOTION

It was moved by Jill Foys and seconded by Kirk Shimshock to approve the consent agenda as a whole. All were in favor. There were no abstentions. Motion passed and carried.

REVIEW OF PREVIOUS ACTION ITEMS

Lisa Miller stated that all action items are complete. The action items included scheduling the Ad Hoc Site Selection Committee meetings; Scheduling a CLEO meeting for Title I and Operator RFPs approval and release; and the Executive Director and Fiscal Agent to negotiate and propose to the board a PY23 profit payout to the Title I contractor.

MEMBERSHIP UPDATES

Travis Crytzer noted that Keith Szewczyk's resignation has been accepted and his replacement, Jeff Horneman from Port Erie Plastics, has been appointed. Jeff Horneman was in attendance at the meeting and was invited to introduce himself to the board. He stated that he began working at Port Erie Plastics through a co-op program at the Erie County Tech School and has been with the company for 48 years. He has been in his current position of Support Operations Manager for 25 years and serves on numerous boards. Kerrie DeChurch has been appointed to replace MaryBeth Williams as the new Assistant Regional Director for PA Labor and Industry. Kerrie DeChurch was also in attendance and introduced herself to the board. She has worked for 10 years for the PA Department of Labor and Industry and has been promoted to an Assistant Regional Director to replace Larry Fannie who retired in September. Upcoming reappointments include Title II Adult Ed and OVR.

APPROVAL OF FISCAL ITEMS

Diona Brick noted that the linked document represents the expenditures through November but stated that she has since reconciled December expenditures and is ready to draw funds, noting that the end of year for the County of Venango is December. She gave the following fiscal report:

- WIOA Formula Dollars (A):
 - Highlights are as follows:
 - Please find attached the Adult and Dislocated Worker Expenses as depicted. The total Title I Adult and DW allocation for 24-25 is \$2,905,306. Through November, we expended \$1,040,880 of this amount or 36%. It is important to remember our 30% training requirement for the current year. We are at 16.7% excluding additional sources and 16.7% including additional sources. (A.1) December updates show the Title I Adult and Dislocated Worker expended at 42% through December. There is a bit of a lag due to reduced demand for Dislocated Worker services. We may need to transfer funding from Dislocated Worker to Adult, which is allowable by the state.
 - It is important to monitor the youth percentages to ensure compliance with the requirements. The total Youth budget for 24-25 is \$1,589,203. Through November, we have expended \$623,896 or 39% of the allocation. Two key benchmarks include a requirement to spend at least 75% of the allocation in Out of School Youth and at least 20% must be spent on work experience for youth. We are currently at 100% and 27% respectively. (A.2) For the December update, the Youth expenditures are closer to 50% when you include the December expenditures.
- Detailed Administrative Budget: (B)
 - Administrative Expenses - (Includes all Program Oversight and Fiscal Agent Costs)
 - Overall, the administrative budget is 35%, which is slightly under budget. This is namely due to timing of payments. All monies are used on the FIFO or first in first out basis so that no funding will be forfeited.

When including the December expenditures, we are at 45% through December.

- EARN Program: Attachment C
 - Cumulative- We are at 42% of the budget through November. EARN expenditures are on track.
- Infrastructure Funding Agreements (IFAs) - Each of our IFAs have finished at budget as follows: (Attachment D)
 - Erie Comprehensive Site = 40% of budget
 - Oil Region Comprehensive Site= 39% of budget
 - Mobile Delivery of Service = 22% of budget

Diona Brick noted that we would expect to be at 42% at this point with the IFAs, but this will assist us with moving the PA CareerLink® Oil Region which will increase expenses.

- TANF Youth-The total budget for 24-25 is \$822,158. To date, we have spent 18% of the allocation. Contracts are currently being devised. Diona Brick noted that we would expect to be at 42% but due to the timing of payments, expenditures are lower at this point.

