

**BERKS COUNTY WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD
(WDB)**

7:30 a.m.

September 16, 2016

**PA CareerLink® Berks County, 1920 Kutztown Road, Suite F, Reading, PA 19604
Meeting Summary**

Members Present

Ms. Debra Antol
Ms. Ashley Chambers
Mr. John DeVere
Mr. Modesto Fiume
Mr. Michael Fischetti
Ms. Kristi Gage-Linderman
Mr. Robert Harrop
Ms. Carole Homolash
Ms. Joanne Judge
Ms. Peggy Kershner
Mr. Lewis McCoy, Jr.
Mr. Brian McMahan
Mr. John Morahan
Ms. Jeannine O'Neill-Rohrbach
Mr. Mark Pinkasavage
Mr. Gregg Riefenstahl
Mr. Michael Rowley
Mr. Mark Schlott
Ms. Connie Skipper (via conference call)
Mr. Edward Swoyer (via conference call)
Mr. Karyn Troxell
Dr. Anna Weitz
Ms. Tammy White

Members Absent

Mr. Thomas Brizek
Ms. Marianne Egolf
Mr. Tom Herman
Mr. William Hornberger
Mr. Thomas McKeon
Mr. James Nichols
Ms. Jennie Rodriguez-Priest
Mr. Russell Showers
Mr. Pablo Tejada
Mr. Barry Unger
Mr. Chester Winters

Staff and Guests Present

Mr. Daniel Fogarty	Berks County Workforce Development Board Staff
Mr. John Moser	Berks County Workforce Development Board Staff
Mr. Rory Stevenson	Berks County Workforce Development Board Staff
Ms. Patricia Spencer	Berks County Workforce Development Board Staff
Ms. Patricia Adamczyk	PA CareerLink® Berks County Administrator

The meeting was called to order by Ms. Judge at 7:30 a.m. and a quorum was present.

The minutes of the June 17, 2016 meeting were approved unanimously upon motion by Ms. White and seconded by Mr. DeVere.

Ms. Judge welcomed Mr. Fischetti to the Board. She introduced the Executive Committee report and asked Mr. Moser to explain the Program Year 15 Fourth Quarter Common

Measures Performance. Six measures were above target and three measures were over minimum of 80%. The time period for these measures was July 1, 2015 through June 30, 2016. Ms. Judge commented that all Boards were “measured” by the same standards and this Board’s numbers have been stellar and complimented Mr. Fogarty, Mr. Moser and staff. Mr. Moser said that this year (July 1, 2016 through June 30, 2017), performance measures will change drastically and the metrics used will be for those individuals who exited as long as a year ago.

Mr. Fogarty and Mr. Moser commented on the chart titled WIOA Performance Negotiations Worksheet for PY 2016 which listed the State Proposed Levels, the State Final Levels and the Local Request which was proposed September 13, 2016. The State is urging Boards to work more aggressively with individuals who have considerable barriers to employment including poor work histories and challenges. Dr. Weitz added that there are also language barriers to be considered.

The proposed schedule for Executive Committee and Board meetings included in the report was referred to by Ms. Judge:

2017 Executive Committee Meetings		2017 Berks WD Board Meetings	
Thursday March 9	8:45 -9:00 a.m.	Friday March 17	7:30 – 9:00 a.m.
Thursday June 8	8:45 -9:00 a.m.	Friday June 16	7:30 – 9:00 a.m.
Thursday Sept. 7	11:15 a.m. - noon	Friday Sept. 15	7:30 – 9:00 a.m.
Thursday Nov. 30	8:45 -9:00 a.m.	Friday December 8	7:30 – 9:00 a.m.

Mr. Fogarty added that the Executive Committee meetings and Workforce Development Board meetings will be duly advertised publicly.

In the absence of Mr. Fineman, Fiscal Manager, who was on a bicycling tour of Barcelona, Spain with his wife, Mr. Fogarty discussed the Finance Committee’s report and handouts. Expenditures for Program Year 2015 (July 1, 2015 through June 30, 2016) were at or within budget as previously projected. The Proposed Operating Budget for Program Year 2016 (July 1, 2016 through June 30, 2017) was discussed. This Budget was approved at the June meeting of the Board and a few minor adjustments were made since then and approved by the Finance Committee. The goal, as noted, is to end PY 2016 with \$300k in fund balance/carryover. This will entail requesting additional Rapid Response funds in the first half of PY16.

