



CHICAGO COOK WORKFORCE INNOVATION BOARD

Minutes for December 8, 2022

Present: George Wright, Jacki Robinson-Ivy, Haven Allen, Colin Cosgrove, Xochitl Flores, Jennifer Foster, Adam Hecktman, Mary Howard proxy for Tracey Scott, Michael Jacobson, Sylvia Jenkins, Adam Levine proxy for Michael Fassnacht, Dan Lyonsmith, Pam McDonough, Donovan Pepper, Nora Cay Ryan proxy for Robert Reiter, Marc Shulman, Carrie Thomas, Sarah Lichtenstein Walter proxy for Juan Salgado

Quorum: Yes

CO-CHAIRMAN WRIGHT: Called the meeting to order at 10:34 am. So welcome all. We appreciate your commitment to this Board. As the end-of-year meeting comes about I want to make sure that I acknowledge all the hard work that this body has performed throughout the entire year, which has been an unusual year for all of us.

The first order of business is the approval of the September 2022 meeting's minutes so I will entertain a motion.

Motion to approve the September minutes was moved by Pam McDonough and seconded by Mary Howard. After a roll call vote the motion passed.

CO-CHAIRMAN WRIGHT: All right. Thanks all. Next on the agenda is the interim CEO's report so, Patrick, the floor is yours.

MR. COMBS: I'd like to have a conversation with all of you instead of focusing on a PowerPoint. We found that 2022 was nothing as we expected. But this has been a year of great successes for The Partnership. We reopened everything that we do. Our American Job Centers were closed during the pandemic starting in March 2020, but by 2022 we reopened all 10 of our AJCs to the public and available for walk in appointments. I'd also like to do a shout out to Carrie Thomas at IDES for all their support going through this process. This has been a huge lift for our team and all our partners, and we appreciate their support now as we are getting back to normal. Later on this agenda we'll talk about how we need to reintroduce the public to our services. We have started doing in person events again and have relaunched the Hospitality Hires Chicago event, with the support of Michael Jacobson and other great partners.

We are back at the Palmer House and back letting the labor market know these are great jobs and the hospitality industry is open for business.

We did another big event with our contact tracing team as people were cycling out of that and moving on to the next thing, and of course the Career Connector events we've been hosting with the County have been a huge success through our suburban AJCs and the suburban community colleges.



We have learned to live in this hybrid model. Our offices were closed for all of 2020 and most of 2021. We have started bringing people back in the office in 2022. Staff are working a few days a week now as we explore what the new normal looks like. Exploring new ways of doing business and how we can model that for our business customers. We are examining at what work is better done in person and what work can be done at home.

Our staff has really stepped up and done a fantastic job. We brought in some great new talent to the Partnership this year that we're proud of so this has been a big year about us transitioning and then building something new.

The year started with getting awarded a grant from We Rise Together from the Community Trust, then we got awarded the new contact tracing grant. Now its creating a community response to be there to help build the next generation of public health workforce while trying to improve health outcomes for our communities that we care so much about.

We were awarded a grant from Polk Bros. to support our career activation fund, which some call a barrier reduction fund, but we're trying to take it from a deficit to an asset.

The Good Jobs Challenge Grant was a huge win for The Partnership, the city and the county along with all of our partners. It was exciting to win this award as an assistant lead entity, not because of us, but because of us and all our partners. World Business Chicago was integral in this. There are different organizations involved and we're supporting, creating, and augmenting sector partnerships in manufacturing, transportation, distribution, logistics, healthcare, and technology. We are creating a new, better model for how we do what we do.

I'll be going next week for a meeting in D.C. with other awardees from around the country with the Economic Development Administration, and this is just the beginning.

We know CIJA is coming out soon from DCEO, we'll look at the structures we've created to hopefully win that grant as well.

It's been a great year for the Partnership. Does anyone else have anything to share about successes in the last year?

If anybody else has anything they want to share -- staff, board -- you know, a success you saw this year, just something that you're grateful for that we've done together please feel free to share.

