



BLUE RIDGE REGION

Western Virginia Workforce Development Board Meeting

June 17, 2021 – 9:00 AM

Virtual: <https://zoom.us/j/93563812395?pwd=NINSQWduMHV4NEFRTFpSL1F5SRjhVdz09>

| Board Members Private Sector | Present | Board Members Public Sector | Present |
|---|----------------|--|----------------|
| Teresa Hammond | | Joseph Brinley | X |
| Casey Nicely | X | Chuck Simpson | |
| David Olsen | | Karen Michalski | X |
| Jeremy Adkins | X | Abby Hamilton | X |
| Debra Lovelace | X | Crystal Hall | |
| Michael Gardner | X | Lea DeCosta | X |
| Todd Putney | X | Jason Suhr | |
| Amanda Rogers | X | Dr. John Rainone | X |
| Emily Smith | | Dr. Milan Hayward | X |
| Amanda Forrester | X | Susan Watkins | X |
| Kristi Mallory | | Beth Simms | X |
| Adrienne Ross | X | Sue Goad | |
| Richard Mansell | X | Chris Simmons | |
| Ashley Bayne | | | |
| Sharon Pandolfini | X | | |
| Stephanie Aliff | X | | |

| WVWDB Staff | Present |
|--------------------|----------------|
| Morgan Romeo | X |
| Leah Gibson | X |
| Michelle Brennan | X |
| Danielle Hart | X |
| Bobby Welch | X |

| Guests | Present |
|----------------|----------------|
| Kim Dameron | X |
| Toni McLawhorn | X |

Welcome

Morgan Romeo welcomed those in attendance and called the meeting to order at 9:05am.

Review of Electronic Meeting Process

Morgan Romeo reviewed the process with those in attendance, shared on the screen.

Public Comment

Casey Nicely asked for any public comment, there was none.

Consent Agenda

Casey Nicely asked those in attendance to review the Minutes from the last meeting, on March 19, 2021.

WVWDB Action: A motion was made by Debra Lovelace to approve the minutes as presented. The motion was seconded by Karen Michalski. The motion was carried by a roll call vote as follows:

| Board Members <i>Private Sector</i> | Vote | Board Members <i>Public Sector</i> | Vote |
|---|-------------|--|-------------|
| Casey Nicely | Yes | Joseph Brinley | Yes |
| Jeremy Adkins | Yes | Karen Michalski | Yes |
| Debra Lovelace | Yes | Abby Hamilton | Yes |
| Michael Gardner | Yes | Lea DeCosta | Yes |
| Todd Putney | Yes | Dr. John Rainone | Yes |
| Amanda Rogers | Yes | Dr. Milan Hayward | Yes |
| Amanda Forrester | Yes | Susan Watkins | Yes |
| Adrienne Ross | Yes | Beth Simms | Yes |
| Richard Mansell | Yes | | |
| Sharon Pandolfini | Yes | | |
| Stephanie Aliff | Yes | | |

Officer Elections & Committee Rosters

Casey Nicely noted that there is a vacancy for the Vice Chair position on the Executive Committee, vacated by David Olsen, as he retired from West Rock. Michael Gardner, currently the At-Large Business member of the Executive Committee, has been nominated to fill the Vice Chair position. Richard Mansell was nominated to fill the At-Large Business member spot, if vacated by Michael Gardner. Casey Nicely opened the floor for any additional nominations to the Executive Committee, none were presented.

WVWDB Action: A motion was made by Dr. John Rainone to approve the nominations as presented. The motion was seconded by Amanda Forrester. The motion was carried by a roll call vote as follows:

| Board Members <i>Private Sector</i> | Vote | Board Members <i>Public Sector</i> | Vote |
|---|-------------|--|-------------|
| Casey Nicely | Yes | Joseph Brinley | Yes |
| Jeremy Adkins | Yes | Karen Michalski | Yes |
| Debra Lovelace | Yes | Abby Hamilton | Yes |
| Michael Gardner | Yes | Lea DeCosta | Yes |
| Todd Putney | Yes | Dr. John Rainone | Yes |
| Amanda Rogers | Yes | Dr. Milan Hayward | Yes |
| Amanda Forrester | Yes | Susan Watkins | Yes |
| Adrienne Ross | Yes | Beth Simms | Yes |
| Richard Mansell | Yes | | |
| Sharon Pandolfini | Yes | | |
| Stephanie Aliff | Yes | | |

