

# W.I.B.

(WORKFORCE INNOVATION BOARD) of LWIA #15

Serving the counties of: Fulton, Marshall, Mason, McLean, Peoria, Stark, Tazewell and Woodford

## MINUTES

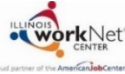
**GOOGLE MEET.com**

**Virtual Meeting**

**Wednesday, July 21, 2021**

**12:00 (noon) to 1:15 pm (approx.)**

**Notice: We will strive to hold all future meetings to 1 hour, when possible**



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### **I. Roll Call and Introductions – Chairman, Sam Lewis**

WIB Chairman, Sam Lewis opened the meeting at 12:01 pm. Roll call was taken and guests were introduced.

#### **Board Members Present:**

*McFarland Bragg(PCCEO), Mark DeKeersgieter (CIRBN), Wendy Hess(Unity Point), Kelli Hill(Heartland C.C.), John Hubert(CAT), Sam Lewis(Pridestaff), Kacie McIntyre(IL DHS-DORS), Laura Maas(Unland Ins.), Kacie McIntyre(IL DHS-DORS), Todd Mundorf(NRG), Chris Setti(Greater Peoria EDC), Arnitria Shaw (ICC), Jeff Strode(Mid National Bank), Sergio Talavera (IDES) and Steve Timmermann(Bank of Pontiac)*

#### **Board Members Absent:**

*Larry Crouch(Mahoney Crouch & Mahoney Ins.), Brian Ford (Facet Tech), Lori Johnson(Peoria Goodwill), Bill Lawrence(PLR Insurance), Curt Oldfield(SRC), Steven Petersen(Waste Management), Darell Sarff(Kennedy-Sarff Real Estate), Matt Watchinski(West Central Bldg. Trades Carpenters Union), David White(Connect-Transit) & Brian Wipperman(Marcfirst)*

#### **Career Link Staff:**

*Steve Martin(Executive Director), Dena Weth(Assistant Director), Leeann Norris(Fiscal Director), David Vaughn(Technical Specialist/Planner/EO officer), Shelly Purchis(Business Service Rep-McLean County), Norm Griffin(Business Service Rep.- Peoria County), Kelly Schapmire(Program Manager), David Taylor(Pekin, IL Performance Manager, Tazewell Co.) & Lorena Cary (Peoria, IL Career Planner, Peoria Co.)*

#### **Guests:**

*Sherrilyn Benjamin (DORS), Warren Cheatham (One Stop Center Manager), Dawn Fentem (ICC), Robin Gathers (Upgrade), Chad Murphy (SRC), Jennifer Orban (MCCA), Johanna Wagner (Goodwill), Jody Wanless (IDES), John Whalen, (Midwest Region Laborers) LEDC (Laborers' Economic Development Council), an affiliate of LiUNA (Laborer's International Union of North America), Sherry Laible (Lie-blee)-White (DHS) & Rick Pearce (HCC) & Kerry Urquizo (HCC-Adult Ed).*

### **II. \*ACTION ITEM: Approval of Wed., April 21, 2021 'Google Virtual Meeting' Minutes**

**A motion was made by Mark DeKeersgieter and seconded by Chris Setti to approve the Wed., April 21, 2021 'Google Virtual Meeting' Minutes. Motion carried.**

Chairman, Sam Lewis provided Executive Director, Steve Martin the opportunity to say a few words regarding a former WIB Board member.

Steve Martin stated that the Career Link and the WIB Board/Corporate Board lost a very important member; Ronn Morehead, who passed away on Friday, July 2, 2021. Steve expressed that Ronn was a person that if anyone ever needed help with Workforce initiatives, Ronn was the man to call. Ronn served on the WIB Board for over 40 years and also served as President of LWIA #15's Corporate Board for several years as well as a member of Career Link's Youth Advisory Council. Ronn will be missed by many in the eight county area and the whole EDR region. He was very active with the State and at the Federal Level on Workforce Initiatives. He was a champion of the Career Link Agency and Steve stated that he was also a friend and a mentor to him. His guiding presence will be greatly missed.

Sam Lewis expressed that he had written a letter to Ronn last summer while Ronn was in the nursing home, and stated that although he didn't know Ronn well or very long but he wished that he had been able to get to know him better. He provided a quote, *'People with no skin in the game are called bureaucrats. People with skin in the game, for their own gain, are called citizens. People with skin in the game for the gain of others, are called warriors, knights, saints.'* Sam felt that Ronn Morehead fell in the latter category of warrior, knight and saint and stated if anybody ever meets even a handful of people like Ronn Morehead, they should consider themselves lucky.

