



**The Chief Elected Officials of Area 14 Workforce Development Board (WDB) met for a scheduled meeting on the 12th day of May 2021, via Google Meet due to Covid-19.**

- 1. Commissioner Owen opened the meeting, and a quorum was established with the attendance of Perry County Commissioner, Scott Owen and Athens County Commissioner, Lenny Eliason and Commissioner Shannon Miller of Meigs County. The meeting commenced at 9:01am. Commissioner Eliason made a motion to approve the minutes from the February 10th, 2021, meeting and Commissioner Miller seconded. All were in favor. Commissioner Miller made a motion to approve the agenda. Commissioner Eliason seconded. All were in favor.**

Also, in attendance via video or phone were Athens County JFS Executive Director Jean Demosky, Meigs County Executive Director Chris Shank, Perry County Executive Director Cheryl Boley, Area 14 Fiscal Agent/Perry County JFS Assistant Director Mendra Hupp, Meigs County CFO Vince Reiber, and Meigs OMJ Supervisor, Shelly Adams.

**1. Executive Committee Update-Director McKnight presented:**

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.

**2. Fiscal Report-Mendra Hupp:**

Mendra emailed out the fiscal update report, and it was added to the folder.

OWIP has ended March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2021. No new incentives were paid out since the last report out.

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.

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 funds have been extended to December 31, 2021. Money has continued to be spent and will be spent by the end of that time period.

RESEA grants. Each county received \$7399.54, and all that money has been spent with just the training that staff needed. 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.

Perry and Associates has started their audit for calendar year 2020. Working on initial questionnaire. Cost expected to remain under \$10k.

ODJFS audit completed their review of the Area 14 WDB. This audit commenced for PY18, PY19 & PY20 for Athens County CCMEP, Perry County WIOA programs and Area 14 Fiscal agent. There were no findings or significant observations.

Area 14 worked with Area 15 to request 2<sup>nd</sup> year funds that Area 15 had remaining. Their board voted and approved to allow Area 14 to receive \$180k in Adult funds and \$191k in Dislocated worker funds.

Commissioner Owen made a motion to accept the 2<sup>nd</sup> year funds from Area 15. Commissioner Eliason seconded. Motion carried without opposition.

Area 14 has spent all their 3<sup>rd</sup> year funds. The 2<sup>nd</sup> year funds end in June of this year with close out by September.

Area 14 would like to move \$34,000 from adult administrative funds over to programs where needed to the counties.

Commissioner Owen made a motion to moved admin to program. Commissioner Miller seconded. Motion carried.

### **3. Area Updates-Director McKnight:**

OWA membership is up for renewal. The cost remained the same as last year at \$3786.

Commissioner Eliason made the motion to renew. Commissioner Miller seconded. Motion carried.

### **4. 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. CEOs were asked that as long as there is no comments during our comment period, that the Regional Plan with the board vote as well, be passed and allowed for presentation to the Office of Workforce Development for final approval.

Commissioner Eliason made the motion to accept the Regional plan as long as there are not comments. Commissioner Miller seconded. Motion carried.

### **5. Apprenticeship-Director McKnight:**

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 CEOs 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.

Commissioner Owen made a motion to approve the use of WIOA funds if TCCC can get this listed on the WIET list. Commissioner Miller seconded. Motion carried.

## **6. Policy Changes:**

There have not been a lot of policy changes that were drastic. The two that are out for comment are just making minor adjustment. The one is for 2-year fund transfers to be allowable between Area's that show a need with less steps needed. The second was based on a memo for the 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.

## **7. Unemployment:**

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 23<sup>rd</sup>. Prior to this, only new initial applicants after December 6<sup>th</sup> 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.

## **8. Job Fairs 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.

## **9. Other Business:**

The virtual meeting allowance has been extended to 12/31/2021. CEOs all agreed to keep these meetings virtual until that date or until the emergency authorization ends.

Director McKnight asked if sponsoring Project Rise at their platinum level would something would be the Area could do with administrative funds since they work very closely with her and the OMJ's to get students in K-12 to understand career pathways and introduce them to employment opportunities in their communities. Mendra believes this is allowable but will verify first with OWD/Fiscal. Platinum level is \$1000 and sponsors every event along with our logo on their newsletter and website.

Commissioner Owen made the motion to allocate \$1000 to Project Rise contingent on allowability. Commissioner Eliason seconded. Motion carried.

With no further business, Commissioner Eliason made a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Owen seconded the motion. With the motion passing, the meeting ended at 9:30am.