Casey Nicely shared the current members of each of the additional committees to the Board, below:

| Program Oversight Committee | Position | Finance Committee | Position |
|------------------------------------|-----------------|--------------------------|-----------------|
| Abby Hamilton | Chair | Karen Michalski | Chair |
| Dr. Milan Hayward | | Dr. John Rainone | |
| Joseph Brinley | | Casey Nicely | |
| Karen Michalski | | Vacancy | |
| Emily Smith | | Vacancy | |
| Amanda Rogers | | | |

Casey Nicely asked the group for two volunteer/nominations to fill the vacant positions on the Finance Committee. Richard Mansell and Joseph Brinley self-nominated to fill these positions.

WVWDB Action: A motion was made by Dr. Milan Hayward to approve the nominations as presented. The motion was seconded by Debra Lovelace. The motion was carried by a roll call vote as follows:

| Board Members Private Sector | Vote | Board Members Public Sector | Vote |
|---|-------------|--|-------------|
| Casey Nicely | Yes | Joseph Brinley | Yes |
| Jeremy Adkins | Yes | Karen Michalski | Yes |
| Debra Lovelace | Yes | Abby Hamilton | Yes |
| Michael Gardner | Yes | Lea DeCosta | Yes |
| Todd Putney | Yes | Dr. John Rainone | Yes |
| Amanda Rogers | Yes | Dr. Milan Hayward | Yes |
| Amanda Forrester | Yes | Susan Watkins | Yes |
| Adrienne Ross | Yes | Beth Simms | Yes |
| Richard Mansell | Yes | | |
| Sharon Pandolfini | Yes | | |
| Stephanie Aliff | Yes | | |

Old Business

Leah Gibson asked Karen Michalski to provide an update on the One Stop Center Certification process to the group. Karen shared that the state put out guidance at the beginning of 2021 revamping the process to Certify the One Stop Centers across the state. Each Center is reviewed at least once every 3 years for certification to ensure all Centers meet the standards of service and operations under the state & federal requirements. With the new process from the state, each local workforce board was to designate a Center Certification Team, comprised of 3 or more individuals to conduct the review, with at least one of the 3 being a Board member. Our team was comprised of Previous Board Member & Chair, Phil Peters, Previous Board Member & Executive Committee Member, Crystal Hall, and herself, Karen Michalski, current Board Member & Current Board Treasurer.

The Center Certification Team was given information about each Center, including the required plans & documents in place at each facility, and had interviews with Toni McLawhorn, the One Stop Coordinator, and Board staff. They also reviewed staff interviews from front-line staff at each of the Centers. The team were also given pictures of the facilities, and the opportunity to visit on-site, if needed, while most of the reviews were completed virtually, due to COVID-19 protocols.

Upon completion of the review of the facilities, completion of the required documentation and discussions with actors involved, the Center Certification is to make a recommendation for each Center to be either 'Certified', 'Not Certified' or 'Probationary'.

The Center Certification Team would like to make the recommendation to the Board to assign the determination of 'Certified' to the Comprehensive Roanoke Center, Affiliate Covington Center, and the Affiliate Franklin Center.

WWDB Action: A motion was made by Michael Gardner to approve the recommendation presented by the Center Certification Team. The motion was seconded by Casey Nicely. The motion was carried by a roll call vote as follows:

| Board Members <i>Private Sector</i> | Vote | Board Members <i>Public Sector</i> | Vote |
|---|-------------|--|-------------|
| Casey Nicely | Yes | Joseph Brinley | Yes |
| Jeremy Adkins | Yes | Karen Michalski | Yes |
| Debra Lovelace | Yes | Abby Hamilton | Yes |
| Michael Gardner | Yes | Lea DeCosta | Yes |
| Todd Putney | Yes | Dr. John Rainone | Yes |
| Amanda Rogers | Yes | Dr. Milan Hayward | Yes |
| Amanda Forrester | Yes | Susan Watkins | Yes |
| Adrienne Ross | Yes | Beth Simms | Yes |
| Richard Mansell | Yes | | |
| Sharon Pandolfini | Abstained | | |
| Stephanie Aliff | Yes | | |

