

Area 14 Workforce Development Board

Executive Meeting Minutes

5/12/2021

Board Members Present: David Brennan, Stephen Carson, Jeff Circle, Laura Davidson, Kate Perani sitting in for Mollie Fitzgerald, Jennifer Kleski, Misty Milstead, Robert Ogden, Brent Patterson, Jessica Stroh, Melissa Sheppard

Guests Present: Laurie Gribble-McKnight, Area 14 Director; Teresa Garey, ODJFS Area 14 Workforce Specialist; Shelly Adams, Meigs OMJ; Jean Demosky, Athens JFS; Dean Pidcock, Athens OMJ; Cheryl Boley, Perry JFS; David Hansen, Perry OMJ; Mendra Hupp, Perry JFS/Area 14 Fiscal; Lenny Eliason, Athens Commissioner; Tom Poorman, OhioSE; Bryn Stepp-Lt Gov Office; Tammy Skinner-Athens JFS fiscal; Medea Loibl, Project Rise

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Area 14 Workforce Development Board met virtually on May 12, 2021. A quorum was present with 11 of 19 Board members present.

Chairman Robert Ogden called the meeting to order at 10:05 AM. Laurie McKnight took attendance.

Meeting Minutes (February 10th, 2021) were presented for approval.

1st – Stephen Carson; 2nd – Laura Davidson

Motion carried without opposition.

Agenda (May 12, 2021) was presented for approval.

1st – Jeff Circle; 2nd – Kate Perani

Motion carried without opposition.

Introductions:

- Rob Ogden welcomed Kate Perani who is sitting in for Mollie Fitzgerald and granted voting rights.
- Welcome Speaker – Medea Loibl from Project Rise who presented on what Project Rise does and has done in School year 20-21.
- Director McKnight welcomed Tom Poorman with OhioSE and Bryn Stepp with the Lt. Governor's office to the meeting.

County OhioMeansJobs Center Updates:

- **Athens County** – Dean Pidcock
 - Melissa McAbee will be taking over for Jami Koons in the CCMEP program.
 - OhioMeansJobs Center is now open completely since Athens is now orange. Appointments are no longer needed, but masks and social distancing will continue.
 - The OMJ is working with JFS and their transportation team to help reduce transportation as a barrier to employment. They are hoping to help people locally for a limited time on getting to and from work if those people are not on the bus route.
 - Anchor Hocking out of Lancaster is looking at busing people who are willing to work from Athens and the Columbus areas to their job site in Lancaster.
- **Meigs County** – Shelly Adams
 - The Meigs OhioMeansJobs Center has remained open throughout the COVID pandemic. Staff have all returned as of April.

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- OMJ traffic is steadily increasing, and they are providing both in person and virtual hiring events onsite.
 - Meigs will use a lot of their Business Outreach funds on increasing business awareness on the OMJ can do for them.
 - They are starting their pre-apprenticeship with Mark Porter and Meigs Career center in auto tech for 21-22 school year and are excited to be able to help students with on-the-job training, increased earning potential upon graduating and assistance with supportive services.
 - Meigs mobility management working and has received 1.25 million for their public transportation system to get up and running.
 - Shelly shared a success that their OMJ has worked to help 10 people find employment in the last month.
- **Perry County** – David Hansen
 - Perry County has been working on visibility on career and job services available through the OMJ. 2-3 times a week they are going out with their mobile unit and this has increased awareness and interest.
 - People in recovery from substance use disorder (SUD) are being helped through their boot camp and halfway house by providing structure and support with a support worker and the OMJ. They are helping them find jobs. The OMJ is also working to help businesses understand what it means to be a recovery friendly workplace such as allowing workers flexibility to attend their dr appointments or meetings. They will be doing a campaign around this. They are also looking to provide a community garden as a worksite that will allow people in recovery the ability to start back into the workforce slowly and then work up to longer hours and into full time work.
 - RESEA has been good as they are using it as a way to get word/messaging out in hopes of loosening up their labor market and helping people get back into the workforce.