MS. LEWIS: -- I'd like to give some props to you, Patrick. You stepped into the role of CEO on an interim basis without much of a heads-up and you've done a phenomenal job as everyone can see based on the list of accomplishments that you just stated. So, for the record, the Year 2022 was the year of Patrick Combs.

MR. COMBS: Thank you, Marisa. And thank you, Adam. I can't take credit, these successes are a result of the team we have at The Partnership, it's the Board we have, it's our community. We did this together which is why I find it so rewarding.



MR. COSGROVE: Added that one success to lift was the Triton College Job Fair in September which was manufacturing focused. We are hopeful that it is first of many years of events that is the manufacturing version of Hospitality Hires. Everyone put in a lot of work that we can build on going into the future. I appreciated this event coming to fruition after initially talking about it several years ago. The other thing I want to mention is what Susan Massel has done. She visited S&C Electric and took some photos and created a video that was very good and impactful. It's reaching thousands of people on social media. Next up I believe doing the same thing for Marc over at Eli's Cheesecake.

This campaign designed for Manufacturing month was well done and our team members were so excited about it. We had a lot of internal engagement out of it. Kudos to Susan and her Communications team and to Amy and her team on the Manufacturing Fair.

MR. COMBS: Thank you, Colin. We're excited about the work we've done in manufacturing.

MR. ALLEN: I mean I just want to give props to the team for keeping the ship steering in the right direction during a turbulent year that had a lot of change. Also props to George and Jacki for really stepping up as Co-Chairs to keep this big machine going and making the impact that you do. I'm sure you have done more than you expected when you walked into 2022, and to position us for a great 2023. Thank you all!

MR. COMBS: Thank you, Haven.

CO-CHAIRMAN WRIGHT: Are there other questions? We certainly appreciate the comments as well as the accomplishments. They mean so much to all of us.

MR. COMBS: Presented the Service Delivery Committee update, noting there were not any funding recommendations to vote on so we talked about performance measures and our training provider recommendations. I want to recognize Amy Santacaterina and her team as we met or exceeded all our negotiated performance metrics for PY21.

The Partnership always meets our performance measures, so these results are not a surprise. I will say that this is exceptionally gratifying for the team and for this organization because if you'll notice at the bottom there is a little asterisk that tells the performance period. All these customers entered services during the pandemic, and they left services during the pandemic. Even with the fluctuations in the labor market over the past few years and everything else going on, we were still able to meet or exceed our goals. We made a tremendous impact on the people that we are serving.

These are not just numbers to look at, but actual people, and every person in these numbers came into our orbit and took advantage of our services during the pandemic.

These results show more than our teams' efforts. They help with strategies, oversight, and leadership, but this is also all the people on the ground, all the people running our American Job Centers that are delegated through the network. This is those on the front lines who are being burned out dealing with Covid, dealing with virtual learning in their homes and still showing up to provide services to the people



that need it. This is our One Stop Operators who kept things moving in the right direction. It took a village, to accomplish these results and it's amazing to see these numbers.

Patrick referred to the PowerPoint. These are our new Performance measures for the next year that were negotiated with DCEO. The state of Illinois is looking at new ways to measure performance in the new program year. These updates shouldn't have a big impact for our LWIA07 since we traditionally meet or exceed our performance measures.

MR. COMBS: Introduced Anne Hogan, thanking her for all the work that gets done putting the training provider information together for Board review every quarter. We appreciate it. We will be voting on this item today.

MS. HOGAN: I ask the Board to ratify the training provider recommendations approved by the Service Delivery Committee in their recent Committee meeting.

CO-CHAIRMAN WRIGHT: Called for a motion to approve.

MS. McDONOUGH: So moved. DR. JENKINS: Seconded the motion.

After a roll call vote, the motion passed with one abstention.

MS. LEWIS: For the Youth Committee update, the main topic of discussion was the Request for Proposal for Youth Agencies that will be released in early 2023. We began the research in November to see how other workforce areas structure their youth programs and what best practices they include. This helps us to strategize how to engage youth, especially in this pandemic and post-pandemic economy.

