



Workforce Innovation Board

Meeting Minutes

Tuesday December 12, 2023; 10:30am – 11:45pm

Physical Location: 69 W Washington, 22 Floor, Chicago, IL, 60602

In Attendance: Jacki Robinson-Ivy, George Wright, Pam McDonough, Amy Santacaterina, Susan Massel, Becky Raymond, Marisa Lewis, Xochitl Flores, Adam Hecktman, Michael Jacobson, Rahnee Patrick, Donovan Pepper, Nora Cay Ryan for Robert Reiter, Sarah Lichtenstein Walter for Juan Salgado, Marc Schulman, Jason Spigner, Tom Evenson for Liisa Stark, Carrie Thomas, Jose Mota, Amelia Fulgham, Kit White, Jan Terry

Welcome; Attendance; Minutes of September Meeting *

Jacki Robinson-Ivy and Smita Shah, Co-Chairs

The Workforce Innovation Board (WIB) meeting was called to order at 10:33 am by Chairwoman Jacki Robinson-Ivy. Jacki Robinson-Ivy called for a motion to approve the September WIB minutes. Tom Evenson for Liisa Stark seconded the motion, the motion was moved. As quorum was not met, items on the agenda needing votes will be held until the following meeting in March.

CEO Update

George Wright, CEO

George Wright begins with an overview of the accomplishments that The Partnership has made over the last five and a half months. These accomplishments do not strictly pertain to WIOA, which is what this body oversees, but to The Partnership as a 501(c)(3) entity. George advises that he separates his comments into three categories, the people, the finances, and the processes.

As for the people, we promoted 9 individuals within the Partnership. These promotions have never happened since The Partnership's inception 11 years ago. This is to ensure we have the right people in the right jobs. We have also hired about 11 new employees. Three of these staff have been brought back to The Partnership after a layoff due to funding tied to a specific program. These three staff members have been brought back into The Partnership in various roles. We created a SWAT team to focus on the migrant population. This is an example of focusing our efforts to create a specialized team that is working with our migrant population endeavors and initiative. This in turn gives our people within The Partnership expanded responsibilities, pushes them, and lifts up their skills. We have realigned some internal units, and dedicated staff charged with raising funds. We promoted the former board liaison, Marisa Lewis into the newly created director of development role to oversee these staff members. Amelia Fulgham is taking over the role of board liaison.



In terms of finances, George advises that when he came into the organization the audit was late. This this point the audit is no longer late as it has been ahead of schedule for over five months. We have also hired a firm called KEB to review our processes from a financial perspective. George advises he has just received the first draft report. Due to KEB's findings, we have established new policy and procedures, along with updating established policy and procedure. Over the last five months we have eliminated \$250000 in expenses. Cutting unnecessary and redundant costs is needed to be good stewards of our dollars. Marisa Lewis's department has started to reach out to organizations that can provide us funding supporting so we may diversify our funding sources. Union Pacific has come to the table again.

In terms of processes, we have been focusing on creating a robust IT process and building our IT team. Historically, our IT team of two full time staff have been focused on outcomes and not impacts. Due to understaffing we have been unable to respond to IT requests in a timely manner and did not have staff working on our systems. George advises that we have more than doubled our capacity with five staff members working in IT. We plan to gather data points that can take us from simple outcomes to understanding how we are impacting communities and people in a positive way. We are also utilizing full time IT staff to move from our current record system to the states system as our current record system is redundant.

George concluded his updates at 10:59 am by stating that this progress is due to the effort of dedicated employees within The Partnership.

Jacki Robinson–Ivy states that we will pass over the committee reports due to not meeting the quorum for voting. These items will be voted on in the March 2024 session. We will move into the financial report from Jose Mota.

Committee Reports

FY23 WIOA Financials for the period ending 9/30/23 – Jose Mota

Jose Mota begins his financial report for PY23 by stating that his team is checking expenses as we obligate 80% of these funds to the sub-grantees. We are ensuring we are compliant at the state level and meeting the 3 WIOA fiscal requirements of an 80% requirement for obligation, 50% requirement for direct training, and 20% to work based learning training for youth. As we are in the first quarter we are not meeting these percentages. This is typical as we will pick up in the second quarter due to increased expenses for the contracts starting 10/ through September of 2024. When these expenses hit the general ledger in the second quarter, our obligation requirement will increase which will increase our direct training requirements. Jose advises that the 20 percent requirement is usually not met in the first year but is met in the second year.

Jose advises that as of now we are 5 months into the program year and at 70 percent of the ITA budget. Going into the new year we must closely monitor this budget. If these funds are over issued, we will have to find the funds to pay for these ITAs. To help alleviate the over-issuance.



we will apply to transfer 1-D expenses to the 1-E grant to spend that down alleviating some of those 1-D dollars to be transferred into the adult funding stream. For PY22. The second year of the grant, Jose advises that all contracts have ended as of 9/30. We are beginning to re-class expenses from PY23 to PY22 to spend down the grant to 100%.

New Arrivals Task Force Work

Amy Santacaterina, Director of WIOA Programs

Amy Santacaterina advises that we are part of a team with the city, the State, and a team of pro bono attorneys to help process work applications, work authorizations and temporary protective status applications for new migrant arrivals. We are hosting a series of workshops located at the Metcalfe Building where primarily Venezuelan new arrivals are being bussed from the shelters. After people have gone through their work authorization processing, they will be surveyed for assistance with and given information about how we can help with placement services and jobs. To date we have surveyed 567 people. We are hoping that work authorizations will take 30 to 45 days to process. We will be reaching out to the people we have surveyed so that we may offer services and placement as soon as work authorization is complete. We are connecting with our employer networks to identify groups that are interested in specifically hiring new arrivals.

