

**Workforce Development Board
 Quarterly Board Meeting Minutes
 September 19, 2024**

CALL TO ORDER: Workforce Development Board Chair, Jackie Murray, called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. at the Three Rivers Chamber of Commerce Business Center, 1116 N. Main Street, Three Rivers, Michigan.

INTRODUCTIONS: Individuals attending in-person introduced themselves and Shelby Springett introduced individuals attending virtually.

WDB Members Present:

Kathi Cain-Babbitt (Labor)	Jackie Murray (PS)*	Liz Van Dussen (PS) [∇]
Randall Hazelbaker (PS)*	Brian O'Donnell (PS)*	Dr. Paul Watson (Educ)
Jared Hoffmaster (PS)	Jose Orozco (CBO) [∇]	* Exec Committee
Al Ives (PS)	Dave Pawloski (Labor)	[∇] Attended virtually
Kris Jenkins (Educ)*	Frank Tecumseh (PS)*	

WDB Members Absent

Morris Appleby (Labor)	Rebecca Hill (MRS), alternate for John Fiore	Karla Meeks (PS)
Jill Bland (Eon Dev)	Lisa Johansen (DOC)	Sabrina Radenovic (PS)
Jessica Eyster (PS)	Derek King (PS)	Windy Rea (Job Corps)
Jeff Heppler (PS)	David Maurer (PS)*	Ken Willcutt (Labor)

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

Jackie Bigelow [∇]	Jacob Eagen (Upjohn) [∇]	Kathy Olsen (MWSW)
Cherise Buchanan [∇]	Ashley Iovieno (MWSW)	Amanda Rosenberg (MWSW)
Jakki Bungart-Bibb (MWSW)	Amy Meyers (MWSW)	Shelby Springett (MWSW)

Guests Present

Jim Berry (SJCISD)	John LoPorto (MI-LEO)	Emma Robbins (WDI)
Susan Corbin (MI-LEO)	Deb Lyzenga (MI-LEO)	Kristine Stevens (GOCC)
Paige Daniels (KRESA)	Tommy Moton (KRESA)	Amanda Sutherland (KRESA)
Blaine Farr (WDI)	Dr. Bryan Newton (GOCC)	

STATE & LOCAL PLAN DISCUSSION

Susan Corbin, Director of Michigan's Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity presented information on the Michigan Statewide Workforce Plan and the alignment of the MW! Southwest local plan with the State Plan. The presentation covered the State Plan goals which included (1) helping Michiganders earn a skills certificate or degree; (2) increasing access to opportunities that grow the middle class; and (3) supporting business and entrepreneurial growth through talent solutions; as well as the strategies to achieve the goals. Discussion occurred following the presentation and in conclusion, it was noted that the MW! Southwest local plan reflects alignment with the State Plan.

RECOGNITIONS

MW! Annual Conference - Jakki Bungart-Bibb reported the Michigan Works! Annual Conference was held last week in Traverse City and there were over 800 attendees. She thanked Amy Meyers for speaking on a panel as an expert in the field and noted that it is always an honor to be viewed as experts and to participate in that capacity. She also thanked Shelby Springett for volunteering at the conference, Kathy Olsen for providing support to the Board members in attendance, and to both for coordinating a reception for MW! Southwest attendees.

There are several awards presented at the conference to acknowledge workforce development champions, employers, and workforce boards. This year, MW! Southwest received multiple recognitions.

Annual Shining Star - Business Solutions Coordinator Lynn Page received this year's Annual statewide Shining Star Award. Lynn was acknowledged for her willingness to take on new projects, to hit the ground running and for her overall excellent customer service.

Volunteer of the Year - John Kerr from Denso received the Volunteer of the Year Award for his service to two Michigan Works! areas, working closely with both Michigan Works! Southwest and Oakland County Michigan Works! John is a workforce champion and an advocate for Michigan Works!

Employer of the Year - Duncan Aviation received the Employer of the Year Award. Duncan was acknowledged for being a champion employer, for going above and beyond for their employees and the community, and diving into addressing challenges affecting the workforce. Duncan leads by example and participates in many local initiatives including the Employer Resource Network®, the Going PRO Talent Fund, on-the-job trainings, and apprenticeships, as well as working very closely with Pulse to address the childcare crisis.

