



**Workforce Alliance**  
**Executive Committee Meeting Minutes**  
**Wichita Workforce Center and ZOOM**  
December 13, 2023 – 11:30 AM

**1. Welcome and Introductions**

The Workforce Alliance (WA) Executive Committee met on December 13, 2023. Chair Jeff Longwell welcomed Committee members, asked for self-introductions and called the meeting to order.

**2. One-Stop Operator Request for Proposals (RFP)**

Under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity act (WIOA), local workforce boards are required to conduct procurement to select a one-stop operator. Since 2017, Eckerd Connects has served in this role for Local Area IV. The current agreement with Eckerd Connects for one-stop operations was initially entered into in 2021 to provide one-stop operator services for the WA and expires June 30, 2024. In order to achieve the community impact goals of the 2023-2025 Strategic Plan that was recently adopted by the WA Board, staff are reviewing one-stop operations, agency partnerships and introducing new initiatives. Staff recommend updating the current scope of services for one-stop operations and releasing a Request For Proposals (RFP) to procure a new contract for one-stop operator services to begin on July 1, 2024. The plan is to release the RFP no later than December 20, 2023 with responses due in mid-February that will then undergo a selection process. As done in the past, staff recommend appointing a task force to review proposals to make a recommendation to the Executive Committee. After committee discussion, Kathy Jewett, Rod Blackburn, Michele Gifford and Erica Ramos were appointed to the task force.

*Tony Naylor (Michele Gifford) move to approve the release of an RFP and the creation of a task force to review the proposals. Motion adopted*

**3. Computer Equipment for Virtual Meetings**

Currently, the Air Capital room at the Workforce Center is the only meeting room equipped with the permanent technology to hold meetings virtually. To utilize the Keeper of the Plains room for virtual meetings as well, staff recommend acquiring new equipment to expand the capacity to host virtual meetings. Staff analyzed options to equip the Keeper of the Plains room with online meeting equipment. Staff worked with Kansas Department of Commerce and gathered two quotes and staff selected Cytek, a vendor that currently contracts with the State of Kansas, to provide this type of virtual equipment. The cost is \$34,980 and includes installation, training, and one year of support. The system includes video cameras, ceiling hanging microphones, ceiling speakers, wireless microphone system, touch screen control panel, along with many other amplifiers, and IT connectors.

*Kathy Jewett (Alana McNary) moved to authorize President and CEO to enter into a purchase agreement with Cytek. Motion adopted.*

**4. Workforce Alliance Project Updates**

Updates on some priority projects (Youth Employment Project (YEP), Home Base Wichita, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education and Training (SNAP E&T) and MeadowLARK Registered Apprenticeship grant for the WA was provided.

YEP had a strong year in 2023; there was an increase in employer and participant involvement. For 2024, staff want to build on the model for high school internships that relate to student academic interest and being able to offer more choices of industries and employers. This year, the financial services and public safety sectors were added and the plan is to add more career exploration choices. Wichita Public Schools has experienced challenges with placing students in internships during the school year and are working with the WA on summer focused internship placement. Staff will work with the Wichita Business



Journal, the Wichita Regional Chamber and the City of Wichita to help with outreach in obtaining more employers to participate. Wichita Mayor-Elect Lily Wu will visit the Workforce Center on December 21<sup>st</sup> to discuss the City's involvement and support of workforce strategies. Staff are implementing additional curriculum from Roadtrip Nation (RTN) to integrate with the schools and Camp HYPE. They are expanding the hosting of watch parties in the schools to watch the RTN episodes and use the RTN tools. Additional Camp HYPEs are planned for the summer and a virtual career exploration tool called Transfr is being introduced. The WA Youth Employment Committee meets next week to discuss the 2024 work plan and some requests are being prepared to community funders to assist in paying for youth programs and activities. Community impact meetings have been scheduled in Butler, Cowley and Sumner counties to provide outreach to businesses and local leadership with the goal to expand youth programs to those areas; strong employer involvement is needed.

WA staff Tamara Ray, the new Director of Home Base Wichita, was introduced and present to discuss the program. The goal is to sustain the program after the City of Wichita's initial investment ends by developing an identifiable strategy to direct military connected individuals to employment opportunities. She has been attending many community events such as the recent Get Hired Job Fair to promote awareness and outreach. The program is seeing an increase in job placements and individuals served through the program with the goal in the next six months of having a sustainable model in place beyond the initial City of Wichita's ARPA funding. Revamping social media and the website is a focus along with diversifying the employers that are involved in the program in order to expand the job options to other employment sectors and industries beyond aerospace and advanced manufacturing. The program seeks to help employers understand military culture as part of their hiring processes and transition skill sets in order to help recruit and retain employees.

Denise Houston provided an update on the SNAP E&T project. The WA is working with the Kansas Department of Children and Families (DCF) to identify eligible recipients of SNAP benefits that qualify for employment and training who are then brought into workforce system where training dollars are invested in them and are also assisted with finding jobs. The WA receives funding from DCF and then the WA can receive a match of a percentage of those funds with local dollars as well to grow those resources. Referrals were slow in the first few months, however they have started to increase in the last couple of months. Implementation of labs and workshops for participants are a focus in 2024.

The MeadowLARK Registered Apprenticeship (RA) grant expansion has had one application for an RA program approved with another for an automotive mechanic now in progress for Don Hattan that could be implemented for other dealerships in the area. The goal is to serve 100 individuals through 2027.  
*Report was received and file*

#### 5. **Consent Agenda**

Approval of meeting minutes for November 8, 2023, Program Year 2023 budget update, Operations / One-Stop Operator Report, Communications Report, Registered Apprenticeship Report, WIOA final performance reporting for Program Year 2022 and on-the-job training (OJT) contracts for Airbus, HM Dunn AeroSystems and Blake Clotia were presented to the Committee for review and approval. The Operations report shows that job seeker traffic continues to increase. The Communication report shows a decrease in Twitter participation and more engagement with LinkedIn so focus will shift there and expand to Instagram in 2024.

*Michele Gifford (Tony Naylor) moved to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. Motion adopted.*

#### 6. **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 12:35 PM.



**Attendees:**

*LWDB Executive Committee Members*

Michele Gifford  
Kathy Jewett  
Jeff Longwell  
Alana McNary  
Tony Naylor  
Amy Williams

*Staff/Guests*

Amanda Duncan  
Denise Houston  
Keith Lawing  
Shirley Lindhorst  
Chad Pettera via Zoom  
Will Dorr, Eckerd Connects  
Erica Ramos, LWDB  
Jennifer Baysinger, Senator Roger Marshall's Office  
via Zoom