

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

7:30 a.m.

September 16, 2022

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

Meeting Summary

Members Present

Ms. Debra Antol
Ms. Jenny Batista
Ms. Auria Bradley
Ms. Ashley Chambers
Mr. John DeVere (conference call)
Mr. Michael Fischetti (conference call)
Ms. Kristi Gage-Linderman (conference call)
Ms. Peggy Kershner
Mr. Thomas McNelis
Ms. Debra Millman (conference call)
Mr. James Nichols (conference call)
Mr. Mark Pinkasavage (conference call)
Ms. Christy Pisker
Ms. Alexia Pursley
Ms. Patricia Shermot
Ms. Karen Troxell (conference call)

Members Absent

Dr. Karen Campbell
Mr. William Dorward
Ms. Marianne Egolf
Ms. Yvelisse Gonzalez
Mr. Robert Harrop
Mr. Scott Mengle
Mr. Richard Olmos
Mr. David Turner
Mr. Barry Unger

Staff and Guests Present

Mr. Daniel Fogarty	Berks County Workforce Development Board Staff
Ms. Amber Columbo	Berks County Workforce Development Board Staff
Ms. Megan Noll	Berks County Workforce Development Board Staff (call in)
Ms. Matika Palmer	Berks County Workforce Development Board Staff
Ms. Patricia Spencer	Berks County Workforce Development Board Staff
Mr. Rory Stevenson	Berks County Workforce Development Board Staff
Ms. Pamela Shupp Menet	Berks County Director of Community and Economic Development
Ms. Helen Konnick	PA CareerLink® Berks County Administrator
Mr. Andre Hardy	Educational Data Systems, Inc.
Ms. Tristin Prostovich	PA CareerLink® Berks County Young Adult Program Director
Ms. Marybeth Williams	Bureau of Workforce Partnership and Operations (call in)

Mr. Fogarty conducted a roll call and confirmed that a quorum was present either in person or on the conference phone.

The meeting was called to order by Ms. Jenny Batista, Vice Chairperson, at 7:35 a.m. as requested by Ms. Gage-Linderman, Chairperson, who participated via conference call.

Mr. Fogarty announced that the meeting was not being recorded and to assist staff with keeping the official minutes, members participating by phone should clearly state their name when making or seconding any motions and when making comments.

The Consent Agenda and all associated documents were provided to members previously in time for review. The documents are as follows:

- Approval of Previous Meeting’s Minutes
- Approval of WDB Policy Revisions per One Stop Oversight Committee
 - *Policy on Workforce System of Record* – effective 9/16/2022
 - *Data Security Policy* – effective 9/16/2022
- Approval of PY2022 Contractor Goals as Recommended by Committees
 - Business Services Team (BST) Goals with EDSI (per Executive Committee)
 - Title I Adult/Dislocated Worker Goals with EDSI (per One Stop Oversight Committee)
 - EARN Goals with EDSI (per One Stop Oversight Committee)
 - Title I Young Adult Goals with Equus (per Youth Committee)

On Ms. Batista’s behalf, Mr. Fogarty asked if there were any items to be moved from the consent agenda. There were no such requests. On Ms. Batista’s behalf, Mr. Fogarty moved to adopt the consent agenda. He noted that in accordance with the Workforce Development Board’s By-Laws, Mr. Harrop had submitted his votes on agenda items ahead of the meeting and he had no objections or abstentions to the consent agenda. Mr. Fogarty announced that the consent agenda was adopted with no abstentions.

Introducing the Executive Committee Report, Ms. Batista welcomed two new members to the Board: Ms. Trish Shermet, Visions Federal Credit Union and Ms. Christy Pisker, Glen-Gery.

Mr. Fogarty reminded the Board that Ms. Gage-Linderman’s second two-year term as WDB Chairperson will end on December 31, 2022, and that Ms. Batista’s six-month term as Vice-Chairperson (to complete a term previously held by Mr. Russell Showers) will also end on December 31, 2022. Mr. Fogarty noted that under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) of 2014, the WDB Chairperson must be a representative of the local business sector. He pointed out that the Executive Committee has nominated Mr. David Turner to be presented to the Board as a qualified candidate for election as the next Chairperson for a two-year term from January 1, 2023 through December 31, 2024. He invited members to nominate any other qualified members who might be willing to serve as Chairperson, including any self-nominations. No other nominations were offered. Ms. Bradley moved to elect Mr. Turner as Chairperson and Ms. Antol seconded the motion. On calling for the vote, all members voted their approval. Mr. Harrop had submitted his yes vote for Mr. Turner. There were no abstentions.

Mr. Fogarty also noted that the Executive Committee has nominated Ms. Batista to be presented to the Board as a candidate for election as Vice-Chairperson for a full two-year term from January 1, 2023 through December 31, 2024. He added that the Vice-Chairperson need not

be a business representative and invited members to nominate any other qualified members who might be willing to serve as Vice-Chairperson, including any self-nominations. There being no other nominations, Ms. Kershner moved to elect Ms. Batista as Vice-Chairperson and Ms. Pursley seconded the motion. On calling for the vote, all members voted their approval. Mr. Harrop had submitted his yes vote for Ms. Batista. There were no abstentions.