**III. Spotlight Participant (Peoria County) Presented by Peoria, IL office, Career Planner, Lorena Cary) Introduced by Dena Weth, Assistant Director**

Career Link Assistant Director, Dena stated that the "Participant Spotlight" provides an opportunity to recognize Career Link staff as well as the outstanding customers of the LWIA #15 eight county area. Dena then introduced Career Planner, Lorena Cary from the Peoria, IL office. Lorena began with Career Link in June 2020. She is an incredibly fast learner and willing to jump in and tackle any tasks that is given to her. She has taken on the learning role of becoming part of our Trade Planner Team.

Lorena Cary gave a brief story of a Dislocated Worker Customer who was enrolled in Career Link's Program in the Peoria County area.

*'Matthew Clevenger was a dislocated worker from Synergetic Industries as a design engineer for tooling where he worked for four years. The manufacturing plant shut down on 3/15/2020 due to COVID-19. Finding it difficult to obtain work during the pandemic, he applied for tuition assistance and went to CDL program at ICC, which began 3/29/2021. He earned his class A CDL on 4/30/2021. Matthew landed a job with Werner right after he received his CDL. He is a team driver with his girlfriend who attended CDL training about the same time. He has already driven to Florida, Texas, Kentucky, and Indiana and is currently on his way to Denver, Colorado. While his pay is based on how many miles he drives, his take home average pay of approx. \$1,600 per week. He really enjoys his new job and says that he could not have done it without the help of Career link and the WIOA grant. Testimonial: 'Thanks to Career Link's assistance I was able to enroll in truck driver training program at ICC after being unemployed as a direct result of COVID-19. My girlfriend and I completed the training about the same time, knowing we wanted to team drive. We hired on with a major carrier after obtaining our CDL's and began a new hire training program with our new employer. We noticed right away we were more advanced than the other new hires in our orientation class. The instructors at ICC gave us the skills and confidence to stand out. In our first two weeks of professional team driving, we've bene to 18 states and are loving the life on the road together.'*

**IV. Report on the Re-Opening Status of Offices – Steve Martin, Executive Director / Jody Wanless IDES**

Steve Martin reported that the tentative re-opening date of the Peoria, IL AJC (America's Job Center – One Stop Center) will be by appointment only and is slated for August 30, 2021. CMS (Central Management Services) of the State did a walk-through and made some security suggestions both inside and outside of the building. There is a form issued by the state that will be completed by the physical partners of the AJC (America's Job Center-One Stop Center); IDES and Career Link. Once there is an agreement on the reopening guidelines the form is then sent to the State and this has been completed and waiting on the approval from the State. Due to the timing of this documents, it will be necessary to call in an Executive Meeting of the Board to approve this document since it requires the signatures of both the WIB Chairman, Sam Lewis and the Chairman of the LWIA #15 County Consortium, David Zimmerman. With regards to the other seven Career Link offices, they will be open by appointment only.

IDES Regional Manager, Jody Wanless stated that Peoria, IL IDES office will have two security guard; one armed and one unarmed security guard. The plan at this time, there will be a triage center in the parking lot in Peoria, IL. There is enough for staff to park in the rear area and cones and barricades will be set up in the parking lot to direct traffic. The reason for this is to keep citizens away from the center, that do not have appointments. Once the Center is reopened, only those with appointments will be allowed to enter the facility for both IDES and Career Link. The appointments will be scheduled from 9a to 12(noon) and 1:30p to 4:30p. She hopes that workshops will be able to restart holding workshops, etc.

**V. MOU Submittal – Steven Martin, Executive Director**

Steve Martin reported that the MOU revisions have been completed and he indicated to the Board that the report of outcomes were submitted. He officially submitted the MOU for PY2021 along with the budget and the signatures of all of

the Partners to DCEO on June 30, 2021 and he is waiting on the State for approval and feels that we are in good standing as far as the MOU.