We have had an internal working group across all the Partnership divisions to start to piece together what we'd like to include in the youth RFP and in youth programming. This week we are bringing together all our current WIOA youth providers to talk about their experiences as WIOA youth contractors. These conversations help to pull together what works for us and what we can modify or change. We'll be reaching out to you in 2023 to seek volunteers to review the proposals when they come in. The agencies we select will be scheduled to begin their contracts in July 2023.

MR. LEVINE: Was there something that brought on this review and analysis of other programs and anything you anticipate changing?

MS. LEWIS: Great question. We don't put out the RFP for youth programs every year. We haven't done it for about five years. Instead, once we procure the youth agencies, we renew their contracts in subsequent years for a maximum number of years. PY23 ends most of these contracts and they all need to re-bid, which gives us an opportunity to revise the RFP to revamp any areas that we'd like updated. The previous RFP was written pre-pandemic, so we are exploring if service delivery methods need to change and if the needs of our young people have changed and how do we address those changes.

CO-CHAIRMAN WRIGHT: Our next committee report out is finance.

MR. CASARETO: Thank you so much, George. Refer to the PowerPoint for specific details.



The previous Finance Committee reviewed the quarter ending September 30th for Fiscal Year 23. He referenced the PowerPoint presentation, noting that that some programs and associated costs don't begin in the first quarter; due to grant funding they start in the second quarter and these activities are taking place now.

Additionally, the EdAssist billing to us is historically delayed. They typically need a longer time to obtain information necessary for processing their billing. EdAssist is recorded on a cash basis in our financials to tie to our drawdowns, and we need vouchers to be able to draw the money. These 2 factors are the reason that we were below the 25% at the end of the first quarter. We are looking to be closer to 50% by the end of quarter 2.

MR. CASARETO: Okay. You received as a part of this package a detailed finance presentation, one that breaks down by components, you know, adult, youth, dislocated, et cetera, and I will leave that information to your review unless you've got some specific questions that I can answer about it.

MR. COMBS: The Finance Committee also discussed the continued outstanding nature of our single audit. It has not been finalized yet. We anticipate having the final audit from our auditor by tomorrow. They have continued to push back the date for sending to us due to requests for more information, but now have not requested additional information in several weeks. We expect the final report by next week.

Programmatic audits are on-going, with Illona Sheffey-Rawlings compliance team doing regularly scheduled monitoring visits with our sub-grantees. Patrick added that we are monitored by DCEO a few times a year, the next audit from them will be in February 2023 for one of our National Dislocated Workers grants (NEG).

CO-CHAIRMAN WRIGHT: Thank you, Carl, Patrick. Next up is the Communications. Susan?

MS. MASSEL: Thank you. Looking back over the past year, you can see that we have worked very hard to promote WIOA network events, initiatives, and non-WIOA network events and initiatives. We have focused on returning to in-person events. Our marketing has included a wide variety of social media, using texting, our website and leveraging our partner platforms.

Our first annual report was issued recently, and we are starting the next draft of the second annual report to the external agency that helps to lift us up. You can find our annual report on the home page of our webpage, www.chicookworks.org.

The Partnership is also doing podcasting which has been a great tool for us. Our website takes a significant amount of work to keep updated.

The PowerPoint shows some examples of the communication efforts that have been successful for us this year. We created a new way of using signage. We show employers holding a sign that says, "I made a great hire" then someone next to them with a sign that says "I got an offer" or "I got the job" or "I got the interview". People love these signs and wait in line to have their pictures taken. It's an exciting and relatively affordable way to get our story out.



Hospitality Hires Chicago returned this year and will next occur in April 2023.

Last May we launched our Cook County Career Connector event, a program with Cook County ARPA funding and that's been an in-person event almost monthly. President Preckwinkle attended one of the events. It's a great way to get energy back and remember why we're all doing this.

