

# WORKFORCE CENTERS

of South Central Kansas

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### Local Workforce Development Board (LWDB)

#### Executive Committee Meeting Minutes

February 10, 2021 – 11:30 AM

1. **Welcome and Introductions**

The LWDB Executive Committee assembled via ZOOM. Vice Chair Melissa Musgrave welcomed Committee members and called the meeting to order.

2. **Workforce Alliance (WA) 2020-2022 Strategic Plan Implementation**

A summary of the series of recommended action steps to begin implementation of the six 2020-2022 strategic goals that were adopted at the LWDB meeting in October was provided to the Committee, which includes identifying a lead for each of the goals, listing the initial steps in plan implementation and updating membership for the committees. Action steps are now being implemented to produce outcomes for the goals identified by the Board during the planning process. Some of the actions now underway include the Youth Employment Committee met and is developing a plan for HYPE operations in 2021, the Communications and Outreach Task Force is on track to produce recommendations for the WA at the next LWDB meeting on April 28 and an internal analysis of the organization policies and processes that impact issues of Race, Equity and Inclusion is in progress including a training session provided by WSU at the WA in-service training for staff on February 15th. An agreement with Cowley College has been finalized and they have hired a staff member to be trained in workforce center services and provide those services in Cowley County. A review of the recent Request For Proposals (RFP) for the One-Stop Operator has begun. The date for the annual Jobs FORE Youth Golf Tournament typically held in April has been changed to September due to COVID uncertainty and other considerations and possibly will be held in September each year moving forward. The tournament will be held September 30<sup>th</sup> at Hidden Lakes Golf Course

*Report was received and filed.*

3. **Grant Funded Projects and Revenue Review**

Over the years, the WA has secured millions of dollars through grants and special projects. As of February 1, 2021, the WA has 19 funding sources totaling just under \$23 million that are leveraged into the annual WIOA allocations and operations for the Workforce Centers in Local Area IV. For the current budget year, the annual WIOA allocation is 29 percent of the total with the remainder consisting of various grants and funds for special projects. The funding obtained creates both new programs and provides capacity to build upon some existing programs. A brief summary of each of these projects and grants was provided to the Committee. The WA is one of the local funding collaboratives in the National Fund for Workforce Solutions network and a member of the Midwest Urban Strategies (MUS) coalition. The WA has been able to secure targeted grant funds from each of these organizations. The MUS is comprised of 13 other workforce boards in 11 states and the WA has paid the MUS \$10,000 a year for membership over the last two years, which has resulted in \$2 million in funding through their grant making branch. Pat Jonas commended WA staff and expressed appreciation for the excellent work in obtaining the additional funding.

*Reports were received and filed.*

4. **Consent Agenda and Committee Reports**

Approval of meeting minutes for December 9, 2020, Program Year 2020 (PY20) Budget Update, One-Stop Operator report, Regional Economic Impact report, Workforce Center Operations

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report, on-the-job training contracts for Youngers & Sons, The Bradbury Company and Eck Fabrication and the Workforce Alliance server upgrade were presented to the Committee.

Keith Lawing asked that Consent Agenda Item #G, Workforce Alliance Server Upgrade, be pulled from the Consent Agenda and be considered as a separate item for approval. The current server equipment was installed in 2013 and the equipment's end of life is in fall of this year. A server upgrade is being pursued now in order to allow for some advanced functions such as providing for some file data systems online to be available through a web portal for partners such as Cowley College and CPRF, which is not possible with the current technology as it is not fast or smart enough and since the servers' end of life will occur later this year. The current chassis can be kept in place as there are four expansion slots to install the upgraded equipment and then perform data migration and other operations. WA has a price quote for this upgrade at a total cost of \$75,393.31. The total financed amount would be \$70,405.02 for two years through Cisco Capital with a monthly payment of \$3,094.76. Melissa Musgrave asked about the status of other computer systems in relation to this upgrade and what the timing and downtime would be for the upgrade. Computers for staff are current and the one of the functions of the server upgrade will run the virtual desktops that customers use in the Workforce Center and should result in much faster response times.

*Rod Blackburn (Kathy Jewett) moved to authorized the President and CEO to enter into an agreement for the purchase and finance of a server upgrade. Motion adopted.*

The Consent Agenda Item #F, Additions to the On-the-Job Training Eligible Training Provider List, was considered as a separate item for approval. Youngers & Sons, The Bradbury Company and Eck Fabrication have submitted on-the-job training contracts to be added to the Eligible Training Provider (ETP) list.

*Tony Naylor (Michele Gifford) moved to approve the addition of Youngers & Sons, The Bradbury Company and Eck Fabrication to the on-the-job training Eligible Training Provider list. Jennifer Hughes, Youngers & Sons declared a conflict of interest and abstained from the vote. Motion adopted.*

The remainder of the Consent Agenda: approval of meeting minutes for December 9, 2020, Program Year 2020 (PY20) Budget Update, One-Stop Operator report, Regional Economic Impact report and Workforce Center Operations report were reviewed and considered as a separate item for approval.

The regional economic impact report included employment data from the Kansas Department of Labor (KDOL) from December 2020. Staff reviewed the report with Committee members and pointed out that while unemployment numbers are notably lower than the previous month, the drop in the unemployment rate is somewhat deceiving as the size of the labor pool decreased significantly at the same time and the number of workers employed only increased slightly. Additionally, first time Unemployment Insurance (UI) claims have risen every week since the end of December, so the current unemployment rate is not an accurate representation of a positive development of economic recovery. It is more likely that many individuals exhausted pandemic and extended unemployment benefits in December, but were not looking for work because they are waiting to move to the next federal extension, authorized by the Trump administration on December 27, 2020 that did not begin to payout by KDOL until February 2, 2021. Essentially these individuals fell off the report because they did not fit into either category to be included in the labor force total. Once the new federal extensions are fully implemented, a more accurate picture will be available in March or April 2021. KDOL is also reinstating the job search

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requirement for individuals receiving unemployment, which had been waived since March 2020. This should help identify those who fell off the report in December 2020 and may increase the number of people searching for employment and drive increased traffic to the workforce center. Commissioner Howell questioned the accuracy of the unemployment numbers provided by KDOL as there have been many issues facing the KDOL since the pandemic began. Staff responded that most of the problems have been related to unemployment claims, but feel certain that the employment numbers being reported are accurate.

The Workforce Center Operations report was discussed. Staff are currently developing a plan to re-open the Workforce Center to some in-person services sometime next month. Rod Blackburn asked if an RFP had been released for administrative office space. An RFP was released and two bids for administrative office space one from the current location at the Garvey Center and the other was considered far too expensive to consider. No final agreement with the current landlord has been finalized, but it appears that the administrative offices will continue to be located at the Garvey Center.

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

### 5. Other Discussion/Announcements

There was no further business or announcements.

### 6. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 12:15 PM.

### Attendees:

#### LWDB Executive Committee Members

Rod Blackburn  
Michele Gifford  
Commissioner Jim Howell  
Jennifer Hughes  
Kathy Jewett  
Pat Jonas  
Jeff Longwell  
Melissa Musgrave  
Tony Naylor  
Matt Peterson

#### Staff/Guests

Amanda Duncan  
Keith Lawing  
Shirley Lindhorst  
George Marko  
Chad Pettera  
Josh Diemart, Sheet Metal Workers  
Jeff Townsend, LWDB