**VI. DCEO Monitoring – Steven Martin Executive Director /Dena Weth, Assistant Director/LeeAnn Norris, Fiscal Director**

Steve Martin stated that during the monitoring of obligations and expenditures were low in every category; Youth, Adult and Dislocated Workers. He sent a report to DCEO with an explanation of how Career Link plans try to meet the expenditure goals. All LWIAs across the state are experiencing similar issues with meeting the required goals, mainly due to the COVID-19 Pandemic. The issue when making this Report, the COVID-19 Pandemic would not be allowed as a reason of not meeting the goals, according to the DOL. Career Link has asked for a waiver on the 80% expenditure requirement and on the 50% training requirement. Career Link is in the same position that quite a few employers are in with trying to get people through their doors. Outreach has been ongoing through the Pandemic, although has been via virtual outreach for the majority of it. Having the AJC (America's Job Center) in Peoria, IL being closed to the Public, has not helped the matters. Outreach continues via Comcast Advertising and Facebook postings. Career Link is in a very rare, unlikely and unfamiliar position of having to ask for a waiver for not meeting obligations and expenditures because Career Link has always met and exceeded expenditures.

Dena Weth referred to the program aspects regarding the monitoring visit. She stated that at the last WIB meeting, she had reported that there was a 'soft-exit' with the monitors. At that time, all files and reports, were done remotely as it was basically done, again the same way at the recent monitoring this year. She stated that at that time, there were no major findings. She gave an example of what all is involved with monitoring. There was a customer's Trade program file that had 225 case notes that were uploaded and reviewed by the monitors. In addition, there were 35 additional randomly selected files and the majority of policy files were selected, randomly selected Incumbent Worker projects, a number of Work Experience file as well as a number of Contracts and the National Disaster Grant information were all selected for reviewed. She commended the hard work and efforts of all of the Career Planners. There have been four different monitoring groups that have performed monitoring over the last four years, so they each can have their own interpretations that can vary significantly different. One area that the monitors pointed out, was with one of the 36 customers where there was not a 90-day two way communication entry but instead it was entered on the 100<sup>th</sup> day. Up to this point, this gentleman, who was not in compliance and is no longer in our program. The two other areas that stand out, that the Management Team tried to get the Monitors to change their minds to no avail, Dena stated that at least since 2006 up until April 2021, once a file is created by a career planner and all documentation is turned in, we refer to that as going through a certification process and at that time Career Planners enter an occupational training line. The Monitors felt that this was incorrect and instead they wanted the occupational training line to be entered on the first day of training, which does not help our Nursing students, our CDL students who have pre-requisites to complete. Our Nursing students often times have projects, reading projects to complete. So we agreed upon sticking with putting the date as the start date of when the semester starts at the school but if we have to put it earlier, we will case note it as to why we are starting them on the certification date. The one that really intrigued us the most, is we have 11 sub-contractors who we have worked with since the early 2000s with many of them, and each of the programs have always had an incentive component. The Sub-contractors directly provides the incentive to the student so our involvement has included with LeeAnn will review their incentive program at different times, making sure that students are signing off for gift cards, making sure they are meeting the guidelines of why that card is being given to the student. This group of monitors suggest that every time a subcontractor would issue an incentive, we were to get a receipt of that incentive and open up a service line. That could entail 200 kids at least a couple times a month and we argued that in no way could our Career Planners maintain this heavy load first of all and it would be very difficult to go into like Bloomington, IL District 87 and ask Fiscal Dept to provide us with receipts every time a gift card is given out to a student. We sent in our rebuttal and we all agreed upon that we would just add a service line at the very beginning of the semester specifically stating that they are receiving an incentive and it is being provided directly by the subcontractor. So those were the main issues that were pointed out to us during the visit.

LeeAnn Norris stated that regarding Fiscal monitoring aspects, had a familiar monitoring group that she had worked with in the past and they were familiar with Career Link's Fiscal situation and familiar practices of Career Link's Fiscal Dept. The only thing that they found fiscally, was that we are allowed to have up to three days of cash on hand and there was one month that due to holidays and things and the way the cash came in, we were at 3.4 or something like that and they ended up not writing that up as an official finding that was one that was mentioned at the soft exit, but they did not actually write that up so in the final report there were no fiscal findings.

