

# 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 15, 2020**

**12:00 (noon) to 1:30 pm**



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

Chairman, Sam Lewis opened the meeting at 12:04 pm. Roll call was taken. Career Link staff, David Vaughn briefly introduced Business Builders representatives, President & Owner, Jennifer McCarron and Account Manager, Blake Herrman.

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

Christine Davis(Camtek), Mark DeKeersgieter(CIRBN), Brian Ford(Facet Tech), Lori Johnson(Peoria Goodwill), Bill Lawrence(PLR Insurance), Sam Lewis(Pridestaff), Laura Maas(Unland Ins.), Ronn Morehead(aflcio), Todd Mundorf(NRG), Curt Oldfield(SRC), Steven Petersen(Peoria Area), Mary Phelan(Illinois Migrant Council), Jeff Strode(Mid National Bank), Steve Timmermann(First Farmers Bank), Lizette Tripur(DHS-DORS), Matt Watchinski(West Central Bldg Trades Carpenters Union), David White(Connect-Transit), Deborah White(MCCA), Brian Wipperman(Marcfirst).

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

McFarland Bragg(PCCEO), Larry Crouch(Mahoney Crouch & Mahoney Ins.), Wendy Hess(Unity Point), Kelli Hill(Heartland C.C.), John Hubert(CAT), Darrel Sarff(Kennedy-Sarff Real Estate), Chris Setti(Greater Peoria EDC) and Arnitria Shaw(ICC)

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

Steve Martin(Executive Director), Dena Weth(Assistant Director), Leeann Whitlatch(Fiscal Director), David Vaughn(Planner/EEO officer), Dona Nanney(Business Service Rep-McLean County), Norm Griffin(Business Service Rep.-Peoria County) & Bonny Ficek (Career Planner, McLean Co.)

#### **Guests:**

Warren Cheatham(One Stop Center Manager), Jody Wanless(IDES), Dawn Fentem(I.C.C.), Sherrilyn Benjamin (DORS) & Sherry Laible-White(IDES) and Business Builders, reps. Jennifer McCarron (President/Owner) and Acct. Mngr, Blake Herrman.

### II. **\*ACTION ITEM: Approval of April 15, 2020 'Google Virtual Meeting' Minutes**

**A motion was made by Steve Timmermann and seconded by Bill Lawrence to approve the Wed., April 15, 2020 'Google Virtual Meeting' Minutes. Motion carried.**

### III. **Spotlight Participant (McLean County) – Dena Weth, Assistant Director**

Dena Weth introduced the Spotlight Participant Presenter, Career Planner, Bonny Ficek of the Normal, IL Career Link office. Bonny started her employment with Career Link in 2015 as a TRADE Funds Career Planner. She currently works with all three of the Formula populations. Bonny Ficek provided some information on her client, Brandon Swartz. He was a dislocated worker. She stated that he was employed with Fresh Market in Bloomington, IL while attending ISU but Fresh Market closed and Brandon was concerned of not completing his pursuit of a degree in Criminal Justice. He attended the Rapid Response through Career Link as he was able to meet eligibility requirements and met with Career Planner, Bonny Ficek. Career Link helped by providing the funding for him to continue with his degree. He was able to complete the required internship at McLean Co. Law & Justice Center and graduated from ISU. Brandon was hired as a Probation Officer at the Law & Justice Center where he currently remains employed. Bonny expressed her appreciation of Brandon's strong communication skills, great attendance record and excellent grades and his overall good personality and his eagerness throughout his participation in the program. Following is a statement that was provided from participant Brandon which Bonny Ficek read to the board: ***My Experience: 'I began working with Career Link after I lost my job in the middle of attending college. I didn't know what I was going to do to move forward or how I was going to be able to graduate on schedule. Career Link afforded me the opportunity to get back on track and achieve a goal I have been working towards my whole life by working in the Criminal Justice System.'***

Sam Lewis expressed that these success stories are such a great way to see how good these programs are for our communities.