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- Additional Assistance Monies
 - Rapid Response (RR)
 - We currently have no rapid response dollars.
 - 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 06/30/2025. To date we have spent approximately \$111,230. In addition, we have received another \$150,000 with an end date of 6/30/2026.
 - Statewide Activities - \$10,400 Careerlink ® Days - To date we have expended all of this allocation.
 - Apprenticeship Expansion-Total award is \$183,333. To date, \$64,940 has been spent.
 - DW NEG- Opioid Use Disorder-This is an award of \$120,783. To date, none has been spent.

MOTION

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

Diona Brick stated that the Fiscal Agent Agreement was updated and will need to be ratified since it had to be signed and submitted to the state by a deadline that was prior to the next board meeting.

MOTION

It was moved by Jill Foys and seconded Jeffery Horneman to ratify the updated Fiscal Agent Agreement as presented. All were in favor. There were no abstentions. Motion passed and carried.

Diona Brick stated that our Title I Program Services Contract and One Stop Operator Contract were updated to include disclosures regarding the whistleblower language and the scoring system for performance dollars.

NWPA GRANTS ACTIVITY UPDATE

Lisa Stalnaker reported on grants that are being implemented to support workforce development in our region.

- Business Education Partnership Grant (BEP) 2024: \$150,000 grant; contract period through June 30, 2025. NWIRC producing 15 manufacturing virtual reality tour videos to highlight businesses in the area. Anyone who would like to showcase a business is encouraged to contact Lisa Stalnaker. They are working with 15 schools in Warren, Clarion, Venango, Forest, and Crawford Counties, with 1,800 students to participate in classroom presentations, receive flyers with video QR, with over 2,000 video views.

Erie Together has begun infusing the Profile of a Graduate into work with employers through the Erie County Career Pathways Alliance advisory groups. An employer survey has been developed and deployed to identify the highest priority Profile of a Graduate skills in each advisory group. The data collected will be used to shape career exploration experiences. This project focuses on five career pathways: Engineering & Industrial Technology; Science & Health; Business, Finance & Information Technology; Human Services; and Arts and Communication.

- BEP 2022: \$150,000 grant contract through June 30, 2024. This project has reached over 300 students across Erie and Crawford County school districts. Collaboration occurred between 10 local labor unions to create career exploration experiences. Partial support was given to the Uniquely Abled Academy for CNC Machinist through NWIRC through the Crawford County Career and Tech Center and Erie County Community College. Six students graduated in the last cohort. Two are employed and one was upgraded in his employment as a result of the training.
- Apprenticeship Building America Grant: \$183,333 grant; contract period through June 30, 2026. Partners in the project include Early Childhood Connections and the National Tooling and Manufacturing Association. This project has helped to create new RAPs for mold designer, expanded a new RAP for the childcare development specialist program, and supported CTC engagement, and registered apprenticeships.
- Opioid 2023 Disaster Supporting Recovery in the Workplace ECHO Program. \$120,782.87 grant; contract period with Title I through June 30, 2025. Title I is still working on hiring a staff person for this position. The lack of a dedicated staff person is holding up progress on the project and achieving the goals of the grant.

Lisa Stalnaker stated that videos for the 2022 BEP grant are available on our website. Jill Foys asked if these videos will be incorporated into Northwest IRC's virtual reality tours in the five rural counties. Ms. Stalnaker stated that NWIRC is in the process of recruiting manufacturing businesses in the five rural counties to participate. These videos will be incorporated with the school districts in all five counties. Katherine Schaaf stated that she participated in two of the videos currently on our website and encouraged everyone to get involved in making them. Jill Foys asked members to connect any interested manufacturers to Lisa Stalnaker or the NWIRC regarding the videos. Will Price asked if all providers were sent information on these grant activities or if they were just posted to the website. Lisa Stalnaker stated that the information was distributed via our email distribution lists that also includes board members and CLEOs. She noted that we are working to post them on the website as well. Jeff Horneman noted that he is on the advisory board for the Erie County Tech School and he can reach out to other manufacturers that participate in that group. Lisa Stalnaker will send the contact information for the videos to Jeff Horneman.