Fiscal Report – Mendra Hupp

- WIOA Area 14 Fiscal Update – May 12, 2021 Report submitted to the Board (See folder)
- OWIP has ended March 31st, 2021. No new incentives were paid out since the last report out.
- **National Disaster Grant - NDWG OH32 Flood**
 - OH 32 has closed out in Athens and Perry counties. Meigs will be closing done completely this month. There were some funds that will not be used and Director McKnight informed OWD so those funds can be used by other Area's if needed at the end.
 - Overall the Area received close to \$2M to operate this program.
- **Opioid Grant #3**
 - Opioid Grant 3 was extended to March 2021.
 - Area 14 requested and received an additional \$247,744.
 - All counties have continued to work on their plans and programs with the new extension.
- **Business Outreach Grant**
 - \$200,000 Awarded to Area 14

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- \$60,000 per county distributed to each county
 - \$20,000 Area 14 Business Outreach
 - Total Spent \$48,567.79; Remaining Balance \$151,432.21.
 - Business Outreach funds have been extended to December 31, 2021.
- **RESEA – Reemployment Services & Eligibility Assessments Grant**
 - Award Total \$19,979.62 has all been spent on training staff.
 - Area 14 has requested an additional \$65,000 to operate through June of 2021, but likely will not heard about this until after June to see what funding remains from other Area's so that it can be reallocated to Area's who requested additional funds.
- **Area 14 Audit –**
 - Perry & Associates has started their audit for calendar year 2020.
 - Working on initial questionnaire.
 - Cost expected to remain under \$10k.
- **ODJFS Audit & Monitoring**
 - Audit completed for PY 18 & PY 19 and PY20
 - Audit has been completed for:
 - Athens County CCMEP
 - Perry County WIOA Programs
 - Fiscal Agent
 - There were no findings or significant observations.
- **CEO Approval:**
 - CEOs approved moving \$34k of admin funds to program.
 - CEOs approved accepting 2nd year funds from Area 15 totaling over \$191k.

Director McKnight:

Executive Committee Updates:

The executive committee approved the monitoring/consulting contract that Area 14 put out for bid to Real Workforce Solutions. The contract is a one-year contract with the possibility of 2 additional years. Real Workforce Solutions will be completed our yearly OMJ county program monitoring, fiscal monitoring as well as assisting with special grants monitoring and consulting services as needed.

Regional Plan:

Area's 15, 16 and 14 worked on revising and updating our regional plan. This year we had the option of just doing a basic revision and update which we all felt was the best solution due to Covid and the uncertainty of what workforce needs in the future. In the next bi-yearly update, there will be a deeper dive with the boards and area businesses to find out how they have come out of this and what their long-term needs are going to be in order to best serve them. Board was asked that as long as there is no comments during our comment

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period, that the Regional Plan be passed and allowed for presentation to the Office of Workforce Development for final approval.

Discussion - None

Motion to approve the acceptance of the Regional Plan for approval to OWD.

1st – Jeff Circle; 2nd – David Brennan

Motion passed without opposition

Job Fair Update

- Based on the quotes, Area 14 purchased the Premier Virtual Platform. All the OMJ's have designated a person in their OMJ to oversee the platform along with Director McKnight and Teresa Garey from OWD will be trained in how to use the platform. The platform will allow for one-on-one hiring events, area or county specific job fairs and my hope is to also do training fairs. OMJ's to do hybrid events with employers to allow for onsite job fairs with the ability to also do virtual interviews during that time frame. It will also allow the mobile units like the one in Perry County to do virtual hiring events while they are in more remote locations.
- Area 14 along with Project Rise, the OMJ's held an in person hiring event with Tri County Career center and their seniors as well as seniors from Nelsonville York. This was a huge success with over 34 students getting job offers and 135 students being scheduled for second round interviews.
- Area 14, the OMJs working with Hocking College to do an in-person event May 18th that is open to the public. All events are socially distanced and masked. There is currently 42 employers signed up.