Mr. Fogarty noted that Committee assignments were being reviewed for the program year by the Chairperson and asked if any member wished to participate on a different committee to let Ms. Gage-Linderman know their preference by September 30. He noted that Ms. Antol would be moving from the One Stop Oversight Committee to the Youth Committee.

Mr. Fogarty welcomed Ms. Columbo, who joined the staff on June 29, 2022, to her first Board meeting as the WDB Assistant Director-Performance and Policy.

Referring to the WIOA Title I Performance Outcomes for the 4th Quarter PY 2021 Program Year-to-Date Results, Mr. Fogarty noted that the initial results indicated an overall performance for PY2021 through the 4th quarter to be above acceptable levels. Final PY2022 results from the Department of Labor & Industry (L&I) are expected by the end of December 2022.

Mr. Fogarty distributed the latest WIOA Performance Negotiations Worksheet, PY 2022 & PY2023 (CWIA Counterproposal 9-14-2022). He noted that the comprehensive proposal covered 15 distinct performance metrics across three WIOA Title I programs (Adult, Dislocated Workers and Youth). Mr. Fogarty requested approval to negotiate up to the Department of Labor and Industry's counterproposal goals. Mr. McNelis moved to approve Mr. Fogarty's negotiation; Ms. Shermet seconded the motion. On calling for the vote, all members voted their approval. Mr. Harrop had submitted his yes vote. There were no abstentions.

On Ms. Noll's behalf, Mr. Fogarty reported on the Finance Committee Report by commenting on the PY2021 Budget Vs. Actual. As summarized in the report, year-end expenditures were lower than expected across all contracts. There were no questions for Ms. Noll who participated in the meeting via conference call.

Mr. Fogarty directed members attention to the PY22 Revised Budget Proposal (Revised 8/17/22) which incorporated changes in funds due to adjusted carry-over amounts and the addition of a new Rapid Response grant award. He noted that the revised budget has been recommended for approval by the Finance Committee.

There were more carry-over WIOA formula funds and TANF funds than projected and included in the original approved budget. Ms. Shupp Menet asked if she might offer a question of clarification as to whether the carry over funds were restricted. Ms. Batista recognized the question of clarification. Mr. Fogarty answered that carry over funds must remain in the program in which they were allocated. He added that carry over must be carefully planned for in the budget each year to insure that sufficient funding is available for required operations.

Mr. Fogarty requested a motion to approve the PY22 Revised Budget Proposal. Ms. Antol so moved; Ms. Pisker seconded the motion and all members voted their approval. Mr. Harrop had submitted his yes vote. There were no abstentions.

Ms. Kershner commented on the *By the Numbers* report (July 2021 – June 2022) which is put together quarterly by Ms. Konnick, the PA CareerLink® Berks County’s Administrator. “Foot traffic” totaled 17,112, with 515 persons oriented. 771 individual businesses were served. Also included in the quarterly report are numbers for UC Claimants, New Training Accounts, New Work-Based Training Contracts and Virtual Services.

Planning has commenced for the November 9, 2022 Job Fair which will be held at the Abraham Lincoln from noon to 5:00 p.m. Ms. Kershner added that to date 41 employers had already signed up. She noted that Berks Connections Pretrial Services (BCPS) will hold a career fair for returning citizens on October 3, 2022 at the Doubletree Hotel.

Ms. Columbo reported that the current lease held by the County for the PA CareerLink® Berks County office at 1920 Kutztown Road, Suite F, expires May 31, 2023 and that the Operator (Educational Data Systems, Inc.) has engaged a real estate agent to look for site options. Their options will be presented to the Board and CareerLink Partners in November 2022.

Mr. DeVere commented that the Training and Industry Partnership Committee Report, put together by Mr. Stevenson, contains a lot of information summarized from their August 25, 2022 meeting. A chart listing the 2022 High Priority Occupations for the Berks County Workforce Development Area recently received from the Center for Workforce Information & Analysis was included in the meeting documents.

Mr. DeVere advised the Board that the annual Manufacturing Summit will be held at Reading Area Community College on October 26, 2022.

Mr. McNelis reported for the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Committee stating that despite releasing a Request for Proposals (RFP) for an Employer Symposium twice, we received no proposals bidders either time. The Committee supports incorporating an Employer Symposium into the Business Services Team’s (BST) contract and goal attainment as approved under today’s Consent Agenda. The Committee also recommends the BST utilize the Thomas P. Miller study suggestions to reach the employer community effectively. The timeline for this virtual event would be between November 2022 and February 2023.

Mr. Fogarty introduced Mr. Andre Hardy, Regional Manager of Educational Data Systems, Inc. (EDSI). Mr. Fogarty commented that additional funding would be provided to EDSI to coordinate the event.

The Planning Committee Report was introduced by Mr. Fogarty. He noted that Mr. Rowley’s term on the Board expired June 30, 2022. Mr. Rowley also served as the Planning Committee’s Chair which position is currently vacant.

