

Region 4 Workforce Board Meeting Minutes of September 22, 2021 Location: Virtually-GoToMeeting Conference call	NEXT MEETING Wednesday, November 17, 2021-Annual Event Location: TBD
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Directors Present:

Randy Vernon, chair
Karen Mellen, vice-chair
Steve Snyder, secretary
Mike Barnes
Spencer Buchanan
Dennis Carson
Randall Holmes
Elva James

Dean McCurdy
Amy Wood

Excused:

Richard Bradshaw
Deb Close
Alicia Hanawalt
Shannon Polmateer

Staff and Guests Present: *Roger Feldhaus, CEO; Tara Bradley, CFO; Deb Waymire, COO; Mellisa Leaming, Director of Operations; Blake Sempsrott, Financial Coordinator; and Tina Overley-Hilt, Executive Assistant.*

Guests Present: *Judy Hasselkus, Regional Support Manager, IDWD; Ethan Heicher, Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, Ivy Tech-Kokomo; James Little, Director, Logansport Century Career Center; and Jonathan Schuck, Director, Kokomo Area Career Center.*

Call to Order and Welcome

The September 22, 2021, WDB meeting was held via conference call with GoToMeeting. Attendees were welcomed and the meeting was called to order by Chair, Randy Vernon, at 8:30 a.m. Introductions were made. A quorum was present.

Consent Agenda

A motion was made to approve the consent agenda items as presented.

Motion: Randy Holmes

Second: Steve Snyder

Action: Unanimous approval

New Business

Fiscal

PY 21 WDB Budget

Tara Bradley presented the proposed PY 21 WDB budget for July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2022 to the Board for approval. The proposed budget has been recommended for approval by the Finance and Executive Committees. Region 4 received its new WIOA allocation that will have a two-year life beginning July 1, 2021. If all funds were received at once, we would have \$9,594,653 available, which is a slight decrease from PY 20. 20% of the allocation will be set aside for carry-over into PY 22. 80% of the new allocation, plus the carry-in from PY 20, will be budgeted for PY 21. There was a 24% increase in the new WIOA allocations for PY 21 and a greater amount of funds carried in from PY 20. The total projected WIOA funding available to budget is \$2,977,415, which is an increase of \$590,030 for PY 21.

Under Non-WIOA funding, which includes funding from IDWD, there are several decreases shown, because to date there are no replacements for grants like the COVID-related grants received by the State. We will not receive Next Level Jobs Workforce Ready Grant funds in PY 21. The RESEA allocation has not been received yet. Throughout the year additional funds may be received and added to the budget. For example, Region 4 was just notified of a new WIOA Support Grant in the amount of \$250,157 that is not currently reflected in the budget. For PY 21, there is a slight increase in IDWD funding of \$210,461.

America's Promise grant (APG) and the Rural Healthcare Grant are direct grants from the USDOL. APG ends December 31, 2021. Not all APG funds will be utilized. The Rural Healthcare Grant is a four-year grant that was received in February 2021 and ends in March 2025. It is in collaboration with eight other Indiana regions. Each region will receive up to \$250,000 for training services. Region 4 will receive an additional \$250,000 for grant administration services. All told there will be an \$899,980 decrease in Non-WIOA funding for PY 21 compared to PY 20.

We will continue to act as a fiscal agent for certain of the WHIN grant agreements. We will also continue to manage IDWD's fee-for-service WorkKeys Job Profiling contract. Overall, the total funding available to budget for PY21 is \$6,384,792, which is a decrease of \$775,547 from PY 20.

The proposed line item expenditures are expenses mainly for the seven Board staff members. Most services are subcontracted out to JobWorks, Inc. Line items are broken out by direct participant costs and staffing and overhead costs for the WorkOne Centers. There is a decrease in WorkOne overhead cost due to the closing of the Lafayette WorkOne REACH office in March 2021. Lafayette WorkOne REACH is now located within the Lafayette WorkOne Center office. Salaries and Fringe Benefits are decreased because of two fewer staff members. It does include merit and cost of living increases for the current WDB staff. The Board Discretionary funds are funds used for the Board functions that are not customer service-related, such as meetings, dues, travel, and workforce information.

Board Action to approve the PY 21 WDB Budget

A motion was made to approve PY 21 Budget as presented to the Region 4 Workforce Board.