Apprenticeship Update:

- Apprentice Sponsor of record application is being started again after a delay due to Covid 19. Working as well to get the pre-apprenticeships with Porter approved as well. In the meantime, Area 14 will continue to offer the pre-apprenticeship to the senior high school students and would be providing this service under work experience. The OMJs have placed students from Tri County Career Center in Auto Tech and 2 who started with their auto body shop which is now closed were moved to In Town body shop to finish out the year. Meigs Career Center has waited to move forward with this until this coming school year.
- Area 14 has been working with TCCC and Point Broadband and Crown Castile Fiber to develop and implement a fiber optics short term training. It needs added to the WIET list which Director McKnight is working with OWD to do since this will not be a credentialed training as the instructor needs to be with the career center for at least a year and will need test out as well. An employee of Crown Castile has stepped up to teach this class in the evenings. They said current workforce demand out paces people by 2 to 1. Starting wages for employees with no training starts between \$17-\$25/hr with some experience between \$23-\$35/hr. Director McKnight would like the Board to approve the use WIOA funds to pay for participants to get trained. The training will cost \$900. The problem is that until the instructor is credentialed, the participants cannot receive a certification which means that Area 14 will take a performance hit for credential attainment if approved. The CEOs approved this in their morning meeting.

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Discussion - None

Motion to approve use of WIOA funds if this is on the WIET list.

1st – Jeff Circle; 2nd – Kate Perani

Motion passed without opposition

Policy Changes

- 2-year fund transfers to be allowable between Area's that show a need with less steps needed.
- Extension of the Opioid Grant that allowed for increased hours of work for participants from the regular 2040 hours under most DWG to 4080 due to the extension.
- The state has asked for a waiver with Incumbent Worker funds. These funds are currently limited to 20% of our overall WIOA allocation to provide training dollars to companies for their current employees. The state has requested a waiver to allow for an increase to help support our businesses during this time of significant workforce changes. DOL has not responded yet.

OH32 Program

- Participants last day is today.
- Meigs will be working to do their close out and will provide the numbers to the board at our August meeting.

Covid 19 DWG

- 8 participants enrolled in or completed training.

OERG Grant:

The OERG grant was extended. The Area requested and received additional money to keep this going. The Area has received a lot of state recognition on the programs we are running and how outside the box we are in delivering services that each county identified as needed in their county. Director McKnight was asked to be part of a panel for the Office of Workforce Development on our programs to help other area's think about what they are doing and who/how to collaborate.

Unemployment Update:

Unemployment continues to be about 2 times higher than normal even though the % appears low. Per the new order, all UI participants will have to start the work search requirement starting May 23rd. Prior to this, only new initial applicants after December 6th had to do the work search. This helps to explain our lower unemployment rate even though the actual continued claims number is about twice what it was pre-covid.

Attached Documents

- **Unadjusted Performance Measures for PY20 QTR 2** for both WIOA and CCMEP
 - Area is doing well for the second quarter.
- **OhioMeansJobs Quarterly Reports**

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- Reports that we are still seeing a steady stream of customers using our centers. Training numbers are slightly down, but are expected to increase with the work requirement and outreach efforts of the OMJs.
- Job Postings reports show that there are plenty of jobs out there. This is a job seekers market right now.

Other Business

- The allowance for virtual meetings was extended to 12/31/2021 so we will continue to hold these virtually until that time or until this changes.
- Director McKnight brought up a discussion on workforce and the increase in SUD due to Covid that she had with Member Brennan. The feeling is that this is also having a great effect on our workforce and may be a reason that some people are not returning to work. Director McKnight again stated that this makes our OERG grant work more important than ever. Member Brennan shared that maybe re-entry populations need to be utilized more to fill the workforce gap.

Motion to Adjourn at 11:04 AM

1st – David Brennan; 2nd – Jeff Circle

Motion carried without opposition

Next meeting August 11th, Virtually