

**Workforce Development Board
Executive Committee Meeting Minutes
January 16, 2025**

CALL TO ORDER: Workforce Development Board Chair, Jackie Murray, called the meeting to order at 9:01 a.m. at the Michigan Works! Service Center, 200 W. Van Buren Street, Battle Creek, Michigan.

WDB Members Present:

Randall Hazelbaker (PS)* [∇]	Jackie Murray (PS)*	[∇] Virtual
Dustin Scharer, alternate for Kris Jenkins (Educ)*	Brian O'Donnell (PS)*	* Exec Committee
Dave Maurer (PS)* [∇]	Frank Tecumseh*	

WDB Executive Members Absent

None

Center for Workforce Innovation and Solutions / Michigan Works! Southwest Staff Present:

Jakki Bungart-Bibb	Amy Meyers	Jennifer Teske
Drew Duncan	Kathy Olsen	Mark Waurio [∇]
Ashley Iovieno	Amanda Rosenberg	

Guests Present:

Jim Benton (KRESA)	Sam Larey, Legislative Director	Kristine Stevens (GOCC) [∇]
Blaine Farr (WDI) [∇]	for Rep Steve Frisbie [∇]	Amanda Sutherland (KRESA)
Logan Foreman, staff for Rep. Julie Rogers [∇]	Ben McLeod, Field Rep for Congressman Bill Huizenga	

PUBLIC TIME

No comments.

TRANSPARENCY & INTEGRITY OF WDB DECISIONS

Kathy Olsen asked members present if there were any items on the agenda for which a conflict of interest or a potential conflict of interest exists; and if so, the conflict should be declared at this time. There were none.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES (Exhibit A)

Motion made by Brian O'Donnell and supported by Frank Tecumseh to approve the December 3, 2024 WDB Annual Workforce Development Board meeting minutes. Motion carried.

PUBLIC TIME

No comments

COMMITTEE REPORTS

No reports.

NEW BUSINESS

Plans (Exhibits B1 – B3)

Amanda Rosenberg requested Board consideration and approval of three workforce development plans included as Exhibits B1 through B3 in the agenda packet. The plans included the following: **FY24 GF/GP Funding for**

Young Professionals Plus (YPP) Initiative as described in Exhibit B1, the ***Michigan Works! System Plan 2025 Update*** as described in Exhibit B2, and the ***FY25 Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) Plan*** as described in Exhibit B3.

Motion made by Frank Tecumseh and supported by Brian O'Donnell to approve the FY24 GF/GP Funding for Young Professionals Plus (YPP) Initiative, the Michigan Works! System Plan 2025 Update, and the FY25 Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) Plan. Motion carried.

WDB Policies (*Exhibits C1 – C6*)

Kathy Olsen requested Board consideration and approval of two updated WDB policies.

WDB Policy 5 Revision 09 Supportive Services and Needs Related Payments (*Exhibits C1-C3*)

She reported changes made to WDB Policy 5 Revision 09 Supportive Services and Needs Related Payments WDB Policy 5 Revision 09 Supportive Services and Needs Related Payments include minor edits to the language throughout the policy, updating references, and separating the background section into 'Background' and 'Purpose'. Other changes were made to align with recently released State policy. Those changes included adding language under Section 6.a. 'WIOA' to allow for food allowances from sources other than WIOA; changing National Emergency Grant (NEG) to Dislocated Worker Grant (DWG) in Section 6.b.; and adding language in Section 6.d. 'Special Initiatives' to allow for food allowances and digital literacy access.

WDB Policy 6 Revision 08 Procurement and Property Management (*Exhibits C4-C6*)

She reported changes made to WDB Policy 6 Revision 08 Procurement and Property Management included minor edits to the language throughout the policy, updating references, and separating the background section into 'Background' and 'Purpose'. Other changes were made to align with recently released State policy. Those changes included updating definitions, increasing the simplified acquisition threshold from \$5,000 to \$10,000 in Section I; and minor edits to terminology in Section II.

Motion made by Brian O'Donnell and supported by Frank Tecumseh to approve the changes to WDB Policy 5 Revision 09 Supportive Services and Needs Related Payments and WDB Policy 6 Revision 08 Procurement and Property Management. Motion carried.

WDB and CEAC Action Items (*Exhibits D, E and F*)

WDB 2025 Meeting Calendar

Kathy Olsen reported the WDB 2025 meeting calendar that was previously approved by the Board includes a meeting on June 19, 2025, which is a holiday. She proposed changing the meeting day/date to either Wednesday, June 18, 2025 or Friday, June 20, 2025. Members agreed to change the meeting to June 18, 2025.

WDB Alternate Member Appointment (*Exhibit D*)

Kathy Olsen requested Board consideration and approval of the appointment of Bobby Beauchamp, Dean of Workforce Development at Kellogg Community College, as an alternate for Dr. Paul Watson, representing Education on the Workforce Development Board for the balance of a two-year term that began October 1, 2024 and ends September 30, 2026.