IV. **\*ACTION ITEM: Approval item for Regional Local Plan – Steve Martin, Executive Director**

Steve Martin reported that the State reviewed the Regional and Local plan that was submitted earlier in the spring. After the review, they stated the approval with conditional sending subtractive changes. He stated that there may be future revisions down the road as there may be language added regarding COVID components to this plan and to the MOU. **A motion was made by Ronn Morehead and a seconded by Curt Oldfield to approve the Regional Local Plan revisions for LWIA #15. Motion carried.**

V. **Report on the Re-Opening Status of Offices – Steve Martin, Executive Director**

Steve Martin reported on the re-opening of the Career Link offices and One Stop Center offices. He stated that every Monday morning with DCEO (Julio Rodriguez, Deputy Director runs the meetings) as well meeting with IDES partners at the One Stop Center. IDES staff are working inside the Peoria, IL One Stop Center Office processing claims but not seeing any public. Google.com had to make a correction about the current status of the Office being opened. Career Link has purchased all of the necessary PPE per COVID protection guidelines and distributed to each office. Steve has instructed that if the Peoria, IL Career Planners need to have physical appts. with clients, they are to work at one of the other seven Career Link offices but not at the Peoria office location. He is not sure when the offices will be opened, but upon receiving the orders to reopen, a conference call will be conducted with all Career Link staff when those steps will be implemented. There was no further discussion.

VI. **\*ACTION ITEM: Approval of 500c5 - David Taylor, Performance Manager**

David Taylor reported on the 500-c-5 that was sent previously to the WIB Board. He stated that each year Career Link reassesses the post-secondary training programs offered by training providers in and around the Career Link Service area. The programs that Career Link funds must have a proven record of being a high growth occupation which leads to a job in central Illinois that will enable a customer to earn a self-sufficient wage. **A motion was made by Steven Petersen and a seconded by Laura Maas to approve the 500c5 for the 2020-2021 PY year. Motion carried. (Mark DeKeersgieter abstained for IL State University/Heartland C.C./University of IL and Curt Oldfield abstained for Spoon River College).**

VII. **Partner Performance Report/Career Link – David Taylor, Performance Manager**

David Taylor reported on the Partner performance report update on the customers that have excited during the previous programming year. Career Link is required by law by one-year of post-program year which includes tracking employment status and wages. David expressed that the report shows that prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, customers were well on the way to exceeding all of Career Link's performance goals. The strength of those results, however, began to fade in March as local employers closed their doors and laid off staff. By the end of September, there will be a better idea about the customers that were served last year, but it is possible that Career Link may not meet the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter employment numbers will not meet performance objectives. David stated that he has had conversations with many other offices, and those offices are in a similar if not a worse situation, than Career Link is in Central Illinois. There is a strong belief amongst other office Performance Managers, that the Feds will lower the percentage of success needed for performance, or for that matter, for a period of time, throw out all of the performance measures. As of today, there has been not been any official statement regarding this issue. Warren Cheatham stated that this will be the 1<sup>st</sup> time the Four Core Partners will be reporting on their performance results as per the WIOA law. Steven Petersen stated that he was impressed in inspired that 65% of the clients should be given a lot of credit and expressed his KUDOS to the great job the Staff and clients are doing during this COVID Pandemic. Sam Lewis expressed similar sentiments. There was some discussion.

VIII. **Business Builders Report on Marketing for Partners – Warren Cheatham, One Stop Center Manager**

Warren stated that last year, through the MOU process, the partnership allocated funds for a Marketing campaign for the partners, as a group. The partners are a diverse group of agencies and associations that jointly work together. Business Builders was solicited through a bid process and were given the reward. Warren stated that Business Builders will report on the activities that took place. There are three major focal points of the campaign: \*Increase participation at the now defunct Orientations for the Public, \*Employer engagement, and \*The general overall partner coalition. Warren introduced Business Builders and the made their presentation to the WIB Board. After their presentation, Steve Martin expressed his appreciation to Business Builders for their work on the new website.