Leah Gibson asked those in attendance to review the WIOA Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker & Youth program reports included in their packets and shared on the screen for review. Enrollments, expenditures, and services provided by these programs were reviewed and discussed by the group. Morgan Romeo & Bobby Welch also presented the most recent MEDR report that goes to the state, showing expenditures for each program year's funds. Morgan shared with the group that Board staff are expecting to not have to return any program funds this year for any of the programs. Richard Mansell asked about enrollments by locality and what we can do to make sure we are serving as many individuals as potentially eligible in each locality. Morgan responded that staff are working diligently to increase program referrals in those localities which we have had lower participation in the past and welcome suggestions on how to increase those. Susan Watkins asked Morgan to share data on enrollments by region for each program for the past year. Morgan ran those reports & shared with the group during the call, for the Adult program our region has had the most enrollments this year, for the Dislocated Worker program our region was average enrollments, and for the Youth program our region had the second most enrollments.

Leah Gibson reviewed policy updates found in the packet and included on the screen. Staff, with help from Michael Gardner, the Executive Committee, and reviewing guidance from the Department of Labor and the Internal Revenue Service, have updated our Work Experience/Internship and Youth Incentives policies to meet the legal requirements. Board staff have also reviewed and updated the Segregation of Duties and Internal Controls policies, implemented last year when we took the WIOA Title I Adult & Dislocated Worker programs in-house, to reflect title changes and procedure changes implemented.

WWDB Action: A motion was made by Dr. John Rainone to approve the policies as presented. The motion was seconded by Joseph Brinley. The motion was carried by a roll call vote as follows:

| Board Members | Vote | Board Members | Vote |
|----------------------|-------------|----------------------|-------------|
|----------------------|-------------|----------------------|-------------|

| <i>Private Sector</i> | | <i>Public Sector</i> | |
|-----------------------|-----|----------------------|-----|
| Casey Nicely | Yes | Joseph Brinley | Yes |
| Jeremy Adkins | Yes | Karen Michalski | Yes |
| Debra Lovelace | Yes | Abby Hamilton | Yes |
| Michael Gardner | Yes | Lea DeCosta | Yes |
| Todd Putney | Yes | Dr. John Rainone | Yes |
| Amanda Rogers | Yes | Dr. Milan Hayward | Yes |
| Amanda Forrester | Yes | Susan Watkins | Yes |
| Adrienne Ross | Yes | Beth Simms | Yes |
| Richard Mansell | Yes | | |
| Sharon Pandolfini | Yes | | |
| Stephanie Aliff | Yes | | |

Morgan Romeo discussed the status of the WIOA Title I Youth program with those in attendance. Currently, the Workforce Board is operating this program, through emergency operations, through 9/30/2021. The Executive Committee requested that Board staff bring this topic to the full Board to discuss continuing operations of this program as Board staff after that date. After review, and discussing the process with staff at the state, the Board would need to approve the request for Board staff to continue operating the Youth program, write a letter to the CLEO for their approval, the CLEO would then approve the request and submit a written request to the City of Roanoke, as the grant recipient. Morgan explained that the Board can still put Memorandums of Understanding in place for specific services for the Youth participants, such as financial literacy, Adult Education, etc. Morgan explained the recommendation of the Board staff would be to move forward with this step, as the operations of the Adult and Dislocated Worker programs has met and exceeded our expectations, after only 1 year of operating it ourselves. Casey Nicely asked Morgan if there would be any staffing issues if we were to continue operating the Youth program. Morgan responded there would not be any staffing issues, as we now have two full-time dedicated staff working this program. Todd Putney asked about staffing retention over the last year, Morgan responded that we have only lost one employee, and they left because they were offered a state job working directly with children, which was that individual's passion, they explained they were not unhappy in their position with the Board. Todd Putney also asked if Board staff expected any change in funding if we did not have a contractor in place. Morgan noted that we have been able to expend funds more efficiently thus far with the Adult & Dislocated Worker programs, due to not having a high indirect or profit line item. Morgan also noted that we have seen a higher participation with businesses and partners operating the programs in-house, since our brand is known, and we have an established history in the region. Abby Hamilton shared that the Board had seen many issues and concerns with the contractors in the past and that we should consider this move with the Youth program. Morgan Romeo also shared that taking this step would not preclude the Board from putting out a Request for Proposals in the future if a contractor were needed.