Board of Excellence – The MW! Southwest Workforce Development Board received the Board of Excellence Award acknowledging the Board's active engagement, focus on continuous improvement, and innovative approach to workforce development solutions. Ms. Bibb expressed that she is proud and excited about the award and thanked members for their engagement, leadership, and support. She thanked Board members who attended the conference and accepted the award on behalf of the Board. She also recognized the MW! Southwest admin team, who work extremely hard to ensure that Board members have what they need to be successful. She gave a special shout out to Kathy Olsen for her multiple years of dedicated service to the Board and recognized Kathy's 31-year anniversary at Upjohn.

MW! Southwest Shining Star Awards

May – Tommy Moton was recognized as the May Shining Star. Tommy's nominator noted his commitment to high quality performance in every area of his work and that he has an incredible ability to connect and build relationships with youth. Tommy is honest, authentic, and consistent, and able to balance being a reliable adult mentor who inspires young adults to be at their best while being an understanding confidant who can be trusted to actively listen to the concerns of the youth he serves. In addition to his ability to connect with and empower youth, Tommy is known for his aversion to procrastination as his efficient and proactive habits are ever present and his reliability as a teammate is unmatched. He has also displayed a great willingness to mentor new staff in the Battle Creek Service Center and to provide support at the front desk whenever assistance is needed.

June – Cherise Buchanan was recognized as the June Shining Star. Cherise's nomination described her as a leader who is always willing to go out of the way to assist participants and staff, including helping three of her team members successfully transition into new positions, demonstrating that she is incredibly encouraging and supportive of her staff's endeavors. Cherise has also taken on additional responsibilities and has stepped up to give direction and assist with finding solutions and resources for customers. Among her accomplishments is the structuring and implementation of the Connect Battle Creek website. Cherise is

a problem solver and wisely taps into the resources and strengths of her team members to create a more efficient work environment. She is deeply devoted to assisting individuals in the Battle Creek community and is always ready and willing to go above and beyond to extend a helping hand to those in need.

July – Emma Robbins was recognized as the July Shining Star. Her nominator noted that Emma brings core expertise to the Adult and Dislocated Worker team at Michigan Works! Southwest, and that she is an inspiration for her coworkers. Emma continually demonstrates patience, sincerity, and dedication to her teammates and to customers, and has an excellent eye for detail. She is also known to be an active listener and was described as a role model who brings positivity to all situations.

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.

PUBLIC TIME

No comments.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES (*Exhibit A*)

Motion made by De. Paul Watson and supported by Jared Hoffmaster to approve the August 15, 2024 WDB Executive Committee meeting minutes. Motion carried.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Career Educational Advisory Council (CEAC) – Kris Jenkins reported that the Career Educational Advisory Council (CEAC) met on September 12, 2024. Highlights from members representing business included appreciation for the regional work to inform youth of career opportunities, especially in the trades. Members reinforced the importance of a CTE focus on clean energy and noted that as the need for building the infrastructure to support the future of clean energy increases, many jobs will be created in other sectors of skilled trades. It was also noted that there are grants for electric school buses through SEC 74 of the Clean School Bus Grant. Education updates included good enrollments for CTE in all four counties within the MW! Southwest service area; and the announcement of a grand opening for KRESA’s new CTE center that is scheduled for May 22, 2025. CEAC members also reported on the success of 611 funds that were used to support teacher certifications and other credentials. Many Teacher Assistants were also able to begin their education classes toward earning a teacher certification. The funds made an impact on these staff who otherwise would have struggled to pay for classes. It was also reported that funding is available for 107 special projects for the region to collaborate between Adult Education, CTE, and local industry to provide skill development. Upcoming events include the MiCareerQuest™ Southwest scheduled for October 22-23, 2024 at the Kalamazoo Expo Center, and the Branch County 9th grade Career Day on October 17, 2024. The State is seeking to fill the MiSTEM Coordinator position for Southwest Michigan that recently became vacant.