Motion: Karen Mellen

Second: Dean McCurdy

Action:Unanimous approval

Operations

USDOL Disaster Recovery Grant Monitoring

Region 4's and Region 5's Disaster Recovery Grants were selected for monitoring by USDOL. The Disaster Recovery Grant became available in May 2020 for Boards to utilize these funds to support rapid creation of temporary employment positions consistent with regional need in one or more of the following areas:

1. Food bank staffing and support
2. Delivery staff to support delivery of food, medical, and other supplies to at-risk populations
3. Community and home healthcare

Region 4's proposal focused on temporary employment for Food Finders as they support food distribution across all 12 of our counties, and Logansport Memorial Hospital as Cass County was our most COVID-19 impacted county at the time. The monitoring was conducted during the week of August 23, 2021. It was very comprehensive and encompassed review of case files, policies and procedures, interviews with Operations and Fiscal staff, and involved employers, case managers, and participants supported by the grant. During the exit interview the reviewer stated she did not see any significant issues with what she reviewed so far. Her final report is due 45 days after completion of the review.

IDWD Performance Support Grant Award

Region 4 submitted three initiatives for building the skills of our current and future workforces and improving retention of incumbent workers.

- One project is to help connect students in regional high schools with career opportunities in advanced manufacturing through dual credit, internships, and work-based learning. Working in partnership with Ivy Tech and seven high schools we will support the Integrated Training and Education Pathway (ITEP) program by funding nationally recognized certification exams such as the MSSC Certified Production Technician, ASE Student Certification for Automotive Students, ESCO HVAC

Certifications, and CNA for Health Care. We will also support work-based learning experience, as part of their dual credit program pathways. Our goal is to serve over 450 students. The budget for this project is \$100K. **Approved.**

- Another project is to implement a WorkLife Navigator program to improve employee productivity, and reduce turnover of incumbent workers. Many employees fail in the workforce due to lacking the ability to problem solve and work out life issues that may stand in their way of keeping a job. The WorkLife Navigator supports employees with their real life challenges and provides opportunities and resources that traditional employer assistance benefits can't meet. Such as: organizing care for an older parent, negotiating with bill collectors, understanding the mortgage process, choosing a therapist on a sliding-fee scale, or finding money for groceries when one is behind in their bills. Our focus will be to engage with our advanced manufacturing employers as manufacturing continues to be the wealth driver for our region. This will be a pilot launch and our goal will be to engage two employers with this project and serve up to 400 employees. The budget for this project is \$150,000 – **Approved**
- The third project is a request for additional funding to support the Employer Training Grant. Employer applications through the Next Level Job portal have far exceeded the current regional Employer Training Grant allotment of \$399,000. Region 4 has received 38 approved applications and, if fully utilized, funds of over \$1.6 million would be needed. **Pending approval**

Apprenticeship Grant Activity Update

We are on track to meet both the programmatic and fiscal goals of \$100,000 sub-award we received in for the period February 2021 – May 2022. At this time we have fully obligated our grant goal to support 67 individuals in new and existing apprenticeships. We assisted Caterpillar and Spirit EMT in establishing Registered Apprenticeship Programs (RAPs) with their companies, as well as supporting the cost for apprentices for them and also for Pace Dairy, Haynes, IBEW Kokomo and Lafayette, and Stellantis.

Board Administration

Executive Director's Injury and Recovery Update

Over the Memorial Day holiday Roger was in a mountain biking accident while vacationing with family in Florida. He was in the hospital for a week and in recovery in Florida with his family for two more weeks. He sustained a cervical spine fracture that was surgically repaired, severe facial lacerations, and a concussion. Roger was fortunate to have avoided more serious injuries, for the great medical care he received, and for the "home away from home" to recover. The concussion caused a hidden issue, however. On August 31, while on a virtual meeting call at his office, Roger had a Grand mal seizure resulting from the subdural hematoma caused by the concussion he sustained on May 31. Roger is on the road to recovery and doesn't feel this will be a recurring medical issue.

READI Grant Applications from Region 4 Groups

Regional Economic Acceleration and Development Initiative (READI) is a grant opportunity for community partners to team up and come up with innovative ideas to attract and retain talent. The applications from those groups have been submitted. There is funding available for 10 groups. We have not heard the results of the funding opportunities. There is \$500 million available statewide. Each regional group may receive up to \$50 million. A 4:1 cash match is required. There are three different groups that include one or more counties in our region's 12-county area. This is an economic development initiative with which we have a responsibility to learn about and align ourselves with, in order to support these groups and their communities' efforts to attract and retain talent.