WWWDB Action: A motion was made by Todd Putney to submit a request to the CLEO, and subsequently the grant recipient, to the Board to operate the WIOA Title I Youth program for the next year. The motion was seconded by Joseph Brinley. The motion was carried by a roll call vote as follows:

| Board Members <i>Private Sector</i> | Vote | Board Members <i>Public Sector</i> | Vote |
|---|-------------|--|-------------|
| Casey Nicely | Yes | Joseph Brinley | Yes |
| Jeremy Adkins | Yes | Karen Michalski | Yes |
| Debra Lovelace | Yes | Abby Hamilton | Yes |
| Michael Gardner | Yes | Lea DeCosta | Yes |
| Todd Putney | Yes | Dr. John Rainone | Yes |

| | | | |
|-------------------|-----|-------------------|-----|
| Amanda Rogers | Yes | Dr. Milan Hayward | Yes |
| Amanda Forrester | Yes | Susan Watkins | Yes |
| Adrienne Ross | Yes | Beth Simms | Yes |
| Richard Mansell | Yes | | |
| Sharon Pandolfini | Yes | | |
| Stephanie Aliff | Yes | | |

Director's Report

Morgan Romeo reviewed the Staff Project Updates included in the Director's Report in the packet with those in attendance. She also informed the group of the Return to Earn Project, released last week by the Governor's office, which will provide hiring support to small businesses for new hire employees. Employers must have 100 employees or less across the state of Virginia, positions must pay at least \$15 per hour, and they will apply with our organization to receive a matching \$500, to their \$500 sign on incentive, providing an overall \$1,000 sign on bonus for new employees. Our local area was given \$105,000 for this program, which Roanoke City will receive, as the grant recipient. Morgan also shared that the local areas are required to spend at least 50% of their budget by 8/31/2021, or the unspent funds will be reallocated to other regions in the state. The full budget must be spent by 12/31/2021. Susa Watkins asked if the project covers our whole region, Morgan confirmed it does. Todd Putney clarified that an employer must agree to provide the sign on bonus, and they are responsible for one half of the \$1,000, Morgan confirmed. Todd Putney shared an initial concern for abuse of this program if there is no agreement in place for employee retention after signing on. Amanda Forrester noted that employers can still require their own retention agreements, if they so desire, and that this program will provide a service for our small businesses who are competing with corporations to hire skilled labor. Abby Hamilton asked if there were any other funds that could provide the matching \$500 if a small business did not have the funds available, Morgan shared that she had asked the localities about this but as of right now there is not.

Morgan Romeo also reminded the members about the Career Quest event happening in September & October 2021, for our regional 7th and 8th grade students. Board staff are working through developing the budget for the event, the largest portion of which is covering transportation to & from the event for the students, so we are working with the schools on this expense. Morgan also asked Board members to remember to sign up to attend as a business and volunteer during the events.

Morgan Romeo also shared a new funding opportunity coming to the local workforce boards through the SNAP Education & Training program with the Department of Social Services. Currently, funds are available through 9/30/2021 to provide enhanced services to SNAP recipients in our region. Board staff are working with our local Departments of Social Services to come up with a plan but are also open to suggestions. Beth Simms asked if we could help recruit participants at the Farmer's Markets, as that is a place where SNAP recipients get double their money for food. Lea DeCosta shared that Region 5 Adult Education is partnering with the LEAP Mobile Market in Roanoke City to share information about their services, and that they would certainly share information or handouts about the service once we have it available.

Committee Reports

Casey Nicely provided an update from the most recent Executive Committee meeting. The Executive Committee of the Board met on June 9th and reviewed several items. The Executive Committee heard and reviewed the monitoring that had taken place for the Board, including monitoring for compliance with Equal Opportunity and Nondiscrimination provisions, the monitoring process with Roanoke City and heard updates on the monitoring from the state. All monitoring was favorable for the Board with minor findings that were related to detailed operations.