Disability Awareness Resource Team (DART) – Kathy Olsen reported the DART Committee met on September 17, 2024. Dr. Jeana Koerber, Executive Director of Autism Services, presented information about the Great Lakes Center for Autism Treatment and Research. Disability Network is seeking volunteers to help build ramps for individuals in need of having a ramp added to their home; one currently needs to be built in Sturgis. Many of the DART agencies have job openings. Members discussed the Certificate of Completion and that it is not recognized as a credential. It was reported that members of the Michigan Development Disability Council Policy Committee are advocating for a change, such as legislation that would create another diploma category. Members also discussed the need for assistance with the driver’s education written test and noted that the student in need can drive; however, struggles with the written test. It was noted that arrangements can be made for assistance with this. Another concern was the need for a State ID for students without a driver’s license. There is assistance to help cover the cost; however, the

barrier is getting to the Secretary of State office and for youth under 18, getting a parent or guardian to sign for them. They suggested having a mobile Secretary of State office at the schools, such as at open houses, where both students and parents could be reached. In addition to the MiCareerQuest™ already reported on, other upcoming events include a Take Charge of Your Health workshop offered by Disability Network at no charge, and the Disability Network's Breaking Barriers Breakfast on October 3, 2024 at 8:00 a.m. at the Kalamazoo Expo Center.

NEW BUSINESS

Plans (*Exhibits B1 and B2*)

Amanda Rosenberg requested Board consideration and approval of two workforce development plans included as Exhibits B1 and B2 in the agenda packets. The plans included the following: (1) **MI Regional Outreach, Awareness and Recognition (MiROAR) Plan** as described in *Exhibit B1*; and (2) **FY24 Going PRO Talent Fund Administration for Employer Led Collaboratives (ELCs) Plan** as described in *Exhibit B2*.

Motion made by Frank Tecumseh and supported by Kathi Cain-Babbitt to approve the MI Regional Outreach, Awareness and Recognition (MiROAR) Plan, and the FY24 Going PRO Talent Fund Administration for Employer Led Collaboratives (ELCs) Plan. Motion carried.

Infrastructure Funding Agreements (IFAs) (*Exhibits C1 and C2*)

Amanda Rosenberg reported Exhibit C1 includes information on the background and required content for Program Year 2024 Infrastructure Funding Agreements (IFA's) for the Michigan Works! Southwest area. Under WIOA, the development and execution of Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) with One-Stop partners is required and, in accordance with the WIOA, the MOUs must include an Infrastructure Funding Agreement (IFA), which details how infrastructure costs for the One-Stop delivery system will be funded. This includes all non-personnel costs that are necessary for the general operation of the One-Stop center. Each MOU is on a three-year period and was approved last year; however, the IFAs must be updated annually. Item C2 in the agenda packet includes Attachments A, B and C to the IFAs. Attachment C describes the MW! Southwest partners who contribute as required by WIOA and the list has not changed since last year when the MOUs were approved. Attachment A outlines the Infrastructure costs of the One-Stop Centers in the MW! Southwest area. The financial contribution of each partner was determined by a methodology set forth by the State of Michigan as noted on Attachment B.

STAFF REPORTS

Business Solutions Update and Dashboard (*Exhibits D & E*)

Ashley Iovieno provided a Business Solutions update that included MiROAR, employers served, unemployment rates, the Going PRO Talent Fund (GPTF), job demand, Michigan's recently released Hot 50 Job Outlook through 2032, MiCareerQuest™ Southwest, Branch County's Career Day, and MiReconnect.

MiROAR – Ms. Iovieno reported that the Michigan Regional Outreach, Awareness and Recognition (MiROAR) policy provides support and resources for MW! to host future local Race to Talent events, like the one held in December 2023 in Battle Creek. At that event, the efforts of four local employers who are leading the way in apprenticeships were highlighted. The employers shared best practices during a roundtable session and then each employer received a crystal award to acknowledge their hard work and dedication to apprenticeships. That event has been recognized as a best practice and was used to develop the MiROAR policy, along with the accompanying process guide which includes a photo of the Battle Creek event.

Employers Served - The second page of the dashboard (Exhibit D) highlights the number of employers served and services provided. This data reset in July, thus the data is reflective of July and August 2024.

Unemployment Rates - Unemployment rates for July 2024 were listed on page two of the Dashboard (*Exhibit D*). The Michigan Unemployment rate was reported to be 4.1%, with the national rate also at 4.1%. The four counties in the Michigan Works! Southwest service area ranged 4.4% to 5.5%, with St. Joseph County at 4.9%, Kalamazoo County at 4.5%, Branch County at 4.4%, and Calhoun County at 5.5%.

