

**WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD
EXECUTIVE FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING**

Friday, November 5, 2021

MINUTES

Members Present:

John Frederick – Interim Chair, Jason Archer, Cenia Bosman,

Members Absent:

Vanessa Parker-Lewis

Staff Present:

Greg Laposa, Director of Workforce Development, Derek Collins, Ethan Dixon, Angela Erby, Marva McJoy, Victoria Reed, Loris Williams

County Executive Representative:

None

Guests Present:

None

Call to Order

The Chair called the meeting to order at 11:06a

Approval of the Minutes

The minutes from the regularly scheduled August 6, 2021, were read silently. A motion was made and seconded to approve and accept the minutes without changes and/or corrections. The motion carried.

Interim Board Chair Remarks

The Interim Chair spoke briefly on the recent USDOL Jobs Report numbers, hiring opportunities in the region, most specifically at Boeing with over 300 current job openings, and his appreciation for the leadership of the Director of Workforce Development's efforts. He also applauded the work of the Workforce Development staff for recent meetings and collaboration with partners MO Department of Higher Education and Workforce Development (DHEWD), Boeing and others to look into the ongoing job needs going into the new year.

The Interim Chair expressed his respect and appreciation for the appointment of the new Director of Human Services, stating he is familiar with Mr. Hayes work, and believes under his leadership, both DHS and Workforce Development will accomplish great things for the region.

He also stated that the Board has some very significant tasks to entertain, including, adopting new By-Laws, setting term limits for the Board, establishing the Nominating Committee process, and electing a new Board Chair.

Director of Human Services Remarks (*Director Hayes' remarks were delivered by Director Laposa in Mr. Hayes' stead*). It was stated that Mr. Hayes was excited to be a part of the St. Louis County Department of Human Services and the Division of Workforce Development. It is his desire to schedule time in the near future to meet and talk with the members of the Executive

Finance Committee to understand their roles and to share his vision with the Board. Director Laposa stated that he and Mr. Hayes had developed a good relationship in the past around workforce issues, so he was looking forward to the wealth of experience and expertise that Mr. Hayes was bringing to the division and the Board. He also stated that he will be reaching out to Mr. Hayes' replacement at SLATE to ensure a continued collaborative relationship between St. Louis City and St. Louis County.

Mr. Laposa and Marva McJoy introduced Victoria Reed, the new FSIS Accounting Manager who will be overseeing the DHS fiscal management unit. Ms. Reed hails to her new role from Homeless Services, another division of DHS. Ms. Reed expressed her excitement in her new role and said she is looking forward to working with the Board.

Director of Workforce Development Report –

- a. *Programs and Initiatives* – The Workforce Development Division is truly focused on solidifying initiatives that create pathways to family sustaining wages. That includes looking more intentionally at the employers with whom we partner, job fairs held in the job centers, and the wages being offered around the County. The Director discussed the various wages in the region with \$14/hr. being considered a living wage, \$15/hr. being the standard desired wage for WFD partners/employers, and \$21/hr. being the base family-sustaining wage in St. Louis County. When reviewing the stated wages, there appears to be a shift toward higher wages, with many employer partners offering \$17 – \$18/hr. but not many are offering \$20+/hr. It was stated that while some training providers are graduating students making more than \$20 – \$30/hr. (i.e., truck driving), other graduates, even those graduating from “blue chip” programs are only being paid \$15 – \$18/hr. There is work to be done to close the help employers close the wage gap.

Using data to inform and drive practice – WFD will continue to use data to inform and drive our decisions, partnerships, and programs. The Business Services group recently created a survey to drill down to determine what our job seekers would find more useful in service, their quest for employment. Some questions on the survey include: What is the bare minimum wage you would take? What are the industries you are preferencing when doing a job search, etc. WFD will use the data to drive our practice.

WFD is doubling-down on the work of the Business Services unit around work-based-learning and work-&-learn opportunities which are critical strategic priorities for the St. Louis County Workforce Development Board moving forward. The Business Services unit is bringing on a new member and will be working with business partners in economic development like the St. Louis Economic Partnership and other local and regional entities and businesses on how to create new apprenticeship, incumbent workers, and training opportunities. The key is going to be how to move from a strategic to an operationalizing an agreement that allows us to fund some of these various opportunities.

The state Office of Workforce Development (OWD) is looking at St. Louis County to be a leader in implementing its Job Center Connect initiative – the most important and strategic initiative the state has launched in a number of years. According to OWD, this is happening because of the solid working relationships that the STLCO WFD staff have built with the State OWD staff.