Innovative Workforce Strategies Discussion

The requests in the IDWD Performance Support Grant proposals coincide with the Region 4 Workforce Board strategy going forward. There is an uncertainty about the recovery period from the pandemic, a concern of the

cost of living surpassing the ability to earn a living wage, and why individuals do not want to participate in training and work at a challenging job. What should Region 4's strategy be that will address the current state of workforce development? It is important to engage young people as early as possible to let them know about the opportunities available while still in high school. We want to encourage early skill development and facilitate the engagement of young people with employers. One way to accomplish this is to integrate learning through career and technical education with experience in the workforce. There is also a need to find a way to work with incumbent workers to increase their technical and work life skills. We want to have resources to work more closely with employers to skill up their incumbent workers through internship programs, on-the-job training, and work experiences.

Establishment of Rural Healthcare Advisory Board

TAP is in the process of establishing a Rural Healthcare Advisory Board as a part of the requirements for the Rural Healthcare Grant. The advisory board will consist of health care providers from throughout the state who will collaborate with us on using the grant funds in a way that maximizes their effectiveness in rural communities. Roger and Deb had the opportunity to present the Rural Healthcare program to the Governor's Health Workforce Council. Mike Barnes has been instrumental in connecting us with the Bowen Center (Health and Research Policy Center) for this opportunity. We are supporting Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) training as the first step in a career pathway that will lead to an associate or bachelor degree in nursing. The vision is that CNA certification will be an accessible entry point to licensed professional nursing for individuals who may experience barriers to directly entering these professions. CNA certification will continue to be a primary contributor to diversity in the nursing workforce. Supporting and enhancing academic advancement and occupational pathways among CNAs should be considered a means to advance strategic workforce goals for Indiana especially in its rural communities. As a workforce development system, we want to help provide the counseling and career advising for those considering healthcare occupations, beginning at the CNA level, to have exposure to the unique challenges of these occupations and the career opportunities they provide. We have a preliminary list of potential Rural Healthcare Advisory Board members and will set up the first meeting of the advisory board in October.

Chancellor Dean McCurdy added that Ivy Tech in Kokomo and Lafayette is expanding its CNA programs and looking at expanding the number of seats in nursing training statewide. A major benefit during COVID was the establishment of the ability to use Telehealth in the rural communities. Telehealth has provided greater access for individuals and more opportunities for medical staff to deliver services more efficiently. There is some momentum with legislators to reestablish Telehealth services.

Mike Barnes commented that Telemedicine is on the Health Council's agenda for this year to make recommendations. Members of the House and Senate health committees sit on the council.

Regional Collaboration with CTE Programs

Region 4 will host the Regional Collaboration with Career and Technical Education programs to take an in-depth analysis of the CTE programs to meet the needs of the future workforce. CTE goes through a comprehensive needs analysis of their programs every two years. This is an effort to tie the labor market demands with the programs offered to meet the needs of the region. CTE directors, post-secondary education and representatives from the workforce board, business and industry will be invited. The Governor's Cabinet staff has provided a template to use for the meeting. The meeting will be held on Monday, October 4, 2021.

IDWD's WorkOne Innovation Project

Mike Barnes shared that in 2019 the discussion began about "what is the WorkOne brand". A study was conducted to find out what the WorkOne brand means, and not just the unemployment office. The results showed many stakeholder groups are not aware of all the services provided at WorkOne.

Board Membership

Several WDB members’ terms expire on September 30, 2021. Roger Feldhaus will be contacting each member whose term is expiring to see if they are interested in serving another two-year term. There are two replacements that need to be appointed for Larry West and Arden Cramer. We hope everyone will agree to continue to serve.

Annual Meeting Event

The Board discussed options for the annual meeting event with the rise COVID and the proximity to the Thanksgiving holiday. Members agreed to a small, in-person gathering for a luncheon for Board members and Board staff.

Conflict of Interest Statements

An email requesting Board members to fill out and sign a Conflict of Interest Statement for this program year was sent in July. Updated forms are needed for monitoring and audit purposes. Most have been returned but a few are still needed. A follow up email will be sent following the today’s meeting.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 10:00 AM

Motion: Karen Mellen

Second: Elva James

Action:Unanimous approval by all members present

Respectfully submitted,
Tina Overley-Hilt
Executive Assistant

Stephen Snyder, Secretary
Tecumseh Area Partnership, Inc.
d/b/a Region 4 Workforce Board