**VII. \*ACTION ITEM: Approval of Incentive Program for Work Experience participants - Dena Weth, Assistant Director**

Dena Weth provided the WIB members with some information about the Work Experience Program to help them better understand its purpose. She stated that the Work Experience Program offers an opportunity for our participants to not only gain some soft skills, etc. but also setting that individual participant up with a supervisor that often times provides a mentoring role during their time with us. We are required to spend 20% of our youth funds on Work Experience. With COVID-19 Pandemic

causing numerous businesses to shut down, there were students who were concern about going to the businesses if they were open due to COVID etc. So after some discussion we thought possibly an Incentive Program would be an ideal component to include in our current program. We are paying our youth \$11 per hour minimum wage and they can work up to 150 hours or 1 year which ever comes first. So our proposal that we are asking for your approval will include that once a student works a total of 100 hours they will receive \$100 and this will be included in their paychecks so it will be taxed. Not only are we trying to entice youth, we have competition. Let's be honest, you can look at marquees and see at fast food restaurants, you can make \$13 per hour so we are trying to be as creative as possible and also provide that youth with a type of situation where they have that mentoring component etc. where they not most likely going to go at a fast food restaurant and such trying to get them to become part of our work experience program. In addition a number of our out of school youth that are in our GED recovery program, they are identified as homeless or if they are living with their family they often times help out with bills and such so we just think that the additional \$100 would become a very big asset and will kind of offset those employers in the private sector who are paying more than the \$11 per hour that we are able to offer. So we are asking for your approval to incorporate an incentive component into our current work Experience program.

**A motion was made by Todd Mundorf and seconded by Laura Maas to approve Career Link to incorporate an incentive component into their current program Incentive Program Work Experience program. Motion carried.**

**VIII. Overview for Fiscal and Programmatic Monitoring for Sub Contract Youth Programs - Dena Weth, Assistant Director/LeeAnn Norris, Fiscal Director**

Dena Weth stated that she and LeeAnn Norris do separate monitoring. Dena stated that she monitors programs by looking at the end of the school year as to whether the sub-contractors have met the guidelines set forth in the program abstract and goals throughout the year. She reported that she is happy to commend those participating in today's Virtual meeting for those that coordinate/administer the programs and appreciate how diligent you work with students; those that are going hungry, having trouble signing up for food stamps, finding housing and you all stepped up to the plate and provided referrals services to our youth and we definitely appreciate that. All of the programs by 'all' I mean our in-school youth our out of school youth which is drop out recovery and our transitional grants which are run by YouthBuild of McLean County and Peoria Goodwill were in compliance. She was happy to see that the number that were still enrolled, even while COVID was taking place, GED programs worked diligently to make sure that the students were still able to participate and preparing for the GED test and such and students were kept in constant communication with the coordinators. One unfortunate instance that has occurred from COVID is Peoria Public School has decided to unfortunately not complete the third year of the grant cycle. They ran into problems with their current school location. They had suggested moving into Woodruff, their Career Center, but they were unable to submit their change of plan of action in time and other factor played into it on their end so unfortunately that Grant will not be occurring for the third and final year of the cycle.

LeeAnn Norris reported that fiscally, from the monitoring that she conducted with the Sub Contractors, she found that there were very minor issues with just a couple of the Sub Contractors but overall the Sub Contractors have done really well. She anticipated some documentation lacking but everybody had everything that she needed and was able to get it all to her electronically so she was able to get through it all in a very timely manner so she finished her monitoring sooner that she normally would having to travel there. There were very minor issues and overall she was very happy with the fiscal monitoring this time with COVID and the remote nature of it all ended up going better than she anticipated.

**IX. Navigator Position / Grant - Steven Martin, Executive Director**

Steve Martin reported that Career Link will be writing a Grant and enlisting the assistance of our key partners in the EDR Region #3 Region area to hire a person for Regional Apprenticeship Navigator. The Navigator will take a proactive approach in establishing and maintaining relationships with businesses, education partners, local workforce areas, chambers of commerce, and other apprenticeship partners in Economic Development Region 3. Steve explained that the Grant that is being applied for has a submittal deadline of Sept. 15, 2021 and will be awarded sometime in January 2022. The Navigator will be responsible for creating workforce opportunities within EDR Region #3 which is ten counties (eight counties which are in our WIA Region) and the other two counties being Livingston county and DeWitt county. In addition to being responsible for creating the workforce opportunities, in essence, they also will be developing a talent pipeline. Some of the objectives of the Navigator will be to provide apprenticeship consultation to businesses and education providers, local workforce areas, coordinate sector partnerships with interested parties and connecting those apprenticeship components, facilitating regional coordination partnership with apprenticeship stakeholders. These are just a few of the items that this navigator will be doing. This isn't only about apprenticeship, but also about incumbent worker training, on-the-job training etc. involving all the partners in our area. In order for this to be successful, we are counting on all of our partners within the region to engage with us including the community colleges, the EDCs and the Chambers. It is our hope that Heartland, ICC and Spoon River apply as intermediaries. LiUNA, plans to apply as

intermediary as well with their apprenticeship program. GPEDC (Greater Peoria EDC) has taken a lead in getting the word out in the western corner of LWIA #15. Kari Rauh of GPEDC has been active in bringing awareness of this Grant opportunity and will act as a convener for this part of the region. Kari will also be joining our board in October, to replace Chris Setti's Board position. The position will be open in December 2021.