As such, OWD is combing the OWD staff at Northwest Crossings with the staff from the Florissant Seven Hills Job Center. The staff from Florissant are now working part-time at

the Northwest Crossings location and part-time at the Florissant location. The new arrangement still allows customers from both locations to receive services. The State is piloting some new strategies to assist job seekers. The first initiative is in resume development which allows the customer to develop a resume then display it on the state site.

- b. *Developing Partnerships* – WFD has been actively working to develop new employer/business partnerships.
- Boeing – began working with Boeing to support their hiring opportunities and fill the over 300 positions they have available. Partnerships of this caliber help advance the mission of the Board.
 - Accenture Federal Services (AFS) – in a collaborative partnership that began over a year ago. WFD has teamed up with AFS to accomplish their plan to establish a presence in the St. Louis Metropolitan area and fill 1,400+ jobs in the area. The Apprentice in Training (AIT) program is designed to train individuals interested in careers in the technology field with a goal of employment at Accenture. The first cohort of an adult work experience and training program is scheduled to graduate soon, with a second cohort planned for Spring 2022.
 - St. Louis Anchor Action Network (AAN) – St. Louis County Workforce Development is participating with the St. Louis Anchor Action Network which is a 11-member coalition of some of the anchor institutions in the St. Louis region. Some of the members of the coalition include the St. Louis Zoo, St. Louis Science Center, Washington University, St. Louis University, BJC, SSM, Edward Jones, and a host of others. Director Laposa shared the networks’ mission and stated that the purpose is to address the racial and economic disparities that exist in the region as a result of historic racist policies and underinvestment in communities of color. St. Louis County Workforce Development will support the efforts of the AAN through recruiting efforts, job fairs, targeting employer opportunities that will lead to better wages and opportunities at the anchor institutions that hire a significant number of people in the St. Louis community.
 - Good Jobs Challenge – with the flow of federal funds coming into the area as a part of the Build Back Better initiative, Greater St. Louis, Inc., in collaboration with other regional partners is strategizing ways to leverage federal funding opportunities coming to the region to improve access to quality job opportunities as defined in the STL 2030 Job Plan. St. Louis County WFD is engaged and on the frontline, ensuring the local workforce development board is positioned to help advance the strategic objectives of any grants and willing to bring other regional workforce development boards to the table.
 - Thermo Fischer Scientific – has committed to invest \$82.5m in 58,000 sq. ft. expansion to their existing Patheon facility in Berkeley, MO. The pharmaceutical manufacturing company is expecting to bring 169 new jobs to the region as a result of this expansion. BIO-STL, in collaboration with the Ferguson/Florissant School District, who has a STEM high school, has signed an agreement with Thermo Fischer to provide a youth training program that can help fill the employment opportunities resulting from this expansion and create a career pipeline for graduating students. It was said that being involved in this initiative is an excellent opportunity for the WDB to, once again, build a partnership with a firm that is bringing jobs and training to the region.

- The Director stated that the partnerships that are being developed go a long way in helping the Board continue its commitment to focus on youth in its service strategies, ensuring that the best subrecipients, programs, and services are available to meet their needs. This is especially relevant as a way of opening opportunities for those looking at career technical training or non-traditional, post-secondary career paths to employment.
- The Director addressed a concern that had been put to him regarding how to engage the whole county in the Job Center services, especially in areas like south county. The Director explained that a new OWD issuance outlines the possibility of creating new “connection points” or “specialized” job centers, which are not the same as affiliate sites, but do allow the Board to work with organizations in different parts of the community to establish agreements for a referral services process or that could evolve into an opportunity to operationalize an agreement that will allow for the installation of WIOA programming, services, and/or personnel.

FSIS Report:

a. WIOA Expenditure Report:

- i. PY20/FY21 WIOA Funds – As of September 30, 2021, PY20 funds have been expended as follows: 77.76% youth funds expended; 82.16% adult funds expended; and 53.64% of dislocated worker funds.
- ii. The State allocated additional PY20 youth and adult funds in the amounts of \$130,681.00 and \$10,959.00, respectively. These additional allocations will require Board votes to approve accepting them. These funds will be allocated as follows: PY20 youth funds – 10% retained as admin funds, remainder allocated to OSY and work experience. PY20 adult funds – 10% retained as admin funds, remainder will be allocated to the ITA line.
- iii. PY21/FY22 WIOA Funds – Due to the rule of FIFO (First-In – First-Out), as of September 30, 2021, 0% of the PY21/FY22 funds have been expended. Once all PY20/FY21 funds have been expended, PY21/FY22 funds will begin being expended.

b. Other Expenditure Summary Report:

- i. PY20 NDWG COVID Humanitarian Grant – initially received \$90,818. An additional \$75,000 was added to the grant for a total of \$165,818. Currently the grant is 7.60% expended, however, it is expected that the grant will be fully expended.