IX. **Update on the Development of New Website – David Vaughn, Technical Specialist/Planner/EO officer**

David Vaughn reported on the new website development update. He stated that out of all of the proposals, Business Builders were selected. Rep. Blake Herrman walked through the website via screen sharing for the Board to view.

- X. **One Stop Center Customer Updates – Warren Cheatham, One Stop Center Manager**  
Warren reported on the One Stop Customer updates. Warren sent out an Excel Spreadsheet “One Stop Customer Flow’. He provided an opportunity for the four core partners to report on recent updates.
- XI. **\*ACTION ITEM: Approval of the Evaluation Plan Report – Warren Cheatham, One Stop Center Manager**  
Warren explained about the Evaluation Plan report that was sent out to the WIB Board.  
**A motion was made by Christine Davis and a seconded by Dave White to approve the Evaluation Plan Report. Motion carried.**
- XII. **Updates by Four Core Partners – Warren Cheatham, One Stop Center Manager**  
Warren reported on the One Stop Customer updates. IDES, Jody Wanless stated that the entire agency is focused on completing claims and working non-stop. Dawn Fentem, ICC, expressed that they starting phone-in registrations on July 29 will be waiting on guidance for GED hybrid or online classes and are moving forward and Heartland started on July 1<sup>st</sup>. Steven Petersen asked about mechanics program, nursing programs, welding programs online contingency plans. . . Dawn stated that ICC is doing 4 different stages: 1.) Online 2.) Time slotted virtual classes 3.) Hybrid classes for those lab classes, and 4.) Internship classes. DORS (Dept of Rehab Services) reported that they continue to work remote as well and provide services for both vocational and home services.
- XIII. **Budget Report - David Vaughn, Technical Specialist/Planner/EO officer**  
David Vaughn reported on the budget and provided a handout to the WIB board via email attachment which reflects how funds have been distributed from the Adult, Dislocated Workers and Youth titles in each of the Eight counties. He stressed that 70% has been distributed of the available training funds. Historically, at the beginning of the Fiscal Year (July 1<sup>st</sup>), 80% of funds is distributed and keep 20% in reserve for the end of the year carry-over costs to handle the transition from one program year into the next year. With the COVID pandemic causes more unexpected concerns therefore there will be additional 10% in reserve. The budget is adjusted throughout the year as needed. There was no discussion.
- XIV. **Programmatic Report – Dena Weth, Assistant Director**  
Dena Weth provided a programmatic report to the Board members. She explained that this year the Program Monitoring for Youth program contracts was conducted via remotely. She stated that one contract had some heated discussion. The end result was that this conflict between East Peoria High School Grant and Career Link could not be resolved so the contractor will not be funded next year. But the eight youth students will be meeting with a Career Planner on a monthly basis to discuss career exploration, post-secondary training and offer them the opportunity to be enrolled in Career Link’s Work Experience program.  
LeeAnn Whitlatch, (Fiscal Director) stated that fiscally there were some delays in working remotely and some minor issues. There are no concerns with moving forward with the grants that are in place. Dena stated that during the past 6 months, there has not been a lot of interest by potential clients due to the U.I. and \$600 U.I. supplement but there has been an upswing with the activity of the online training applications, which is good news. She stated that in early May, DCEO contacted Career Link and stated that they would like to conduct monitoring remotely starting on May 18<sup>th</sup>. Logistically due to office closings, it was quite a challenge. She reported on a few issues (findings) that had to do with the customers not responding to the Career Planner’s requests regarding timesheets and general monthly contacts. Dena also stated that we are in the process of working on these issues; however, she was uncertain as to how an organization can encourage customers to contact us beyond what we are already doing, i.e., student agreement, extensive Assessment, etc. LeeAnn stated that DCEO needs a form that Career Link uses for hiring and pay decreases, to also be signed for pay ‘increases’ as well. Steve Martin expressed how impressed he is with the professional way Dena and LeeAnn handle with the challenges during DCEO monitoring.
- XV. **1-E Emergency Covid Grant - Norm Griffin (Business Service Rep, Peoria Co)**  
The 1-E Emergency Covid Grant report was given by Norm Griffin. He stated that there were five applicants selected successfully out of many applicants. 1. OSF Pandemic Health 1-E Grant was great to work with along with DCEO Julio Rodriguez and Patrick Campbell and other DCEO staff were invaluable. There were 125 positions that were able to be transitioned instead of laying off. 2. The COVID-19 pandemic shut down ‘Needle-In-A-Haystack’ Antiques in Washington, IL but they were very creative and converted their business to put their ‘wears’ online and remotely. 3. PAL Health Technologies (Orthotics) converted their business over to making PPE equipment; masks specifically, and saved a lot of jobs instead of laying off staff. 4. Reditus Laboratory, which is in the same building as PAL Health, and is now processing the COVID tests themselves. 5. United Way applied for a special grant for Peoria office to purchase a software program and laptops to allow them to work remotely.