Staff reported to the Executive Committee regarding personnel updates and proposed performance reviews and merit increases for staff next program year. The Executive Committee also approved three purchases which include extending the virtual hiring event software for an additional year, new furniture for the Roanoke Center to set up a Youth Corner, which was recommended by Mary Ann Lawrence through her Operational Review, and to continue security at the Roanoke Center through at least September 30, 2021.

The Executive Committee also approved an additional \$50,000 transfer for funding from PY2019 Dislocated Worker funding to Adult funding to accommodate additional expenditures in the Adult program and to allow the Board to be successful in spending all PY2019 funding. Additional approvals included the approval of Robinson, Farmer, and Cox's engagement letter for the annual Uniform Guidance audit, approvals of additional training providers for the Eligible Training Provider List, and renewal of the One Stop Operator contract for one additional year. This will be the last year of the One Stop Operator contract and the Board will need to release a procurement cycle in January to competitively procure a new Operator contract.

Abby Hamilton provided an update from the most recent Program Oversight Committee meeting. The Committee received updates on closing grants for the Economic Equity Initiative (ending 6/30/2021), United Way OnRamp (ending 6/30/2021 but hopes to be continued by the United Way funding), and the Wagner-Peyser program (being operated by the Board on behalf of the VEC, returning to the VEC for operations in July). The committee also reviewed and discussed the Programs Reports, reviewed today earlier as well. Board staff provided the Committee updates on new funding from the INSPIRE grant (providing support to the recovery ecosystem in the Highlands), Jobs Plus (partnering with the Roanoke Redevelopment & Housing Authority to share a Career Coach position with them to serve housing assistance recipients), The National Dislocated Worker Grant (working with Carilion, the Health Department and the United Way to hire Community Health Workers to help with the vaccination efforts), and the Goodwill/Roanoke City Youth Work Experience Program (partnering with Goodwill to provide internships for youth in Roanoke City in connection to our WIOA Title I Youth program). The Committee also discussed new technology services coming to our participants through LinkedIn Learning (free online professional development training and certification preparation), Metrix Learning (free online learning tool for WIOA Title I Youth participants for soft skills and basic work learning connected to their field of interest), and Virtual Reality Lab (Board staff released an RFP for these services for career exploration and hands on experience using tools and earning certification for our WIOA Title I Youth participants).

Karen Michalski provided an update from the Finance Committee. She shared that the Committee has not met since our last Board meeting, but that she, as the Board Treasurer, has been reviewing all credit card reports and transactions in the meantime.

New Business

Morgan Romeo presented the PY2021/FY2022 Budget – First Draft with those in attendance. Bobby Welch has been looking at our figures and we are projecting some, as the year has not yet been closed out. Local workforce areas have received their WIOA Title I program allocations, and we received a 30% increase in that funding for the next year. The group reviewed the details of the budget.

WVWDB Action: A motion was made by Joseph Brinley to accept the first draft of the budget as presented. The motion was seconded by Dr. John Rainone. The motion was carried by a roll call vote as follows:

| Board Members <i>Private Sector</i> | Vote | Board Members <i>Public Sector</i> | Vote |
|---|-------------|--|-------------|
| Casey Nicely | Yes | Joseph Brinley | Yes |
| Jeremy Adkins | Yes | Karen Michalski | Yes |
| Debra Lovelace | Yes | Abby Hamilton | Yes |
| Michael Gardner | Yes | Lea DeCosta | Yes |
| Todd Putney | Yes | Dr. John Rainone | Yes |
| Amanda Rogers | Yes | Dr. Milan Hayward | Yes |
| Amanda Forrester | Yes | Susan Watkins | Yes |
| Adrienne Ross | Yes | Beth Simms | Yes |
| Richard Mansell | Yes | | |
| Sharon Pandolfini | Yes | | |
| Stephanie Aliff | Yes | | |

Morgan Romeo explained that the PY2021 Meeting Schedule needs to be discussed. She presented bi-monthly and quarterly dates to the group. The group discussed and agreed that meeting quarterly has been productive and effective, and all those in attendance agreed. Morgan also noted that it is expected we will need to begin meeting in person again in the new year, rotating physical locations as much as possible. The group agreed to a quarterly, in person meeting schedule by consensus.

Other Business

Casey Nicely asked the group if there was any additional business to discuss, there was none.

Adjournment

Casey Nicely adjourned the meeting at 10:27am.