ACTION ITEM

Lisa Stalnaker will send the contact information for the manufacturing videos related to the BEP grant to Jeff Horneman.

NDWG OPIOID GRANT PLAN

Lisa Miller stated that due to the difficulty that Title I is having in hiring a staff person to execute the program activities for this grant, time is running out to be able to meet the grant goals. The individual hired for the grant must be knowledgeable and experienced with substance abuse issues. Lisa Stalnaker stated that the contract period we have with Equus for this grant ends on June 30, 2025. The grant period does not end until April 2026. The person hired to fill this position must be Title I staff and cannot be Operator staff or another subcontractor. Equus has stated that it takes 5 weeks to onboard a new staff person, which would leave only 3 months to enroll 28 participants. It was noted that some of the difficulty in filling the position is that they tend to make more money at the treatment facilities. Therefore, the salary for the position was increased but Title I is still experiencing difficulty in filling the position. A lengthy discussion followed regarding whether to continue with the grant or to deobligate the grant and send the funding back to the state so that it can be redistributed to other local areas. Following discussion, it was recommended that we continue to work toward filling the position and move forward with the grant. We should revisit the discussion at the March board meeting.

MOTION

It was moved by Jill Foys and seconded by TJ Sandell to not de-obligate the grant funds at this time and revisit the discussion at the March board meeting. All were in favor. There were no abstentions. Motion passed and carried.

PWDA CONFERENCE

Travis Crytzer stated that the PWDA Conference is coming up on April 30 through May 2, 2025 in Hershey, Pennsylvania. We are seeking approval for up to \$3600 to be allocated for board members and/or CLEOs wishing to attend. Kirk Shimshock asked how many members could attend for \$3,600. Diona Brick stated that the amount would cover 3 to 4 people at approximately \$900 each.

MOTION

It was moved by Jill Foys and seconded by Kirk Shimshock to allocate no more than \$3600 to cover attendance for interested board and/or CLEOs to attend the PWDA Conference in April, 2025. All were in favor. There were no abstentions. Motion passed and carried.

REVISED AGREEMENTS

Susan Richmond stated that the signature page for the LWDB/CLEO Agreement was updated to reflect the signatures of the current parties to the agreement, as required by the state.

MOTION

It was moved by Jeffery Horneman and seconded by Grainne Blanchette to ratify the updated signature acknowledgement page for the LWDB/CLEO Agreement. All were in favor. There were no abstentions. Motion passed and carried.

Susan Richmond stated that following gathering the updated signatures for the LWDB/CLEO Agreement, several minor changes were made to the LWDB/CLEO Agreement to align and maintain compliance with the state's revised Local Governance Policy.

MOTION

It was moved by Brandon Schmitt and seconded by Jeffery Horneman to ratify updates made to the LWDB/CLEO Agreement for compliance with the state's revised Local Governance Policy. All were in favor. There were no abstentions. Motion passed and carried.

OIL REGION FACILITY RECOMMENDATION

Kirk Shimshock stated that the Ad Hoc Site Selection Committee toured three potential locations and reviewed the options for the new location floor plans, financials, and conducted lease analysis for the PA CareerLink® Oil Region prior to developing their recommendation to the board. He thanked everyone involved for their hard work. The Prime Fitness building across from the Venango Regional Airport was recommended for the new facility. Travis Crytzer also thanked the group for all of their work on this project.

MOTION

It was moved by Kirk Shimshock and seconded by Jack Hewitt to recommend the Prime Fitness building across from the Venango Airport as the new PA CareerLink® Oil Region location. All were in favor. There were no abstentions. Motion passed and carried.

RFP UPDATE

Susan Richmond stated that the Ad Hoc RFP Committee met on January 13, 2025 and has begun to review the proposals received for the Operator and Title I RFPs. The committee hopes to have a recommendation for award of contract ready by the March 14, 2025 board meeting.