**X. The National Disaster Grant Update Report – Dena Weth, Assistant Director**

Dena Weth reported on the update of the National Disaster Grant update. She stated that for those persons that are new to the board or guests, she stated that this National Disaster Grant was started back in late summer/early fall of 2020. It is a direct result of the COVID-19 Pandemic and is a humanitarian program. It's original intent was to help out businesses with putting protocol into place that would keep businesses who had to either shut down or reduce hours for their employees. Career Link applied for the National Disaster Grant and was awarded \$250,444. Career Link develop[ed] job descriptions and sought out different businesses in the public sector only, who needed workers to basically run their daily activities. This grant started late in the Summer of 2020 and continues through March of 2022. Currently there are 18 participants that are enrolled and possibly enroll two(2) additional participants in place at the One Stop Center in Peoria, IL and one in the Normal, IL Career Link office. They would be responsible for tasks of deep cleaning the areas where the Career Planners meet with customers/potential applicants. Most current customers work up to 26 weeks and a maximum of 52 weeks and the most hours per week they can work is 29 hours for each participant. There were some positive outcomes for two participants was that one was offered a full-time position at the Stark county school district in their maintenance custodial dept. and recently in July another participant took a part-time position at MCCA as a general maintenance individual. Career Link continues to full positions until the Grant concludes in March 2022. Board Member, Steve Timmermann expressed kudos to staff for their efforts and hard work.

**XI. Performance Report - David Taylor, Systems Manager**

David Taylor reported on the Performance Report update. Despite the challenges of COVID-19, the report showed that 72% of Low-Income Adult clients earned a credential. 57 of those clients, earned a degree in either an RN or LPN. All together, there were 66 nurses were trained and employed in 2020-2021 program year. There were 26 Low-Income Adults that leave training which reflected Career Link ability to reach the anticipated expenditures. Predominately these Adults were single mothers who were forced to address child-care and home schooling issues. This trend has continued into the new program year, as well. One example of a success with Career Link's program was with regard to a single mother, receiving food stamps when first enrolled into the Career Link Nursing program. She finished the Nurses training and gained employment afterwards, making \$92K annually as a Registered Nurse. There were 135 Adult customers in 2020-2021 and cumulatively, they have earned to date, \$4 million dollars. This is good to see that how these training programs assist many low-income families now have the ability to afford better housing, purchase appliances, cars, etc. and in turn contribute back to their communities. There were 54 Dislocated Workers that were exited after their training completion. This was significantly down from the previous year of 210 Dislocated Workers that were exited. Truck Driver training was the most prevalent of form of training for Dislocated Workers. The top earner, was a former lay-off of CAT and after his nursing training, he was able to be employed as a Registered Nurse, earning \$75K his first year of employment. The Youth program enrollment numbers were lower, but even with the Pandemic, the successes were 51 youth that earned a High School diploma, 35 earned a GED and 10 youth earned a post-secondary credential. A vast majority of youth that previously were employed in the retail and restaurants industries, had lost their jobs in late 2020 due to COVID-19 Pandemic. A 22 year old youth participant graduated from Methodist College of Nursing and earned \$42K her first year. Board Member, Wendy Hess stated that these numbers are great to see. David Taylor provide a snap-shot of the current program year 2021-2022. He stated that currently there have been 103 customers that have exited. 83% of them have earned a credential, despite the Pandemic. 19 Youth did leave training (20% of the current customer base) as home schooling and day care issues have been quite a challenge. 86% of the Low-Income Adults are working, which this could be contributed to gaining employment in the field of Health Care Industry; LPNs, CNAs, Dental Assistants, etc., etc. There have been 33 Dislocated Workers, so far this current program year; 84% have earned a credential and only 6 participants left training. 90% of the Dislocated Workers participants are fully employed and working strong. This is very encouraging. The Youth participant numbers are generally always questionable, but especially due to the COVID-19 Pandemic. 4 Youth left the GED program so far, 2 left High School and 2 left the College training program. There have been 98 Youth participants have been exited and 69% Youth participants have earned a credential so far, and 72% youth are either working or attending post-secondary training. Optimism is strong, although a slow process of getting the Youth back to work, as employers are now desperately looking for those entry-level workers. Many Youth are frustrated with the on-line education process whether it being in High School, GED and post-secondary education program. Many youth are taking a GAP year as they try to get through the Covid window, to getting back to developing their career paths. Board Member, Steve Timmermann asked if any Youth