For the City of Chicago, we have worked closely with construction initiatives this year, under the leadership of Shoshiwa Shields. A key initiative is working with the CTA to get qualified staff for subcontractors on the Red-Purple line modernization. Several people who have worked on this project all say that they want to ride the trains with their grandchildren one day saying, "I built this". They have pride in this effort. It's amazing to see.

You also see our initiative in Jackson Park, working for CDOT building the roadways that will lead to the Obama Center.

Additionally, with the City of Chicago we have the Contact Tracers that are now doing more supporting roles for the City.

For Cook County, funding largely via ARPA, is the Career Connector program. We also do the Opportunity Works and Opportunity Summer programs; the summer program is a youth/young adult program for both in and out of school youths.

Looking at our social media outreach, we don't have huge followers, but the numbers are increasing. Next year will be a focus on videos, interactive and infographic posts which seem to catches peoples attention on social media.

Susan reviewed establishing theme months that we can leverage with communications. We've started already, and as an example, Jacki lent her image and thoughts for Black History Month.

Susan pointed out the QR code that links to the videos. And then we created a couple external pages. We continued to upgrade the Chicago and Cook County young adult youth portal, which is through Road Trip Nation, which is amazing.

Our upcoming focus will be the AJC campaign that will reach out to those coming out of "hibernation" after the pandemic. We will reach out to an external agency to reintroduce our region, residents and our businesses to the American Job Center Network.

This is the QR code I was talking about. Feel free to hold your phone up to the screen, the QR code will lead you to videos for manufacturing.

The closing slide lists my team. I am not a one-man band. Today, there are two terrific people who deserve a lot of credit, Jesus Ramirez, and Sarah Luyengi. They are indispensable and I worry that they don't get enough shine externally.

MR. COMBS: Shout out to Jesus Ramirez and Sarah Luyengi who are on Susan's team who are indispensable in getting this work done.



MR. PEPPER: I agree with wonderful work that you've been doing, and the team has been doing to project externally all the work of the Partnership. Frankly, as a board member, I love all the information that we get, allowing us to learn for ourselves to know what's going on at the Partnership and things that we Board members can share. Not just for the external information, but the internal communication has been excellent. Congratulations to you.

MS. MASSEL: Thank you, Donovan.

MR. COMBS: Thank you, Donovan.

MS. FLORES: Great work, Susan. And great comments, Donovan. I know that pictures really help and just sharing and seeing individuals that got a job offer or were able to get to a second interview is impactful, so I appreciate that campaign.

I have a question as we're doing more of this and hopefully getting more visibility. I recall that Karin would mention a very low number of companies that know and use the public workforce system. I don't know how that number gets generated or where it came from, but is there a way to track those numbers? I think it would be interesting to see whether these communication campaigns and the increased visibility is making an impact in people recognizing the Workforce Partnership.

MS. MASSEL: It's my understanding that the employer partners of the workforce system number between 1,500 and 2,000 that we say we work with, they know about it, and are partners. We always remind our team its not only job seekers; it's businesses too. Our communications need to be both job seeker facing and business facing.

MR. COMBS: Thank you, Xochitl. Colin, do you have your hand up?

MR. COSGROVE: A few years ago, the IWIB set up the business engagement commission and I was volunteered to go and join that commission. To answer your question, Xochitl, 3% of businesses in Illinois engage in the workforce system. Three percent! It's a stunningly low number. The engagement commission is trying to do something about that, that's why they call it business engagement, and that's commission is currently undergoing a leadership change, adding Tom Hacker and Tom Windall to the Commission.

MR. COSGROVE: There's a lot of work going on around on this issue. The workforce commission received a recommendation for a Governor-appointed position to oversee workforce system in the state at a state level. Hopefully that would be a powerful move to have a leader who owns it in the way that doesn't exist today, and there's other states who do this.