Amy shared that from a sample of 400 people, a little less than 50% have a high school diploma, and some have trade school experience. Amy states that 90 people from the sample, or 22% have some college education.

Xochitl Flores asked Amy how many of these new individuals have gotten the ability to work? Amy stated roughly 60 people have gotten their work authorization so far.

Jacki Robinson-Ivy asked if the new arrivals are already in the pipeline for processing?

Amy Santacaterina confirmed this. She stated that people who arrived a year ago from countries like Ukraine, Afghanistan, and Hati have already been processed. The government is trying to fast track work authorizations for the new arrivals.

Xochitl Flores asked if the business who have expressed interest are from any specific sector?

Amy stated that the hospitality sector has expressed interest, and we are going to start reaching out to the employers we are currently working with.

Sarah Lichtenstein Walter asked of One-Stop Operator is making referrals to City Colleges for ESL?

Amy stated Yes, ESL and Title 2 is a big partner with us in processing and handing out resources.

Sarah Lichtenstein Walter stated we've also had a couple of colleges develop some ESL for kids while the adults are in our Title 2 courses.

Becky Raymond advised that One Stop Operator did a survey of the area planning council 508, which is the adult education convening entity here in the City to identify which programs have capacity to

take referrals, which programs have capacity to set up classes. She advised that City College responded to that survey, so One Stop Operator is trying to connect the dots between what we're seeing at the Metcalfe Building with the workshops and what's happening.

Jacki Robinson-Ivy opened the floor for any other comments or commentary.

Xochitl Flores advised Amy, if 211 is not already being utilized to connect this information, I would recommend connecting with 211. The 211 line is now set up in our region. This service is



a call center where individuals can call for any social service needed. Several languages are available. The pandemic highlighted the need to have a centralized phone system where individuals could call-in for help with food, jobs, housing and more. The call center has the ability to answer questions submitted online as well.

Marc Shulman stated that his organization employs Afghans and Ukrainians, and it seems that those funding sources are running out as money is now being directed to newer immigrants. Are there other services or are you getting more involved with those populations because they for the most part have work permits?

Amy confirmed that individuals with work permits can come to our network for assistance and are typically qualified under our adult funding.

There were no additional questions or comments. Jacki Robinson-Ivy opened the floor for the communications update from Susan Massel.

Communications Update

Susan Massel, Director of Communications

Susan advised that we recently held an Opportunity Works graduation at Prairie State with about 40 graduates. Susan shared a variety of events that The Partnership hosted, lifted up, or collaborated with over the last quarter. This included career connect events for Cook County, convening a discussion about the manufacturing industry, and hosting The Partnership holiday party at the South Shore Cultural Center.

Susan shared that George Wright has been hosting a show on WVON every Saturday morning with Danny Marshall. They receive live callers and host guests from a variety of different sectors. We also host our own podcast called Higher Frequency which continues to be successful.

Susan advised that George will be the keynote speaker at the Calumet Area Industrial Commission (CAIC) holiday luncheon.

Susan shared that we had good coverage with ABC news during a Veterans day segment, and the previous week George spoke with Mark Rivera of ABC news about the Level UP AJC campaign.

Susan shared the click rates for our external newsletter and reviewed our website and social media engagement rates. We are experiencing growth and positive engagement across our social media and website. We ensure to leverage special holidays, or recognized months such as manufacturing month or friendship week in our social media posts. This is to humanize our social media presence along with honoring and recognizing the people we serve.

Susan advised that we are working with the State to add translated language to our Level Up webpage that states we are here to work with anybody authorized to work in the US.

Susan advises we are also updating the names and signage of our American Job Center locations to be aligned with how they are colloquially referenced.

There were no additional questions or comments. Jacki Robinson-Ivy opened the floor for the One Stop Operator quarterly report from Becky Raymond.

**One Stop Operator Quarterly Report**

Becky Raymond, Executive Director, ScaleLIT

Becky advises that One Stop Operator continues to have regular communications by having meetings at the American Job Centers. Becky advises tomorrow One Stop Operator will have a system-wide meeting where we're expecting 130 practitioners from across the network to join us to hear the updates that are in this pamphlet. This update has a lot of information about facilities, especially what Susan just referred to in terms of name change and signage. We continue to have the customer satisfaction survey and maintaining cross-training for the network, and the biggest roll-out in the past quarter has been our development of an Airtable referral system. Becky states that inquiries into the Level Up campaign are dropped into One Stop Operators Airtable platform and referrals amongst partners at the centers are all recorded through Airtable. Becky advises that there have been more than a thousand partner referrals made. Through Airtable, One Stop Operator can track the completion status of those referrals and build this connective tissue between partners at the American Job Centers. Becky advises we can get better at nuancing these referrals in making sure that the partners know when to make appropriate referrals. Becky states that this is important is because we believe that when individuals receive more than one service, they'll be more successful because they'll have greater support. Becky advises we need to make sure all of the partners understand how to bolster an individual, and how to galvanize resources around an individual. We are also coordinating and rolling out business services across the partners.

There were no additional comments.

Public Comment and Adjournment

There were no public comments.

At 11:25 am Jacki Robinson-Ivy called for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Meeting adjourned at 11:26 am.

** Denotes items requiring a vote*