Highlights of the CareerLink Oversight Committee’s report were reviewed by Ms. Gage-Linderman. She noted that Ms. Adamczyk, CareerLink Administrator, will be retiring on January 13, 2017. The work statement for an upcoming Request for Proposal to procure a One Stop Operator/Administrator was reviewed by the Committee. The tentative timeline for awarding a contract to the successful bidder and securing a new Administrator is the beginning of January, 2017.

Monitoring by Mr. Moser of Program Year 2015 WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker programs indicated that staff members have a good understanding of the program and goals and demonstrate a positive attitude toward their responsibilities within the program and that customers indicated that services provided to them by CareerLink staff were appropriate and relevant to their circumstances.

Dislocated worker activities involved three employers since the last report—Metropolitan Steel/SteelCo’s closing, BB&T’s acquisition of National Penn Bank and the closing of the K-Mart store on the Fifth Street Highway.

A State Agency Job Fair was held on August 31 at the PA CareerLink® Berks County and the CareerLink’s Fall Job Fair will be held on October 3 at the Crowne Plaza.

An Employer Outreach Team, co-chaired by Ms. Helen Amole and Mr. Rory Stevenson, has created two Career Pathways/Career Families thus far—Heavy and Tractor Trailer Driver and Manufacturing Maintenance Mechanic—which were reviewed by the Committee. The Team consists of PA CareerLink Business Services Representatives, EARN Program Job Developers, a WIOA Employment Specialist, an OVR Business Representative and a Young Adult Program Business Representative. Their work with employers will continue on additional pathways.

Ms. Adamczyk reviewed the infographic—By the Numbers—for Program Year 2015 (July 2015 through June 2016). She clarified the 2,198 “Unemployment Compensation Claimants Served” number by stating that CareerLinks are required to follow up with claimants by calling them for orientation. Claimants have two chances to show up so as not to jeopardize receiving the full benefit of their claims. She added that only State employees are allowed to work in these positions.

Mr. Fogarty added some comments regarding the Request for Proposals for the CareerLink Operator which under WIOA must be competitively procured. He said the State’s input is needed by September 30 in order to get the documents to the County Purchasing Department in time for the deadline. Mr. Fogarty said that a third-party provider, one person, or any number of partners could form a consortium to submit a proposal. Under the RFP the Workforce Development Board will retain the right to approve or disapprove any candidate for the CareerLink Administrator.

Mr. Fogarty complimented Ms. Adamczyk on her expertise in her position as CareerLink Administrator and in putting together a very good team. Ms. Adamczyk had been a County employee for 15 years and then accepted the position with the State in 2005. She has served as the CareerLink Coordinator/Administrator since 1999.

The Youth Committee report was introduced by Ms. White. She said the Reading Eagle provided a great coverage of the summer program. There were 408 participants and an increase in pay this year as well. The breakdown of participants is: 15 enrolled with the Penn State University summer career camps, 290 with ResCare and funded with TANF Youth, 50 with Goodwill and funded with TANF Youth, and 54 with ResCare funded through the Strategic Innovation Grant with Reading Muhlenberg Career & Technology Center, Berks Career & Technology Center, and Lancaster County Career & Technology Center. Ms. White complimented Ms. Am-

ber Columbo, ResCare's Youth Program Manager, for an admirable job administering the summer program.

Participants in the Goodwill Summer Work Experience Assessment Program (SWEAP) were asked to keep a daily journal reflecting on the work performed and the soft skills which were acquired and/or developed. Excerpts from the journals were included in the Board's packets.

A Request for Proposals was issued in August for an Out-of-School Youth Study, with issuance of the notice of contract award expected on October 14, 2016.

Mr. Moser added that ResCare has been the provider of youth services for years and performance measures which reflect the change in performance under WIOA were accepted by the contractor. Those measures were included in an attachment to the Youth Committee Report.

The Training and Industry Partnership Committee Report was introduced by Mr. DeVere. The Committee had reviewed and endorsed the RMCTC and BCTC Occupational Advisory Committee (OAC) membership lists at its September 8, 2016 meeting. There are 400 OAC members advising the combined schools' diverse programs. The Workforce Development Board accepted the Training and Industry Partnership Committee's endorsement of the OAC lists. Workforce Development Board approval of these rosters provides compliance with PA Department of Education, Bureau of Career and Technical Education regulations. The OAC member lists will be reviewed annually at the Committee's September meeting to coincide with the start of each new school year.

Board members commented on the need for skilled workers, especially in the manufacturing and health care fields.

