



**WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD
COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES**

January 13, 2022

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT

Peter Brissette, DMD Consulting
Amy Clement, United Power
Tricia Johnson, Front Range Community College
Rachel Hoard, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation
James Newby, CDLE
Patrick Giron, Brighton Economic Development Corporation
Mark Miller, Pipefitters Local 208
Angela Atkinson, North Metro Denver Small Business Development Center
Larry Caschette, Metalcraft Industries, Inc.
Ashley Dunn, Almost Home
Moses Alvarez, Colorado Contractors Association
Maureen Rudy, MSU, Adult Education
Janet Renden, FutureForward at Bollman
Emily Alencio, Centura Health

GUESTS

Judy Emery, CUWA
Brad Roller, CDLE
Elise Lowe-Vaughn, CDLE
Britta Blodgett, CWDC

STAFF MEMBERS

Jodie Kammerzell – Local Area Director/WBC Administrator
Joel Parriott – WBC Supervisor
Greg McBoat – Administrative Analyst
Rita McGirr – WBC Manager
Sonia Rodriguez – WBC Manager
Meg Pickens – Contract Administrator
Monica Sailas – WBC Administrative Assistant
Laura Garcia – General Accounting Manager
Tyra Litzau – Deputy Finance Director
Karen Ortiz – Senior Fiscal Grant Analyst

INTRODUCTIONS AND QUORUM

A quorum of members was present, and the meeting was called to order by WDB Chair, Amy Clement.

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

Amy began the meeting by introducing new board member's Angela Atkinson from Metro North Denver Small Business Development Center, James Newby who is the interim board member for CDLE representing the Employment and Training Division replacing Bill Dowling, and Rachel Hoard from the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation replacing Meagan Gallegos. She also announced that Tricia Johnson was appointed to the Executive Committee replacing Mike Williams. Amy then asked board members to introduce themselves to the new members.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Board members reviewed the minutes from November 4, 2021, meeting.

MOTION made to approve the November 4, 2021, meeting minutes and was seconded by Mark.

MOTION CARRIED. The minutes of the November 4, 2021 were approved with no corrections. James Newby was not present at last meeting and abstained from the voting.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Amy reported that Denis Atencio is retiring at the end of February 2022. His departure will leave another vacancy on the Executive Committee. Any board member interested in serving on the Executive Committee should contact Yvonne Castillo and submit a brief paragraph about why you are interested in serving prior to our next meeting (by February 10th).

SENIOR FISCAL GRANTS ANALYST

Jodie introduced Karen Ortiz as the new WBC Senior Fiscal Grants Analyst. Karen comes with over 20 years of experience working for government, nonprofits and the private sector. She has worked with multiple federal grant programs and has implemented, documented, and tested internal controls to ensure compliance.

FISCAL UPDATE

Laura reported that all programs are currently underspent due to turn-over and programs not being able to see the program's current financial status. As of end of last month Laura has been able to provide a monthly report to staff so they are aware of the status of program budgets. There were no questions from board members. Laura continued to report on ReCover CO and CoReponds, which are currently in good standing with nothing to highlight.

INNOVATIONS RFP UPDATE

Meg reported on the information session which was held last week. There were a few businesses present and they are going to be applying once the new RFP is posted. Staff are working on redefining the verbiage of some of the program expectations to be clearer and are hoping to repost next week or by February 1st at the latest.

INDUSTRY ROUNDTABLES

Joel stated there has been lots of discussion about the economy and questions around why employers aren't hiring and why job seekers are not going back to work. In an attempt to gain some insight, the Business Services team has begun hosting a series of industry round tables. These

roundtables will be looking to see if the issue is industry specific or not. The first industry roundtable was construction. Industry representatives were asked several questions to help flush out what the problem is, identify possible solutions and how the WBC can assist. Joel stated the roundtables will take place over the next 5-6 months so hopefully we can gather more insight in about 6 months. February's round table will be focused on transportation and March will be focused on healthcare and will be broken down into two parts since it is such a large field. Amy asked what other industries will have round tables? Joel reported manufacturing and information technology. Greg will gather data to determine what other industries we should be looking at such as hospitality. A question was asked about whether childcare is part of the issue. Joel reported that childcare is one of the topics of discussion and its impact.

WAGNER-PEYSER/ESF

Elise Lowe-Vaughn presented on how the Federal Government is looking to reverse the regulatory interpretations that have been put out in the past 2020. Elise explained what a Wager-Peyser (WP) demonstration state looks like and what has been accomplished in Colorado and the conversations currently happening in Washington. Colorado has had WP demonstration status for about 25 years. That means WP services are delivered at the local level by local merit staff and by state merit staff in the rural areas. Over the span of 14 years, it was devolved down to local merit staff because Colorado believes local services and local areas know what is best for employers and the local population. This means that individuals at the local level are delivering WP services and Migrant Seasonal Farm Worker (MSFW) services. Since Colorado is a demonstration state this has allowed us to fully integrate local delivery of services which is a major part of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). This is a full integration of services through braided funding.