have been placed at Rivian. Business Service Rep, Shelly Purchis stated that Rivian has a very specific process for hiring and Career Link has referred people to apply for Rivian's on-line application process. Warren Cheatham stated that Rivian hires were 2,100 individuals that were hired and 175 construction workers as well. There was further discussion regarding Rivian and their hiring, etc., etc. Chairman, Sam Lewis asked if there is a reason when Youth don't make it through the program. David Taylor stated that generally it is due to the frustrations and Covid-19 fatigue depression that is created due to the COVID and the changes in the new ways of adjustments needed to be made. Guest, Dawn Fentem of ICC, stated that in their GED program, that many students lack online technology resources which in addition means they lack skills and access. There was technology fatigue as well as the barriers, as well. She stated that ICC had 62 GED completions, but technology was a driving factor of low numbers, as well as taking a GAP year for some participants. David Taylor expressed that Career Link does serve a large rural population where the technologies have much greater challenges due to the broadband and being able to access the internet and technologies are much more difficult to access in those rural areas.

**XII. \*Action Item - 500 C5 Approval of Training Provider List & Demand Occupation List - David Taylor, Systems Manager**

David Taylor stated that a common question at Career Link is 'What kind of occupations does Career Link fund?'. In the past, each region in Illinois had a list of occupations, which labor market data showed were good occupation in which to train individuals. Generally it had to be an occupation that was in demand and typically resulted in a living wage. The Career Planners help participants receive training that will lead to incomes that will allow their families to become self-sufficient. Therefore, some occupations were in high demand such as nurses and truck drivers, while other training programs that lead to job such as a Graphic Designer or a Landscaper were not always a high growth. In the past, Career Link could petition the State to allow Career Link to add an occupation to the list if the local research showed a need and an appropriate wage. The State was not very critical of the Local decisions. This year, unfortunately, the State did away with all regional lists of in-demand occupations, and instead created a state-wide list of occupations and ranked how demand they were. As a result, the number of programs, for which Career Link has had to success in the past, have been removed. One occupation that was removed, that seemed rather odd, given the impact of COVID, and its importance, was the elimination of the ability to train Respiratory Therapist. Even though the local health care providers that they have a regular need to hire Respiratory Therapists, apparently it is not a growing profession.

Steve Martin added that he plans to write a letter to the State. The petition to add a program to the Occupation list is set up so that Career Link has to provide high growth data, numbers of job and many other things. But for Respiratory Therapist, that does not apply. Rarely does a client come to the Career Link office that wishes to be trained as a Respiratory Therapist. ICC has a Respiratory Therapist program, but doesn't have a lot of graduates every two years for that program. When someone does graduate with that degree, all of the hospitals in that region are in competition for that person and are willing to pay upwards to \$60K annually for two year degree. Steve stated that a person cannot always rely solely on how many jobs are available in the area to make such a decision. He feels that each region needs to express their needs per their own Regions. Also, surgical technologist was also removed from the list. These are occupations that have a low number of graduates, a low number of openings, but yet when they graduate, there is competition for their employment to hire them. Steve feels that this really makes a difference and not rely on just the State's statistics and their labor market information to make the decisions for the local areas.

David Taylor stated that the occupations being removed from the list is very frustrating to have to tell potential clients that the State of IL doesn't feel that certain occupations, such as Respiratory Therapist, are worth funding. Career Link, along with the WIB Board, will be addressing this in the near future with the State.

He stated that each year, the WIB board must approve and recertify the Local Training providers and the list of programs that Career Link wants to fund. As a result, of the new demand occupation list, the training providers and approved programs has needed to be updated, which the WIB board received for review prior to today's meeting.