The Advanced Manufacturing Employment Retention/Layoff Aversion Strategy (2016-2025) was reviewed and approved by the Committee and was also recommended for approval by the full Board. The Strategy commits to seek additional sources of public and private matching funds to sustain and support needed advanced manufacturing technical skills training for incumbent workers. Mr. Fogarty said that manufacturers want to retain skilled workers and upskill current workers, adding that it is expected that 6,000 new skilled entrants will be needed over the next 9 years. Mr. DeVere moved to adopt the proposed Strategy. Dr. Weitz seconded the motion and all voted in favor of its adoption.

A Power Point presentation to the Committee by Mr. Stevenson provided research conducted into the current and projected state of Health Care employment in Berks County. It was also noted in the report that Commercial Drivers License (CDL) training was a "hot item" for ITAs (Individual Training Accounts).

Mr. Jack Pfunder, Manufacturers Resource Center, reported to the Committee that so far 16 middle schools have signed on to participate in the "What's So Cool About Manufacturing" video competition, each school to field a team of 8th grade students to visit, interview and film partnering manufacturers' employees and facilities in the Fall, 2016. Final video versions will be uploaded to the Dream It, Do It website for viewing and a three-day voting in the January-February timeframe. Sponsorships and awards will be presented to schools for several best in competition category winners.

It was noted by Mr. DeVere that Massage Therapist and Credit Counselor have been added to the 2016 Berks High Priority Occupation list, following the State's approval of petitions submitted.

The Staff and COO Update was introduced by Mr. Fogarty. He noted that the local labor market unemployment rate has fluctuated slightly since the last quarterly report but remains at 5.1% as of July. Local job openings remain high and employers across most industry sectors report difficulty in finding qualified applicants, particularly for skilled technical positions.

He said it is unfortunate that PepsiCo announced that it would be closing its Reading plant on November 6, 2016 and that 95 workers will be losing their jobs as a result. Many of the employees impacted are represented by Teamsters Local Union #830. Mr. Fogarty added that CareerLink has Rapid Resource staff working with Ms. Patricia Murr to reach the employees. It is beneficial when the team can reach out to the employees as quickly as possible to help them find other jobs.

The fall Job Fair will be held at the Crowne Plaza on October 3, 2016.

Late breaking news: Co-chairs Ms. Homolash and Mr. McKeon held their first meeting of the Working Group for Individuals with Disabilities on September 14. Ms. Homolash commented that the people who attended the meeting are very excited about the project. The group will be working on a master plan and will meet monthly with facilitation by Mr. Moser. "The core purpose of the Group is to identify and develop solutions to the issues surrounding the employment of individuals with disabilities and raise those that the Workforce Development Board is uniquely positioned to address in a report to the full Board by June 30, 2017." Ms. Adamczyk suggested the Group connect with CareerLink's Employer Outreach Team in the future.

Ms. Judge called for "Market Intelligence" comments or reports.

Mr. Morahan commented on a September 16, 2016 Wall Street Journal article entitled "Social Erosion Fuels Unease" which focused on Reading, PA and working-class neighborhoods hit by the decline of the U.S. industrial base and crumbling under the weight of deepening social problems and cultural divides. The article states "In Berks County, once famous for the Reading Railroad stop on the Monopoly board game, social ills have been exacerbated by a 30% decline in manufacturing jobs and 6% fall in inflation-adjusted median income since 1995." The article includes information about Pottsville, referring to it as "a Reading suburb". Other statements in the article were disputed by members of the Board.

Concluding the discussion, Board members agreed that the manufacturing sector is very vibrant in Berks County. Mr. Fogarty said that he had been invited to make a presentation on manufacturing in Berks County to the Commissioners in August. He said jobs are available, but skilled workers to fill them are not available. Mr. Rowley said that perception of an issue is not reality. Ms. Judge suggested that the Reading Eagle be contacted to do an article with facts. Mr. Rowley added that the Board wants positive articles written. Mr. Fogarty said he would talk to the Ride to Prosperity partners for input.

Dr. Weitz commented on a very positive article, that being the 10th Anniversary of the Schmidt Center. She added that a lot of materials have been gathered in preparation for the next Careers in Two Years Project with the Greater Reading Economic Partnership.

Mr. McMahon said he has been trying to get the Reading Eagle to write an article on the sewage plant budget negotiations to no avail.

No guests were present; therefore, there was no public comment offered

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 9:00 a.m.