In addition, the COVID Grant had requested Career Link to nominate an industry for the 2020 Illinois Workforce Partnership Awards. Career Link will be nominating Morton Industries, as they have been a great partner for working with WIOA.

**XVI. The National Disaster Grant Report - Dona Nanney (Business Service Rep, McLean Co)**

Dona Nanney provided a report on the National Disaster Grant. She stated that Career Link had an opportunity to apply for a National Disaster Grant related to COVID-19 through DCEO (Dept of Commerce & Economic Opportunity). She reached out to several area businesses to inquire on whether they would need help in hiring *temporary workers* to assist them reopen and maintain COVID regulations. Six response requests were received for approx. 29 positions, such as custodial, bus driver, data entry, admin support, etc. Career Link is waiting for the applicants to apply on our Career Link website and an assessment will take place to determine eligibility for assistance. This will give individuals an opportunity to return back to employment. With the number of people receiving U.I. benefits in addition to the \$600 U.I. supplement, this seems to be a deterrent for people to apply for employment opportunities.

**XVII. Trade Petition update - Dona Nanney (Business Service Rep, McLean Co)**

Dona Nanney provided a report on the Trade Petition updates. She stated that back in June, she remotely reached out to four potential TRADE businesses, that closed their business in LWIA #15. One of them was the local 'Sleep Number' business that is within our LWIA #15. They went bankrupt. The other three businesses, she did not get responses from three of the four businesses. She sent an email follow-up, the IDES letter and the B.R.O. (Benefits, Rights and Obligations) document, but received no response. Dona stated that the Trade Petition is for populous group base out of Detroit Michigan that CAT contracted with them, but the contract was not renewed. Within LWIA #15 there was approx. 150 individuals that were affected. She stated that there is a TRADE Conference Call scheduled on Thurs., July 16, 2020 to have explain the opportunities they will have under this TRADE Petition. Sherrilyn Benjamin and Lizette Tripur will contact Dona to talk about DORS and their disabilities program and collaborate with Dona Nanney.

**XVIII. Apprenticeship Grant Report (Laborers) – Steve Martin, Executive Director/Dena Weth, Asst. Director**

Steve Martin provided a brief report on the apprenticeship Grant with the Laborers. Dena had spoken to Tom Frazier of Bloomington Area Career Center. He reported two students have turned applications in for the programs and others have shown interest. However, he feels that when Counselors and Administrators return to school in August, additional applications will be submitted. Career Link is still committed to the program. Tom Frazier expressed of the uncertainty of the School District's plans regarding COVID and the reopening of schools, the timing of attendance and the various factors that come into play on all programs, in general. Career Link continues to be in contact with the Schools and the Laborer's LiUNA.

**XIX. Other Comments**

There was no other comments.

**XX. Public Comments**

There were no Public Comments.

**XXI. \*ACTION ITEM: Adjournment**

**A motion was made by Jeff Strode and a seconded by Steven Petersen to adjourn. Motion carried. 1:58 pm.**