**A motion was made by Laura Maas and seconded by Steve Timmermann to approve 500 C5 of the Training Provider List & Demand Occupation List. Motion carried.**

**XIII. Business Services Rep. Reports {OJTs, IWTs, etc.} – Norm Griffin (Peoria Co. Rep) & Shelly Purchis (McLean Co. Rep)**

Business Service Rep., Shelly Purchis stated that there is an overwhelming need of businesses in the area that need workers. This is carrying over in terms of trying to get new incumbent workers projects, new apprenticeship projects and new on the job training because people want workers and they want them now and they don't want to wait for paperwork, or apply for programs. They just want workers and they needed them 'yesterday'. Shelly is continuing with informing the employers of the OJT programs but it is moving along somewhat slower. She met with Brandt and their H.R. reps. They no longer have a local H.R. It was absorb with a person in Canada, who flew in and met with Shelly and several other. They are desperate need

of at least 45 workers right away to fill their first and second shifts. They initially wanted experience people, but now they will take who they can take. They also need 70 additional people needed to fill their third shift but they will fill the first and second shift to get those filled first. Shelly is doing everything to reach out to as many individuals and agencies and Career Link Career Planners, to inform them of these hiring positions. She stated that there are so many more businesses, such as the Restaurant Industries, the Art Industries, in addition to all of the manufacturing hiring needs. She stated that she is wrapping up a current project with Heritage and ACC Electronics and Bridgestone that are finishing up. Afni has a new OJT project beginning as well as several Businesses that are in the works for OJTs. There are ongoing discussions with the local Chamber of Commerce and local EDC regarding the Navigator position that she and Norman Griffin are having discussion for partnerships with them. In addition, Shelly stated that Flexi-tech in Bloomington and Emerald in Henry, IL were approved for Trade and several people are applying for that funding program.

Norm Griffin, who is the Peoria, Marshall and Woodford Business Service Rep., referred to the Navigator position and that he has been participating with a group with partnership of the Greater Peoria EDC, exploring workforce in the area how to solve those needs and how to bridge the skill gap. The areas have large businesses that participate in this committee that are discussing over the last 6 months, on how to bridge the workforce gap and finding out what companies need hires and figure out how to stop 'cannibalization' that happens in different industries, particularly in the Peoria area, where the businesses seem to keep trading the same people; robbing Peter to pay Paul . . . fighting over \$2 or \$3 per hour, someone will quit one business to go to another. . . talking talent pipeline management. . . long term/short term needs, immediate needs, five year needs, ten year needs. . . That is how this whole Navigator position is playing into this. He is hopeful that Career Link will be the Navigator as Career Link is applying for this position. Norm feels that Career Link would be a great partner for the whole region and the local community colleges and is very excited to work with everyone and see how this plays out, if this comes to fruition. He stated that the biggest complaint, as Shelly Purchis stated, that employers cannot get people in their doors to work. He feels this is not just local problem but rather a national problem. He recently spoke to Liberty (formerly Keystone) in the Bartonville IL area. They held their own Career Fair recently. They needed to hire 100 people but only hired 20 people from their Career Fair. So they are looking for an additional 80 additional hires. Norm reported that he spoke to a rep from the Tri-Valley development out of the Peoria area, and there is a business called 'Source Fresh Water' and they are looking to solve two problems; 1.) find a local environmental problem with a 'Invasive' (Asian) Carp fish and finding something constructive to do with the fish in the Illinois River area by harvesting them, like they were doing in the Beardstown, IL area and turning them into human food and 2.) turning the fish into fertilizer or animal feed. 'Source Fresh Water' business is looking to add employees at entry-level positions to 'be their own boss' so to speak; they are looking for people to go out with their own boats to harvest these fish out of the Illinois river. This is a unique opportunity. Norm is trying to get this approved and turned into a DOL apprenticeship and go from there as far as positions go. Norm has a project with RIO Engineering, which is an ISO project, to get them certified. He reported that he has another one with the leadership with Morton Industries. Norm has two additional Incumbent Worker training projects; a subsidiary company named 'Bradley Services' and another contract will be with Morton Industries, directly, for robotic welding. They will have employees set for upscaling welding to make their jobs more secure. Morton Industries who have been a great partner with Career Link and Morton Industries Director of Organizational Development, Steve Stewart will be joining the WIB board in October. Also, Kari Rauh of the Greater Peoria EDC, made a referral who will be starting with Morton Industries. In addition, a company named BTB in Washington, IL will have an incumbent worker training project coming up.