WDB CEAC Member Change (*Exhibit E*)

Kathy Olsen requested Board consideration and approval the appointment of Bobby Beauchamp to the WDB Career Educational Advisory Council, as an education representative, replacing Dr. Dennis Baskin and his alternate Scott Cubberly, for the balance of a two-year term that began July 1, 2024 and ends June 30, 2026.

CEAC 2025 Meeting Calendar (*Exhibit F*)

Kathy Olsen requested Board consideration and approval as required by State policy of the 2025 Career Educational Advisory Council (CEAC) meeting calendar.

Motion made by Frank Tecumseh and supported by Brian O’Donnell to approve the change the June meeting date for the Executive Committee from Thursday, June 19 to Wednesday, June 18, 2025; the appointment of Bobby Beauchamp, Dean of Workforce Development at Kellogg Community College, as an alternate for Dr. Paul Watson, representing Education on the Workforce Development Board for the balance of a two-year term that began October 1, 2024 and ends September 30, 2026; the appointment of Bobby Beauchamp to the WDB Career Educational Advisory Council, as an education representative, replacing Dr. Dennis Basking and his alternate Scott Cubberly, for the balance of a two-year term that began July 1, 2024 and ends June 30, 2026; and the CEAC 2025 meeting calendar as presented.

Request for Proposal Update

Amanda Rosenberg provided a follow-up report pertaining to the procurement of a merit based provider for the delivery of Wagner-Peyser Employment Services. She extended gratitude from the staff to the Board members who committed their time to review proposals received for this request for proposal. As a result of the staff and committee reviews held in December 2024, West Michigan Works!, a division of ACSET, which stands for Area Community Services Employment and Training Council, a public merit based organization, it was recommended to move forward to contract negotiations for service delivery beginning July 1 of 2025. Sub awarding this program delivery is in response to the final rule released by the USDOL in November of 2023, which requires that all services of the Wagner-Peyser Act be provided by merit staff.

STAFF REPORTS

Business Solutions Update, Dashboard (*Exhibit G*) and Lightcast Data Analytics (*Exhibit H*)

Ashley Iovieno provided a Business Solutions update that included data pertaining to employers served, the Going PRO Talent Fund, unemployment rates, and job demand, as well as information regarding expanded unemployment benefits, the Sturgis Career Opportunities Expo, and changes to the annual National Apprenticeship Week.

Employers served –The number of employers served, and the services provided through the end of 2024 is reported in the upper left-hand corner of the Business Solutions Dashboard (*Exhibit G*)

Going PRO Talent Fund – The Going Pro Talent Fund numbers on the Dashboard (*Exhibit G*) are from the FY2025 Cycle 1 application period. MW! Southwest submitted 55 applications and 31 were awarded, and of those 31, there were two employers with tax obligations which needed to be cleared up by the Department of Treasury. MW! Southwest received an award letter this week for one of those employers and anticipate the second employer to be in good standing shortly. The total awarded is just under \$2 million. In comparison to FY24 Cycle 1 applications, MW! Southwest had the same number of employers awarded, however the total amount was approximately \$175,000 less.

Unemployment Rates - Unemployment rates for November 2024 were listed on the Business Solutions Dashboard (*Exhibit G*). The Michigan Unemployment rate was reported to be 4.8%, with the national rate being 4.2% and the four counties in the Michigan Works! Southwest service area ranged from 4.2% to 5%, with Branch County at 4.3%, Calhoun County at 5%, Kalamazoo County at 4.2%, and St Joseph County at 4.6%.

Job Demand - The most recent Lightcast reports (*Exhibit H*) were included in the email sent to Board members with the agenda packet. A link to the report can also be found on the Michigan Works! Southwest website under the Resources tab. The same positions remain in demand as in the last several months, with registered nurses, medical assistants and fast food and counter workers all in most demand; and the employer job postings match this data. There were 482 unique postings in the area, lower than previous months, which is to be expected at the end of the calendar year.

Expanded Unemployment Benefits - Toward the end of 2024 there was a series of legislative bills that were passed at the State level. This includes Senate Bill 40 which expands unemployment benefits from a 20-week eligibility to 26 weeks. This bill puts Michigan in alignment with other states. Michigan was only one of 12 states

that limited unemployment to 20 weeks. This bill also increases the potential maximum unemployment benefit amount from \$362 a week to \$614 a week. The increase will occur gradually over the next three years.

Sturgis Career Opportunities Expo – The first student career event for 2025 will be the Sturgis Career Opportunities Expo that is scheduled for March 12, 2025 from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. at Sturgis High School. MW! Southwest is partnering with the Sturgis Area Chamber of Commerce and Sturgis High School for this event. Students will have the opportunity to explore careers in the morning which will be followed by a hiring fair component in the afternoon for the employers. MW! Southwest is sponsoring the event and Lynn Page, Business Solutions Coordinator in St. Joseph County is providing assistance through a planning committee position.