Mr. Fogarty noted that every two years the Board’s Industry Sector Priorities are updated. Mr. Stevenson serves as our local staff “subject matter expert” in reviewing and developing the labor market intelligence which serves as a strong foundation for these Industry Sector Priorities.

Following are the proposed priorities:

- Priority A (driver industry) Manufacturing.
- Priority B (sustaining industry) Healthcare (excludes Social Assistance)
- Priority B (infrastructure industry) Construction
- Priority C (watch industries)
 - Transportation and Warehousing
 - Agriculture
 - Educational Services

Mr. Fogarty commented that educational services were added as a watch industry which has suffered great disruption during the pandemic. Fortunately, both local Career and Technology Centers (CTC’s) now offer a two-year technical program, followed by two years at the Community College and then a Baccalaureate at a college as an attractive and affordable pathway to entry into the educational services sector.

Ms. Chambers asked if child-care workers were considered part of the educational services sector. Mr. Stevenson referred to the High Priority Occupations list stating that career pathways flow charts were developed, and these positions are definitely a part of education. Mr. Stevenson referred to the “25-” numbered sections on the HPO list which encompasses educational services and 39-9011 refers to Childcare Workers.

Mr. Fogarty asked for a motion to approve the Revised Industry Sector Priorities (2022-2027). Mr. McNelis so moved; Ms. Chambers seconded the motion and all members voted in favor. Mr. Harrop had previously cast his yes vote. There were no abstentions.

Mr. Fogarty introduced Ms. Pam Shupp Menet, Berks County Director of Community and Economic Development, to the Board. Effective July 1, 2022 the organizational reporting of the Department of WDB, the Department of Agriculture and the Berks County Planning Commission became direct reports to her County position. Ms. Shupp Menet introduced The IMAGINE Berks Strategic Economic Development Action Plan including the Project’s team, process, vision and goals to the Board through a slide presentation during the meeting.

Some highlights of the presentation are as follows:

- The IMAGINE Berks Process
 - Establishing a baseline
 - Creating a vision
 - Defining goals and strategies
 - Moving to action
- Critical Insights
 - Unequal dynamics between jobseekers and the local job market

- Land availability is a challenge
- Housing stock is not meeting housing demand
- Diversity and inclusion as keys to population growth
- Economic Development Focus Areas
 - Business & Industry Growth
 - Small Business & Entrepreneurship
 - Infrastructure & Land Use
 - Talent & Economic Mobility
 - Housing
 - Placemaking
- IMAGINE Berks Goals
 - Encourage industrial and commercial redevelopment
 - Support small businesses and encourage entrepreneurship to enable the creation of high-growth ventures, main street amenities, and wealth building for residents
 - Invest in the County’s greatest asset—its people—by supporting structures to connect residents to opportunity jobs so that they may fully contribute to and benefit from the Berks County economy
 - Support land development that increases the tax base in Berks County
 - Address the County’s needs for new housing and redeveloped housing that is accessible and attainable
 - Invest in and highlight community assets that provide access to a variety of arts, culture, greenspace, and recreation opportunities for all residents and future residents
- Strategies, Action Steps, & Metrics
 - Process Metrics & Economic Indicators for each focus area were included
- 5 Year Plan
 - From vision to reality
 - Collaboration
 - Communication
 - Community

Ms. Shupp Menet discussed some of the priorities for the associated American Rescue Plan (ARP) dollars and offered to return at a future date to share updates on the progress of the project. She added that receiving this financing was a “once in a lifetime opportunity” and it is the Commissioners’ goal to get these dollars out into the community to make the greatest possible positive impact.

Mr. Fogarty thanked Ms. Shupp Menet for her presentation and commented that she is always welcome to return for future meetings.

Ms. Batista noted that Mr. David Hunter, Executive Director of the Berks County Planning Commission, is a member of the Board’s Planning Committee.

Mr. Fogarty referred to his COO report, particularly referring to Section VII. SE PA Local WDB Members Invited as Guests to *Labor Market Information Forum* to be held October 18

and 19 from 9:00 a.m. to 4:15 p.m. at the Montgomery County Intermediate Unit in Norristown, PA. There is no charge to Board members attending, but if any members are interested to please let the Board staff know of their interest in registering.

He noted that the Reading Aero Club and Reading Regional Airport will be hosting an Aviation Career Fair at the main terminal on October 1, 2022.

Mr. Fogarty congratulated Ms. Columbo and Ms. Noll for coordinating a successful application to L&I to receive an additional \$148,262 in WIOA funding under L&I's discretionary statewide activities grant. These additional funds will be included in the next PY2022 budget revision planned for Board approval in December.

A recently received *Pennsylvania's Manufacturing Competitiveness Playbook* published by the Pennsylvania Manufacturing Advisory Council, August 2022, was included in the Board's materials and a link was provided to those attending via conference call.

Mr. Fogarty referred to the Youth Committee report which was included in the Board's materials but was not publicly discussed.

There was no public comment.

Ms. Batista commented that the December 9, 2022 Board meeting will be held via MS Teams beginning at 7:30 a.m.

Ms. Bradley moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:59 a.m.