



**Workforce Alliance Program Operations and Performance (POP) Committee  
Meeting Minutes  
May 2, 2024**

**1. Welcome and Introductions**

The Workforce Alliance (WA) Program Operations and Performance (POP) Committee assembled via Zoom. Co-Chair Tony Naylor welcomed Committee members and called the meeting to order.

**2. Spring 2024 Skills Training Report**

The WA releases two training reports a year in spring and fall to track trends, review funding levels and identify leveraged resources supporting jobs seekers and employers in Local Area IV (LAIV). Janet Sutton, WA Policy and Technical Assistance Manager, reviewed some highlights from the report. Staff are seeing an increase in the number participants in work based learning programs - on-the-job training, incumbent worker training and registered apprenticeship. The report shows data on participants active in training and what kind of training they are participating in. The report also includes employer data, which shows the number of participants by employer or training provider.

*John Clark (Robyn Heinz) moved to approve the draft Spring 2024 Skills Training report and forward to Workforce Alliance Board of Directors for adoption. Motion adopted.*

**3. Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth Program Policies: Self-Sufficient Wage Review**

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) tasks the Local Workforce Development Board (LWDB) with setting an economic self-sufficiency standard for the local area. The LWDB determined that this standard would be reviewed annually with the Demand Occupations. The current Program Year 2023 self-sufficient wage for LAIV is currently \$15.60 for all programs; the Committee was asked to review this standard for Program Year 2024 (PY24). Staff use the MIT Living Wage calculator to assist in recommending the self-sufficient wage. The data presented shows the living wage for a single adult with no children for each county in LAIV and shows a significant increase of \$3.71 per hour or \$19.31 per hour for the Wichita Metropolitan Statistical Area an increase of 23.78%. If the training would result in wages below the standard, staff would not be able to support funding the training for the customer. There are currently 12 occupations on the Demand Occupation List that would have to be removed if the wage is increased to the new amount with many being in the entry level healthcare field, which are very much in demand in the region. Staff are also concerned about the ability to fund some of the current on-the-job training OJT, and incumbent worker training that employers need to upskill their workers. Robyn Heinz noted that there was no mention of those programs specifically in the current policy language. The following exceptions are allowed to the self-sufficient wage criteria - training for justice involved individuals, persons with disabilities and trainees that includes a transitional job/work experience strategy or a career ladder that would result in a self-sufficient wage. Munoz wondered if there is data to show if those that participated in those entry level healthcare training programs have experienced any career advancement opportunities. He and Heinz suggested that research needs to be done regarding how a change to the \$19.31 level would impact the number of people who are currently in training. Options before the Committee were to make no change as it is not required, make a percentage change of 3.5% (Consumer Price Index increase), 5% or 10% or make a change to the full amount of \$19.31. Committee members agreed that the cost of living has increased significantly and some sort of increase is probably warranted, but do not want to impact people's ability to train as a result of a wage an employer will not meet as employers who are trying to upskill their workers also need to be protected

A suggestion was made to make a small increase now and see what impact the change has on the number of people accepted into training programs and possibly review in six months. The new standard would go into effect July 1, 2024 and customers currently in the process of applying for training would not be held to the new standard. Options for a smaller percentage increase were discussed and staff were asked to do more research to provide additional data that documents what impact the of raising the wage would have on Occupational Skills Training, On-the-Job Training, and Incumbent Worker Training projects funded by the WA for presentation to the Executive Committee at its next meeting in June.

*Robyn Heinz (John Clark) moved to approve a recommendation of at least a 3.5% increase in the self-sufficient wage standard with staff to do further research on other potential increases and provide additional data on effects of those increases to training program eligibility for presentation to the Executive Committee for action. Motion adopted.*

#### **4. Demand Occupations List for Program Year 2023**

An ongoing function of the WA LWDB is to annually review the Demand Occupations List for Local Area IV. Staff has researched current labor market trends, surveyed staff, employers, board members, and reviewed regional initiatives to determine occupations in demand in LAIV. The results of the staff, employer, and board member surveys indicate the majority would like to keep the occupations currently on the list and included a few suggestions on occupations to add mostly around education and mental healthcare, which were evaluated and included for discussion. For PY24, staff recommends retaining all the current occupations on the approved training list and adding Digital Media Marketing coordinator. Some of the suggestions require a four year degree and currently the WA is focused on short-term training. The proposed PY24 Demand Occupations List and supporting documentation was included in the meeting materials. Depending on the board's action regarding the self-sufficient wage, some occupations would need to be removed from the list if the full increase in wage (\$19.31) was accepted; these were highlighted in the report.

Munoz questioned the recommended Digital Media Marketing occupation, regarding what certificates are available and how many people are getting a job with the credential as most employers are looking for a degree. Currently, Butler Community College offers a program. This occupation is proposed due to it being suggested by survey responses and is part of one of the industry sectors that WA training supports, Information Technology, as well as has large growth and a good wage range. Heinz agreed with Munoz from a human resources perspective that people with degrees in this area are preferred. Houston pointed out that this occupation is a recommendation as a potential addition and is not required to be added to the list. Munoz would like more information about the credential being used in career advancement in that field and be brought before the Committee at a future meeting.

*Alex Munoz (John Clark) moved to approve the recommended Demand Occupation List for Program Year 2024 with the exception of the proposed Digital Media Marketing occupation. Motion adopted.*

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

Meeting minutes from March 7, 2024, Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act (WIOA) Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth Program Performance for Program Year 2023 and Workforce Center Operations Report were presented to the Committee for review and/or approval. This is last quarter of data gathering for PY23 performance reporting; data will not be final until August of this year. Adult 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter wages is very low and staff feel that this may be a data issue in KansasWorks and staff are monitoring the situation. DW measures struggling in Credential Attainment make sure all data has been entered. Youth program looking good. LAIV performance is comparable to performance for the state.

*Robyn Heinz (John Clark) moved to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. Motion adopted.*

The meeting was adjourned at 12:16.

Present Committee Members

*Tony Naylor, Co-Chair*

*Justin Albert*

*John Clark*

*Robyn Heinz*

*Kami Moore*

*Alex Munoz*

Staff/Guests

*Denise Houston*

*Shirley Lindhorst*

*Chad Pettera*

*Janet Sutton*