

Southwest Iowa Local Workforce Development Board Meeting
Approved/Final Minutes, August 23, 2021

1) Call to Order – The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Katrina Fleharty at 6:32 P.M.

2) Roll Call – Regional Workforce Development Board members present: Katrina Fleharty, Carol Smith, Lana McMann, Sally Rolf, Darla Helm, Wayne Pantini, Don Keast, Susan Miller, Jason Cook, Billie Jo Greenwalt, Michelle Lents, William Berning, Sarah Baebler-Hall. Absent were Steve Gilbert, Brad Kramer, Louis Gonzales, Kim Bishop, Darren Swolley and Mike Haynie. **Quorum – Yes.**

County Elected Officials present: Merlin Dixon, Dan Christensen, Charla Schmid, Dennis Brown, Jerry Walker and Ron Fitzgerald

WIOA/MATURA staff present: Danna Buls
Staff to the RWDB present: Michelle Wilson

3) Minutes – Wayne made a motion to approve the minutes of the June 9 meeting. Carol seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

4) August Agenda – Lana made a motion to approve the agenda. Susan seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

5) Business Items of the LWDB:

Local Plan Review:

Michelle explained that the planning team consisting of core partners: Darla Helm, Sally Rolf, William Berning, Danna Buls, and Sarah Baebler-Hall, with additional employer perspective provided by Carol Smith and Wayne Pantini, board members who are representing SHRM and UCDA, respectively. The local plans are developing local strategies to align with the state workforce board's statewide plan and initiatives. The local plan drives the board's work over the next 2 years. All board members received the local plan draft prior to the meeting, to allow time to review. Highlighted the strengths and weaknesses of the local area, based on the data and input from the partners.

Michelle outlined the timeline for the local plan's implementation. Upon approval, a public comment period of 20 business days will begin. If significant public comments arise that require revision, the board will reconvene to address and adapt the plan. The plan is then due to IWD and the state review team by October 1. The state review team will provide feedback, which the board will then address. The plan will go into effect January 1, 2022.

Wayne inquired about provisions in place to ensure that the plan's strategies are implemented. Michelle explained that the Operations Committee on behalf of the board is going to be charged with reviewing the strategies driving the service delivery strategies. Specific sections could also be addressed at quarterly board meetings to track progress.

It was recommended that after the plan is approved, an index is created for ease of review, in order to ensure that the local plan is truly utilized as a guiding document for the board's efforts.

Carol moved to approve the local plan. Lana seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Committees: Michelle updated the group on the status of committees. Current committees are executive, disability access committee, and youth standing committee. The addition of the new committees: finance, operations, and business engagement are next. Reviewed committee assignment document; each board member and CEO will serve on a committee. The DAC will be co-chaired by Sarah Baebler-Hall and new IVRS rep. Final committee roster list will be emailed out, with Michelle working with each individual committee to coordinate the meetings. Some committees will meet quarterly, with others (finance) meeting monthly, and others (executive) meeting as needed.

Service Provider Update— Danna from MATURA provided the Title I service provider update. The youth team is enjoying seeing the growth with youth participants in their work experiences (handling money, attendance, job attendance, and growth in overall job responsibilities). Additional outreach in outlying areas has taken place. There are five youth in work experience activities currently.

Customer flow in the office remains slow. A job fair at SWCC is scheduled for August 31, with a planned 25 employers in attendance. Michelle agreed to share the flyer with the board. There are no new COVID grant enrollments.

Joel Dirks is the new interim CFO for MATURA and is working with staff to create updated funding budgets. Referrals have been lower than normal. Staff have been working with RESEA: Re-Employment Services and Eligibility Assessment, which is the case management progra for individuals receiving unemployment benefits to support their return to employment.

Danna shared a success story of a job seeker who had been laid off after working 18 years at a local manufacturing plant. He received unemployment benefits and completed assessments to determine his next steps to return to work as soon as possible. He completed a 4-week truck driving training, which was paid for by the TRADE program. He has been hired working full-time driving in the Midwest and is home every weekend, and is happy to be working again in a high-demand field.

Disability Access Committee Update-No new updates to report.

Youth Standing Committee Update- No new updates to report.

Budget Update: Reviewed detailed year-end report for January 1, 2021-July 31, 2021, provided by the fiscal agent. Explained carryover process, as well as WIOA requirements for out-of-school expenditures; 20% of youth funds are required to be expended on work-based learning experiences. Meeting this expenditure rate was challenging during the pandemic, as job placements were not available.

Ticket to Work Funds: Michelle explained TTW process; the DAC will authorize expenditures of TTW funding. There is currently \$14,479 in TTW funds.

Partner Report Updates:

Iowa Workforce Development Update: William reported the outdoor career fair has been coordinated for August 31 at SWCC. Encouraging job seekers to return to the center on the same day, to receive resume assistance and other services to return to work. The summits to bring employers and educators together will be returning this fall, with more details forthcoming.

Adult Education and Literacy Update: Darla reported on the end of the fiscal year statistics: 197 participated in HiSET, ESL or IET programs. Head counts were down, but participation and testing benchmarks have been positive. 22 students completed HiSET battery, with a graduation ceremony held the end of June. The summer has been busy, with 8 students already passing the HiSET. Online platform and computer lend options are also available for students.

Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services Update: Sally reported she has two new IVRS counselors, and will be sending staff and job candidates to the upcoming job fair at SWCC. There are two Title I youth/IVRS co-enrollments, with the youth excited to participate in the program. She is interviewing for the Creston youth counselor position, which will eventually be placed in the Creston OneStop.

Iowa Department for the Blind: Sarah reported that IDB concluded the summer residential program with a total of 18 participants who were 14-20 years old to obtain blindness training skills. Six students will begin the young adult residential training program, and recruitment for the adult residential program is in process. There is a focus on college preparation and technology skills. There is a loaner program for assistive technology. IDB has seen an increase in individuals who were unemployed due to COVID who are now ready to return to work. There is also a need for benefits counseling.

Reports From Other Representative Entities:

UCDA: Wayne reported that the leadership program has been revamped, with a focus on stronger business and education connections. Each speaker will be invited to share their education and career pathways to support youth in knowing their local career options. UCDA is building workplace learning experiences in partnership with the high school and AEA.

SIRHA: Billie Jo reported that the office is now open to the public. There is not a waiting list, so all applications are being processed immediately. Once individuals are housed, there is a significant focus on supporting people to return to work, with SIRHA staff making referrals for employment services.

SHRM: Carol reported that SHRM sent out an email to all local chambers and economic development offices about SHRM, which included a SHRM application, requesting that it be forwarded to all business contacts. With turnover in the local workforce, SHRM can share resources to support staff with HR needs.

Meeting Time Discussion: Discussed the board meeting time and in-person vs. Zoom options. Upon further review of time options, the board chair is only available in the evening. Committees can decide as a group if they would like to meet in the day or evening, depending on the group's preferences and availability.

Michelle shared the survey results on meeting format, which had 100% participation. The majority of respondents selected the option of meeting virtually, with an annual in-person meeting. A spring in-person meeting was preferred by the group, with potential for a board training in addition to the board meeting. There was a recap discussion of the statewide board training held in Ankeny. There may be another statewide board training next year, at the discretion of the local boards.

Carol made a motion for the board to meet virtually quarterly, with an annual in-person meeting. Don seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Establish Next Meeting – Next meeting is Monday, November 8 at 6:30 pm.

Adjournment - William made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Carol seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 7:40 P.M.