Director Laposa explained the additional funds will be used to pay the wages of workers hired through the grant to fill positions that opened, as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, to assist employers in mitigation efforts. Some positions include sanitization workers, COVID testing site assistants, vaccine site assistants, contract tracers, etc. One worksite agreement established allowed residents of a domestic abuse shelter to earn wages for taking on the additional task of sanitizing the shelter. According to the Director, there are some struggles with executing this grant as job seekers are not readily applying to work these part-time, temporary jobs with wages at \$12 – \$15/hr. He solicited the help of the Board. A question was asked about opportunities for justice involved individuals, to which the Director answered that there were no restrictions per the grant but hiring was up to the

worksite employers. St. Louis County has been awarded the largest grant and tasked with providing opportunities to the largest number of workers. It was recommended that the Board staff reach out to the Prosecuting Attorney's office for the possibility of offering opportunities with low-level justice involved individuals re-entering the workforce, post-release.

- ii. PY21 WIOA Equal Opportunity Grant – 0.0%
 - iii. PY21 TANF SkillUp Grant – 100.00%
 - iv. PY21 FNS SkillUp Grant – 83.59%
 - v. PY21 TANF Jobs League Grant – 0.0%
- c. 60/40 Expenditure Rate Status Update:
A report was shared with the Board on the current status and compliance with the 60/40 expenditure status. As of September (data not reported in real-time).

PY19: 61% / 39% PY20: 56% / 44% PY21: 0% / 0%

St. Louis County has done an admirable job of staying within the established percentages for operational (60%) and direct participant (40%) expenditures. However, this is a dynamic accounting and will change. The processes, practices, and programs that have been put in place are helping to keep expenditures in balance and will be largely followed through into the PY21 funding period. The State would like St. Louis County to spend more of its allocations faster which is why there are some many new direct participant programs being developed. This requirement does have a direct effect on the departments ability to bring in new, much needed staff.

Workforce Development Reports:

I. Administrator's Update:

- a. PY21 WIOA program (OSO, ADW, OSY & ISY) contracts for FWCA are in process and should be signed shortly. Budget revisions for Employment Connection and International Institute are pending. Contracts for those subrecipients will be processed upon receipt and approval of their budgets. All of the WIOA contracts are to amend the existing two-year contracts to allocate additional funding, implement changes to the Scopes of Work, and new performance goals. It is anticipated that all program contracts will be fully executed by month's end.
- b. COVID-19 Humanitarian Grant Contract will be amended to allocate the additional funds, as discussed earlier.
- c. New Board Member Orientation – the orientation/onboarding event for the new Board members was held on the 15th of October. All new Board members were in attendance where they learned about the roles and responsibilities of Board members, the governing documents of the Board, basic knowledge about WIOA and other funding sources, the existing STLCO WFD programs, etc. It was a lot to cover, but all members reported that the event was helpful.
- d. By-Laws Revisions – the By-Laws revisions are well underway and should be ready for adoption and ratification at the February meeting of the Board.

II. *Compliance* – No report was given.

III. *Business Services Group Update:*

BSG worked diligently to establish a work-based learning agreement with Accenture Federal Services (AFS). This WIOA funded program will allow qualified applicants to earn \$15/hr. while working and learning in the AFS Apprentice in Training (AIT) program. Students in the program will gain invaluable experience in the following technology areas: custom development, digital platforms, infrastructure, program management, and technical support. STLCO currently has 3 students enrolled in the program cohort which began in October and will conclude in January 2022.

Other great programs that have been developed and continue to provide successful results are the Washington University Medical School Incumbent Worker Training (IWT) program and the MA (medical assistant) apprenticeship program. The 5th IWT cohort is scheduled to begin training in December of this year. To-date, 30 participants have gone through the Wash U IWT program with 100% program graduation and 100% CCMA certification attainment. The Wash U MA Apprenticeship program also continues to do well. The program which began in 2019, has seen a 100% certification attainment rate. The group continues its focus on the OJT program, reporting the most recent placement of a client as an administrative assistant earning \$41,600/year.

The Business Services Group continues the job of reaching out and connecting with employers. The group is establishing, on average, approximately 5 new employer partnerships per month with the newest being several St. Louis County Departments, including Public Works, Criminal Justice and Revenue which has hired 5-7 employees through their efforts with the Business Services Group. With a new BSG staff member scheduled to begin in the coming weeks, there is an expectation that progress will continue to be made in establishing partnerships for the OJT, IWT, and Apprenticeship programs.