I'm going off track, but it's a 3% and the opportunity is there for us. It's like the old joke where two people go to sell shoes somewhere, one person reports back and says nobody wears shoes here, there's no opportunity, and the other person comes back and says nobody wears shoes here, there's an incredible opportunity. I think we fall into it's an incredible opportunity.

MS. MASSEL: Thank you. I had never heard that stat; that is a stunningly low number.



MR. LEVINE: I also sit on that committee, and we talked this week about updating this number soon.

MR. COSGROVE: What exactly defines engagement, if there are One Stop Operators and AJCs you might say I spend my entire day connecting with businesses, therefore that it can't be true.

MS. MASSEL: We are in the final stages of updating our business relations and economic development flier that goes out to businesses. Our focus with this new flier is on what we do for businesses. The headline says Hire, Retrain, Retain. This is what we do for you. We'll make sure to share with our Board members when its finished.

O-CHAIRMAN WRIGHT: Thank you, Susan.

MS. MASSEL: We are going to be looking for external agency help. If anyone knows of external agencies who do good work in workforce development and nonprofit, please reach out to me.

CO-CHAIRMAN WRIGHT: I read Donovan's comments about the intentional focus on making sure we leverage our Board members in a more intentional way. Susan, you just gave a great example of that, and, I'd like to lift up the effort that was done on behalf of The Partnership's Tenth Anniversary. I know our response was kind of muted, but it shouldn't be left unsaid that we do appreciate the Board and the work that your team put forth for that kind of landmark event. Thank you very much.

CO-CHAIRMAN WRIGHT: Next on the agenda is the One Stop Operator presentation.

MS. RAYMOND: The OSO team is working on a universal referral system and AJC signage. The QR code spells out all the activity and work that the team has done.

I'd like to acknowledge Robert Guzman, from our OSO team. Robert is integral to our team; he manages the meetings and all communications at all ten American Job Centers.

MS. RAYMOND: The team has been working very hard on establishing this universal referral system. They've been working with partners across centers, across titles. Forty-six individuals across the network have been engaged in their working group meetings, and so I just want to acknowledge the team for pulling this together. It seems like it would be an easy thing to put together a systemwide referral piece, but it takes engagement and cooperation. We may be reaching out to engage you in the decision-making process about the referral platform.

The partners who have been in the working groups are voting on which platform they would like to recommend and then through early 2023 we will be having leadership meetings to just continue the platform and by the time we come back in March we're expecting to be recommending a systemwide referral platform. We'll be sharing it across our system and will ensure that we do our due diligence in making the recommendation.

We work with the centers to make sure that they not only have the pop-up signs but also the bigger banners outside of the centers. As Susan mentioned we're working collaboratively with the communications team to reintroduce the AJC network to the public and ensuring that community members know how to find the centers.



The customer satisfaction surveys are also active. All the centers are up and running and are receiving visitor input on their experience. We take that data and put it into dashboards and share it out with the partners at the centers.

CO-CHAIRMAN WRIGHT: Called for Public Comments. Hearing none, I'll go back to my opening comments. I would like to reiterate that the board has been extremely supported in a challenging year for many reasons. We've had intentionality around making sure that the board, as Donovan stated earlier, has been more informed as ever.

Jennifer Vravis, thank you for being there to take our notes and making sure our minutes are there. We really appreciate that.

I want to wish everyone a happy and joyous holiday season, and we will see each other on the other side.

CO-CHAIRMAN WRIGHT: Called for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Pam McDonough moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Adam Hecktman. After a voice vote the meeting was adjourned.

STATE OF ILLINOIS COUNTY OF COOK

Jennifer Vravis, being first duly sworn, on oath says that she is a Registered Professional Reporter doing business in the City of Chicago, County of Cook and the State of Illinois;

That she reported in shorthand the videoconference proceedings had at the foregoing Chicago Cook Workforce Innovation Board Meeting; And that the foregoing is a true and correct transcript of her shorthand notes so taken as aforesaid and contains all the proceedings had at the said Chicago Cook Workforce Innovation Board Meeting.

JENNIFER VRAVIS, RPR

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