#### ***XIV. Updates by Four Core Partners – Warren Cheatham, One Stop Center Manager***

Warren Cheatham extended the opportunity to the other three core partners, besides Career Link, on any other significant happenings within their organizations.

Core partner, Kacie McIntyre (IL DHS-DORS) reported that as of last Friday, July 16<sup>th</sup>, IL DHS-DORS has approved the increase in office presence in terms of DHS-DORS staff. They are still closed to the public. Business as usual continues while working remotely. Still providing services and accepting referrals, etc., etc. In addition, they have gotten approval for community visits where the rehab counselors and business service consultants are able to go into the community and meet with customers at their place of employment and community rehab providers and other agencies, now.

Core partner, Arnitria Shaw (ICC) reported that ICC had their 1<sup>st</sup> cohort of eight industrial maintenance apprentices complete. Their workforce equity initiative our WEI Grant now includes HVAC in Surge Tech. If anyone is looking for funding for Surge Tech they may qualify under the ICC WEI (Workforce Equity Initiative) Grant .... Go to <https://icc.edu/wei/> to look into this Grant offered. In addition, ICC had 136 participants enrolled in the ICC Geer Project Grant program that was the Governor's Emergency Educational Relief fund, that came out in July 2020. Through this Relief fund, ICC was able to help students complete their credentials and get into the workforce, they were able to pay off some past balances. There may still be some funds yet still available so please contact Arnitria. There were also 150 participants that went through the 'Earn and Learn' program. ICC continues working with the Workforce Equity Initiative

and making sure that the students receive what they need to obtain their life sustaining wages. There was excellent progress on Adult Education and an all-time high in terms of GED completions. Adult Ed has been fully functioning remotely for the past year and a half. Starting now, go to ICC campus, there are staff on the campus and open and there are no real restrictions, unless you are unvaccinated you must wear a mask. Financial Aid dept. is open, Student services are available. Going into the fall, the vast majority of CTE certificate program courses are in person. GED will be available in person. One thing learned is that there is a distinct population, especially among adults, who needed to have the opportunity to take things on line and not physically come on to campus. There are still several online options available as well as hybrid to try to blend the two. Also, ICC is still working on expanding GPEAK (Greater Peoria Essential Abilities and Knowledge) certification system with the Illinois workNet and Regional Partners. There were 300 participants in the rollout of the initial GPEAK essential skills training and continue to intergrade into the programs that regionally, students when they complete, they will have this badge that lets employers know that they have been trained through ICC regional programming.

Sergio Talavera stated that Core Partner, Jody Wanless (IDES) gave a report at the earlier part of today's meeting.

**XV. OSO Report – Warren Cheatham, One Stop Center Manager**

Warren Cheatham stated that the WIB members received his report prior to the WIB meeting. There was no discussion.

**XVI. LWIB Recertifications / Meetings – Steven Martin, Executive Director**

Steve Martin stated that every two years, the State requires that the WIB Board members are certified. Steve will be sending recertification forms to each member for their signature. He expressed his thankfulness and appreciation for each member that serves on the WIB member in assisting with all of the various matters. There are a few changes of members that will occur in October. Rick Pearce will represent Kelli Hill. John Whalen will represent Ronn Morehead as a union representative. Steve Stewart will join and serve as a member representing Morton Industries. Kari Rauh will be replacing Chris Setti, representing Greater Peoria EDC. Also, Steve mention that as always, Business Representatives are always needed and wanted to be represented on the WIB board, to have their opinions and such to help move forward with workforce initiatives. He expressed if anyone knows anyone who would like to serve on the WIB Board to contact Steve Martin. In addition, the WIB meetings will continue being held virtual via GOOGLE MEET until 2022 schedule. Chairman, Sam Lewis expressed that the Virtual meetings have been advantageous and this is good to continue through 2021 with the next WIB meeting being Oct. 20, 2021. The 2022 schedule will include four (4) meetings, quarterly on the third Wednesday of the month, at 12(noon) to approx.. 1:30pm - January/April/July/October 2022.

**XVII. Other Comments**

There were no further comments.

**XVIII. Public Comments**

There were no other comments.

**XIX. \*ACTION ITEM: Adjournment**

**A motion was made by Steve Timmermann and seconded by Laura Maas to adjourn. Motion carried. Adjournment time: 1:28 pm**

Respectfully submitted,

WIB Recording Secretary,  
Theresa Kotte, Executive Assistant  
LWIA #15