To that end, BSG recently designed and deployed a job seekers' survey for the purpose of gather valuable information from job seekers regarding barriers they are facing in obtaining employment or returning to work. This data will identify issues that will allow BSG to better serve clients, the community, and employers. The survey has been marketed through the Job Center's social media platforms. Job Seekers can also scan a scan code using their smart phone to access the survey. So far, the responses are good, and results have provided great intel. In this endeavor, BSG has partnered with the State Department of Social Services who will text a link for the survey to over 27,000 clients to gain wider audience participation and feedback.

IV. *EO Report*

Currently, the EO officer is conducting monitoring of the Eligible Training Providers as required. In addition, the EO is collecting data to compile a staffing analysis of the subrecipients' hiring practices, including at applicant data to ensure fair and equitable hiring practices.

The department recently issued a Hire Offer for an Admin/EO person to come onboard to assist with EO and serve as the Office Services Coordinator for Workforce Development.

A question was posed about the \$25,000 funds allocated from the state for EO. It was explained that those funds are used for supplies, printing, training, etc.

- V. *Customer Feedback* – Nothing new to report. The JSSI survey has been temporarily suspended so customers may participate in the BSG Job Seekers Survey. Generally, the JSSI survey provides favorable feedback – usually 93 – 94% positive. No significant complaints. The complete report will be included in the meeting packet for the full Board meeting.

Old Business:

A. By-Laws

- I. Major Revisions – received notice from the Office of Workforce Development (OWD) that there were some changes needed to bring the current by-laws into compliance with state and federal WIOA requirements.
- Membership – it was recommended that matter such as the membership selection and approval process, processing notices of resignation, membership requirements, etc., be outlined in the document
 - Nomination Process – the nomination process was not defined. It was recommended by the state that a formalized process be established and included.
 - Term limits – the existing by-laws list the broad terms of “death or resignation” as the defining limits. The state required that term limits be set.
 - The process for notifying the CLEO of a WDB member vacancy needed to be outlined and stated.
 - Proxy or alternative designee participation – in order to conduct any business, it is required that a quorum be in attendance. It was never determined if voting by proxy is allowed or if a member could designate an alternative to stand in his/her stead. This determination needed to be made and clearly stated regarding the Board’s stand on this matter. Committee members expressed interest in rather an alternate would have voting privileges. It was recommended that because an alternate was not a certified member of the Board s/he should not have voting privileges but could serve in an information gathering capacity. There was a discussion about the ability of members to “canvas” other members for votes but was then determined to be inappropriate for this Board given its use of government provided funds.
 - Use of Technology to conduct Board business – in the time of the pandemic and enhanced technology, the by-laws needed to include how and if these options would be employed
 - Process of ensuring Board member participation – needed to develop a process for assessing and monitoring member participation and non-participation and how it would be managed by the Board.
- II. Term Limits – At a previous meeting, Committee members discussed the term limits for members. The term limits for officers are also discussed with parameters being examined. The proposed revisions to the term limit section of the by-laws included defining when the term would begin, would existing members be grandfathered in with their tenure on the Board beginning with the ratification of the new by-laws, etc. All recommended revisions will be presented to the full Board at the November meeting.
- III. Nominating Process – As a nominating process had to be determined to comply with state recommendations, a process was developed and defined for the members of the Committee.

- B. Nominating Process for Board Chair – the process was outlined as follows: 1) A nominating committee was selected from volunteers not able to run for the position of Chair. 2) Eligible Board members were identified (Business / Private Sector Representatives). 3) Members were asked to make nominations from the eligible list. Eligible members could also self-

nominate. 4) Board staff reached out to nominated members to notify them of their nomination, to assess interest, and to assemble materials to present to the Nominating Committee (Resume', statement of interest, etc.) 5) Nominating committee met to review nominations and schedule interviews. 6) Nominating Committee will present the slate of candidates to the full Board to garner their recommendation. 7) The CLEO will be notified of the Board's recommendation. 8) The CLEO reviews the recommendation and formerly appoints the Chair.

It was determined that Cenia Bosman was previously designated to be the Nominating Committee Chair for nominating Board members. Due to her eligibility to be a Board Chair nominee, she would not serve in that role for the Chair selection. It was recommended that the out-going interim Chair could serve as the Chair of the Nominating Committee. It was also stated, this determination should be added to the by-laws.

Other items to discussed for possible inclusion in the revised by-laws:

- Designate the out-going Board Chair as the Chair of the Nominating Committee
- Determination of member tenure for Chair eligibility – is there a period of time that must be served before a Business Member is eligible to be selected Chair?

New Business: Due to time constraints, New Business agenda items will be sent to Committee members via separate email.

A. Board Engagement Strategy – Tabled

B. 2022 Meeting Calendar – approved by a unanimous vote of acclamation

Open Discussion: Due to time constraints, no Open Discussion was held.

Adjournment:

A motion was made and seconded to adjourned. Meeting was adjourned at 1:13p