Elise continued to explain that the current conversation is for the Department of Labor (DOL) to reverse the demonstration status for Michigan and Massachusetts, which are the other two demonstration states. Allocation of funds have been able to be distributed across staffing to deter from siloed programs and have seamless customer services. This approach has been fully integrated into the local and state plan. Career pathways, sector partnerships, work based learning, and employer engagement are all leveraged around the WP funding integrations. It allows us to serve low income, Veterans, out-of-school youth and individuals with disabilities more comprehensively.

As a demonstration state Colorado has met and exceeded all performance standards for over 20 years. DOL is looking to ensure WP services, in some of the states under the 2020 rule, will not be without non-merit staff. If Colorado was to lose our demonstration state status, we will have issues with having siloed programs because WP would only be delivered by state merit staff. DOL will publish their final regulation on WP at the end of January. This could cause a major disruption of services during a pandemic, loss of staff expertise, layoffs at the local level, loss of seniority, benefits, retirement plans and possible lawsuits. It would be a significant cost to the state.

Elise continued to explain how we need to have an aligned process on how we can address this. Colorado is different from Massachusetts and Michigan in that all our local merit staff are delivering WP services. Massachusetts and Michigan have a different model using contractors to deliver their services. Right now, we are trying to be proactive and have the Governors send letters to Secretary

Walsh. As a local board, businesses and local areas it is important to send your comments in now to show the impact this will have in our state. No final rule can be determined until they have addressed all the comments. The state and local areas are in agreement to keep WP services integrated the way that they are at the local level.

WDB member, Larry asked what this would mean from a financial standpoint? Elise stated they have calculated that at a minimum standpoint this would have over \$3.5 million dollar impact to the state of Colorado just to begin such a process. It is uncertain what the full impact would be for businesses. WP helps with employment so it is unknown how deep and far it could go. Jodie added, that for the Adams County WBC, our base funding from CDLE is about \$3.5 million and 42% of that is WP funds. This is our Career Services, Business Services, and workshops we provide. When the WBC stepped up when UI was overwhelmed, that was all WP services. Staff responded to 45,000 calls in 2021. Business Services provides direct services to businesses, the sector partnerships, the round tables we host, and managing the job postings. All of this is affected through WP. The data we provide to the Brighton Economic Development and other partners is through WP funding. It is not that easy to pull it out or apart since our funding is braided. The lines become blurred with Employment Support Funds, WP and WIOA. It cannot be broken down to a certain group of staff and would affect all of the WBC staff. Elise stated that around 180 staff would be impacted by this in one way or another.

WDB member, Tricia asked why there is an interest in making this change? Elise stated that in 2020 the rule was changed on reversing merit staff so there are other states where they have integrated a process where they do not use merit staff. They are looking to have everything align as state merit.

Elise stated the draft final register is expected to be posted by the end of January or beginning of February and the state will inform the local areas as soon as that happens. Right now, we have been putting together letters and meeting with congressional staff to have them write letters of support.

Moses expressed concern on how this would separate programs and make collaboration across programs more difficult. He offered to send information to membership across the state if someone could provide him with some language to send out to business representatives explaining this situation. Elise reported that local areas along with the state have put together flyers with talking points. Jodie reported that all the workforce regions have shared information on the impacts of this and will share it with the board once it has been finalized. Jodie stated the importance of a letter of support from the board as well as letters from individual businesses. Jodie offered to draft a letter to talk about the impact to your business to send in support of us along with the other flyers.

Jodie reported that she has talked to staff about WP and even though the flyers talk about layoffs, Adams County is committed to our team members, and she highly doubts they would have any layoffs. It is important to us to paint the picture nationally to deter this from happening, but it is also important that our staff are not stressed about losing their jobs.

DASHBOARD

Greg started with our Widely Important Goal (WIG) for 2022. Adams County, as the leader of innovation, is looking to increase our Best Practices from 80 to 88 by June 30th. Currently we have 11 Best Practices. Greg then reported on program enrollments. Most of our programs are in alignment to meet program goals with Worked Based Learning being slightly under enrollment expectations. Greg then reported on successful outcomes and reported on the successes of 2020 with people coming in the door. By November 2021 we conceded the 2020 number of people we have successfully helped.

OPEN DISCUSSION

- Peter stated he is on the State Workforce Council and they will be discussing WP at their next meeting.
- Moses stated that the census data was interesting because we are starting to see that the working population has decreased and that this will be an issue moving forward.
- Tricia stated there is a declining number of enrollments at the community colleges as well. That this is an issue that will have very real impacts on the road ahead.
- Maureen stated that a pivotal point she thinks about is look to the immigrant and refugee populations, particularly the Afghan resettlements throughout Adams County. She recommended we look for better ways to engage, train and include these communities as well. Jay also commented on using the New America's office as a resource for the Afghan community. Jodie stated that Adams County has been partnering to help serve the Afghan community which is also part of our WP Services.
- Amy asked if Greg or Joel has any information on how the Marshal fire might be impacting our population and unemployment rate? Greg stated that most of the impact will be in Boulder just because of how isolated it was but it will take about 2 months before we see the impact in the data.

Amy reminded everyone of the next meeting on March 10th, 2022.

SUMMATION AND ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 9:04 AM.