EQUUS STAFFING UPDATE

Lisa Stalnaker reported that Equus currently has 5 vacancies, as well as 1 staff on medical leave.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL PLANS

Susan Richmond stated that we recently received the CWIA data needed for completing our local and regional plans. We will submit our local and regional plans drafts to the state by February 21, 2025. After the state reviews them, they will meet with board staff in May and we will update the plans based on their recommendations. The plans will then go out for a 30-day public comment period and then they are likely to be submitted for final approval by the board at the July meeting.

GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE TO EVALUATE THE BOARD MEETING SCHEDULE

Lisa Miller stated that it is time to review the board schedule of meetings for fiscal year 25/26. We have an opportunity to look at the way this board functions so that we can bring more workforce-related items to the meetings. She reviewed the Governor's workforce goals that would be important to the board discussions. She suggested that we might integrate those goals through a revised board and committee meeting structure to allow for more discussion of those topics. She noted that this would also provide opportunities to plan for grant activities that are needed in the local area when grant funding becomes available. She asked the board regarding charging the Governance Committee with evaluating the board meeting schedule for consolidation, efficiencies, and opportunities.

MOTION

It was moved by Kathryn Schaaf and seconded by Jeffery Horneman to charge the Governance Committee with evaluating the board meeting schedule. All were in favor. There were no abstentions. Motion passed and carried.

BOARD MEETING LOCATIONS GOING FORWARD

Lisa Miller stated that we will likely move the March board meeting to the Penn State Behrend campus since the weather prohibited our visit there for this meeting. Jill Foys suggested the Marienville Area Civic Association (MACA) building in Forest County for the May meeting. Lisa Miller will reach out to Commissioner Bob Snyder to discuss the potential of meeting at the MACA building in Marienville for the May board meeting.

ACTION ITEM

Lisa Miller will reach out to Commissioner Bob Snyder to discuss the potential of meeting at the MACA building in Marienville for the May board meeting.

OTHER BUSINESS

Board Staff Report Highlights

Lisa Miller reported the following highlights:

- The Community Reinvestment Act group will have their next meeting on January 24, 2025.
- All board members must turn in their Statement of Financial Interest form for 2024.
- SNAP 5050 ended on December 31, 2024.
- We provided letters of support to two organizations applying for funding.
- Board members are encouraged to follow NWPAs Job Connect on social media to stay informed on the latest news.

OTHER ITEMS AS NEEDED

Jack Hewitt asked that, in light of some fiscal issues experienced by other unrelated organizations in the local area recently, we should provide assurances that we have checks and balances in place to safeguard our fiscal policies and procedures. Diona Brick provided a detailed explanation of our fiscal policies, procedures, and safeguards in place to reassure the board that all appropriate measures are in place and followed to ensure the integrity of the fiscal process.

Jack Hewitt stated that we have not had a board refresher since 2019 and proposed having a board orientation session for all board members. Lisa Miller pointed out that she conducted two board Q and A sessions on January 13, 2025 for any board member who wished to attend. Several board members have expressed interest in having a board retreat, and she noted that we are looking into that.

Jack Hewitt stated that we have a small fund in place for the purchase of greeting cards in the event that a board member retired. This fund was originally generated in 2020 with donations from board members. The fund is now at \$25. After some discussion, any interested board members can donate to the fund at the March meeting.

EXECUTIVE SESSION AS NEEDED

There was no need for Executive Session.

REVIEW OF NEW ACTION ITEMS

Lisa Stalnaker will send the contact information for the manufacturing videos related to the BEP grant to Jeff Horneman.

Lisa Miller will reach out to Commissioner Bob Snyder to discuss the potential of meeting at the MACA building in Marienville for the May board meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION

It was moved by Jeffery Horneman and seconded by Kirk Shimshock to adjourn the meeting. All were in favor. There were no abstentions. Motion passed and carried.

The meeting adjourned at 10:35 am. The next meeting is Friday, March 14, 2025.

Meeting Advertised in The Derrick and Meadville Tribune		
Minutes Submitted	Nancy Wisgirda	1/17/25

Minutes Approved	NWPA Job Connect Board	
Minutes Posted	https://www.nwpajobconnect.org/wdb/board-meeting-archive	