National Apprenticeship Week – In 2025 and thereafter, the National Apprenticeship Week is moving from November to April. In 2025 it will be celebrated on April 30 and the following year, the celebration will move back to a week-long celebration. The dates are April 26 - May 2, 2026; April 25 – May 1, 2027; and April 23 – April 29, 2028. This change will also eliminate future Youth National Apprenticeship celebrations as both celebrations will be rolled into one event each year.

Operations Update and Updated Dashboard (*Exhibit I*)

Amy Meyers reported the Partnership.Accountability.Training.Hope. (PATH) program, the Food Assistance Employment and Training (FAE&T) program, and the Barrier Removal Employment Success (BRES) program were recently monitored by the State. There was no corrective action required for this monitoring. She thanked local staff for their efforts in providing services and their assistance with the monitoring visit. During this monitoring, MW! Southwest had the opportunity to have staff from the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) participate in the process and great feedback was received regarding program orientation. Staff also received some recommendations to update language in the orientation materials that were monitored to better align with the State requirements. However, she noted that staff had already identified and addressed these changes. Overall, it was a great monitoring visit with great outcomes.

Directors Report

Federal Updates

Jakki Bungart-Bibb reported Congress passed a second Continuing Resolution (CR) on December 20, 2024, averting a government shutdown and extending funding through March 14, 2025. She noted that there was a push to reauthorize WIOA through this CR, and a bipartisan bill was put forward; however, it did not make it into the CR. This means that WIOA reauthorization is back to ‘square one’. Staff do not anticipate any real movement on this until the new administration takes office and it is unknown whether this will fall on the priority list for the new administration.

She further reported that Representative Tim Walberg was recently selected to serve as the chairperson of the House Committee on Education and Workforce. Representative Walberg’s representation covers the MWSW service area. Staff have met with him or his staff several times to discuss the work of MWSW and share success stories. He has a strong interest in workforce development and is supportive of the work of workforce development. Staff are hopeful that his position on this committee will help to keep workforce development and WIOA reauthorization a key priority.

MW! Association

The Michigan Works! Association and the advocacy committee will be meeting with Representative Walberg, as well as many other lawmakers over the next several months. The annual advocacy day will take place in the coming months where MW! staff will meet with lawmakers in Lansing. Additionally, staff will meet with lawmakers in DC when they are attending the annual National Association of Workforce Boards (NAWB) forum in March. These forums will provide multiple opportunities to share the great work of Michigan Works! and especially the work of MW! Southwest.

Along with that same topic of advocacy, the Michigan Works! Association is working to finalize legislative priorities for 2025. The Going Pro Talent Fund (GPTF) continues to be a priority, and it is believed that the Skills Training Fund will also be a priority. These two fund sources are more flexible, and both provide staff with the opportunity to serve both job seekers and employers in diverse ways. Staff work closely with Michigan’s Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity (LEO) to align legislative priorities and to have a collective and consistent voice when meeting with the lawmakers. She reported that the Association’s advocacy priorities will be shared with Board members once they are finalized and that she will keep members posted on the progress of the advocacy efforts.

OLD BUSINESS

None.

PUBLIC TIME

Amanda Sutherland reported that the Earned Sick Time Act (ESTA) is expected to take effect on February 21 of this year and questioned its effect on participants placed in work experience opportunities that are only a few weeks in length. Another member expressed similar concerns for student workers in the schools. Others present expressed additional concerns regarding some of the vague language, as well as the cumbersome record keeping requirements. It was reported that there are currently four State bills proposed to modify this legislation: two in the House, HB4001 and HB4002, and two in the Senate, SB8 and SB15. Staff offered to share the concerns expressed during the discussion with legislators.

MEMBERS’ TIME

No comments.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

Jackie Murray referred members to the list of upcoming WDB meetings that were listed on the agenda.

- Full Workforce Development Board – Thursday, February 20, 2025 (9:00-10:30 am) at the Upjohn Institute, 300 S. Westnedge Avenue, Kalamazoo, MI 49007
- Executive Committee – Thursday, March 20, 2025 (9:00-10:30 am) at the Upjohn Institute, 300 S. Westnedge Ave, Kalamazoo, MI 49007
- Monitoring & Evaluation Committee –Thursday, January 23, 2025 (8:00-9:30 am) at the MW! Service Center, 200 W. Van Buren Street, Battle Creek, MI 49017
- Disability Awareness Resource Team (DART) – Thursday, February 13, 2025 (2:00-4:00 pm) at Upjohn Institute, 300 S. Westnedge Ave, Kalamazoo, MI 49007
- Career Educational Advisory Council (CEAC) – Monday, March 17, 2025 (1:00-3:00 pm) at Upjohn Institute, 300 S Westnedge Ave, Kalamazoo, MI 49007

ADJOURNMENT

There being no other reports or business for the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 9:51 a.m.

Kathy Olsen Date

Jackie Murray Date

APPROVED

These minutes were approved on _____