Going PRO Talent Fund – Staff have attended two informational Going PRO Talent Fund (GPTF) webinars with the State and have been conducting information sessions for employers. The application period for independent GPTF applications will start on October 1, 2024 and end on October 18, 2024.

Job Demand - The most recent Lightcast reports (*Exhibit E*) were included as a link in the agenda packet email sent out prior to the meeting. Ms. Iovieno noted that the same positions remain in demand as during the last several months, with registered nurses, medical assistants and fast food and counter workers all rounding out the top. The employers' postings match this data. The report also shows 530 unique job postings, an increase of 49, in the MW! Southwest area.

Michigan's Hot 50 Job Outlook through 2032 - The Michigan's Hot 50 Job Outlook through 2032 was released this week. Some of the top job prospects are in Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers, Registered Nurses, Software Developers, General and Operations Managers, and Electricians.

Branch County Career Day - A Career Day in Branch County, which operates like a MiCareerQuest™ event, is scheduled for October 17, 2024.

MiCareerQuest™ Southwest - The MiCareerQuest™ Southwest is scheduled for October 22 and 23, 2024 at the Kalamazoo Expo Center. Volunteers are still needed, and anyone interested should contact Ashley Iovieno and she will connect the volunteers to the staff in charge of sign-ups. Michigan Works! Southwest will have a booth at the event to display Virtual Reality (VR) headsets where students can choose from a variety of occupations and then be teleported to real life scenarios for 3 to 8 minute VR sessions. This year's event will also feature a Community Night on October 22. The Community Night is open to the public and is an opportunity for individuals to experience hands-on activities with local employers. She encouraged attendees to attend and to share the invitation.

MiReconnect – MW! Southwest is informing employers about recent changes to the Michigan Reconnect program. This program is a last dollar scholarship that pays for students to attend an in-district community college, tuition-free. The program has been successful, and the changes include an expansion to the age eligibility until December 31, 2024. Individuals between the ages of 21 and 24 are eligible to apply. Staff have partnered with area community colleges and consortiums to share this information and are encouraging individuals to contact their local community college for further details.

Operations Update and Dashboard (*Exhibit F*)

Attendees were directed to the Dashboard in the agenda packet and no verbal report was given due to time constraints.

Director's Report (*Exhibit G*)

Jakki Bungart-Bibb reported that on July 24, 2024, the US Department of Energy selected 20 projects across 16 states to receive up to \$371 million dollars to accelerate interstate transmission projects and support community infrastructure projects along new and upgraded transmission lines. MW! Southwest worked with Michigan's Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity to submit a project proposal, and the project was awarded \$35.7 million dollars. This project will invest in workforce development initiatives to build a skilled workforce to support transmission construction and clean energy investments in Branch and Calhoun Counties, two of the counties affected by the HELIX-HIPLE transmission line. Other community partners are listed within the grant including the Community Action Agency. MW! Southwest is excited to be the core workforce development provider for this project and looks forward to the opportunities it brings.

A planning meeting is scheduled and additional information about the project, including implementation and launch, will be provided as it becomes known.

OLD BUSINESS

None.

PUBLIC TIME

No comments.

MEMBERS' TIME

Dave Pawloski reported on staffing changes at the Kalamazoo Road Commission that includes retirements and a newly appointed Managing Director.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

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

- The next Full Workforce Development Board meeting is Thursday, November 21, 2024 from 9:00-10:30 a.m. at a location in Calhoun County, Michigan.
- The next Executive Committee meeting is Thursday, October 17, 2024 from 9:00-10:30 a.m. at the Upjohn Institute, 300 S. Westnedge Ave, Kalamazoo, Michigan.
- The next Career Educational Advisory Council (CEAC) meeting is scheduled for Monday, December 2, 2024 from 1:00-3:00 p.m.
- The next Disability Awareness Resource Team (DART) meeting is Tuesday, November 12, 2024 from 2:00-4:00 p.m.
- The next Monitoring and Evaluation Committee is Thursday, October 24, 2024 from 8:00-9:30 a.m.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no other reports or business for the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 10:31 a.m.

Kathy Olsen

Date

Jackie Murray

Date

APPROVED

These minutes were approved on _____