

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

7:30 a.m.

March 17, 2017

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
Ms. Carole Homolash
Mr. William Hornberger
Ms. Joanne Judge
Ms. Peggy Kershner
Mr. Lewis McCoy, Jr. (via conference call)
Mr. Thomas McKeon
Mr. John Morahan
Mr. James Nichols
Ms. Jennie Rodriguez-Priest
Mr. Mark Schlott
Mr. Russell Showers (via conference call)
Ms. Connie Skipper
Mr. Edward Swoyer (via conference call)
Mr. Pablo Tejada
Ms. Karyn Troxell
Mr. Chester Winters

Members Absent

Mr. Thomas Brizek
Ms. Marianne Egolf
Mr. Michael Fischetti
Mr. Modesto Fiume
Ms. Kristi Gage-Linderman
Mr. Robert Harrop
Mr. Tom Herman
Mr. Brian McMahan
Ms. Jeannine O'Neill-Rohrbach
Mr. Mark Pinkasavage
Mr. Gregg Riefenstahl
Mr. Michael Rowley
Mr. Barry Unger
Dr. Anna Weitz
Ms. Tammy White

Staff and Guests Present

Mr. Daniel Fogarty	Berks County Workforce Development Board Staff
Mr. Alan Fineman	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
Ms. Terri Lampe	Manufacturers Resource Center
Ms. Paulette Dunkelberger	Abilities in Motion

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

The Executive Committee report was introduced by Ms. Judge. She said that the Committee approved an amended Work-Based Training Policy and a Berks WDB Oversight Plan, both of which would be presented for a vote during the consent agenda time later. She noted that the Berks County Workforce Development Board is in compliance with federal and state board composition regulations having been monitored by the PA Bureau of Workforce Development Administration in January. The Board is in compliance with applicable sections of the Workforce

Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and the Department's Workforce System Policy (WSP) and remains certified until January 2019. Additional topics covered in the report were an update on the timeline and process for a CareerLink Operator and Adult/Dislocated Worker Title I Services provider effective July 1, 2017. The proposal review committee consists of three Board members—Mr. Hornberger, Ms. Chambers and Mr. Swoyer—and three WDB staff members—Mr. Fogarty, Mr. Moser and Mr. Fineman. The State has a new requirement for PY16 that funds equal to at least 30% of local WDB Title I funds are utilized for training purposes. Another related requirement is that at least 50% of Title I training enrollees be individuals with specific barriers to employment. The WDB received final approval from L & I of its one-year local transition plan and proposed policy guidance for final four-year regional and local plans was released in late February.

Ms. Judge asked Mr. Fineman to comment on the Finance Committee Report and the attachments thereto. The Expenditures vs. Budget report for 7/1/16 through 2/28/17 (with figures showing 67% of the program year completed) had been updated and copies of the report were circulated. Mr. Fineman said the Operating Budget shows the implications of unplanned one-time costs in legacy leave/severance obligations which will result from the elimination of seven County of Berks bargaining unit positions and one manager at the CareerLink effective June 30, 2017. These expenses are directly related to the state's policy that the Title I Adult and Dislocated Worker services must be competitively procured by July 1, 2017. Mr. Fineman, referring to the report, added that there are a number of uncertainties related to the PY17 budget for the period July 1, 2017 through June 30, 2018. Another significant unknown for PY17 will be the annual cost of the new contract for CareerLink Operator and Title I Adult and Dislocated Worker services.

Mr. Judge then presented the consent agenda items for approval and a quorum was present:

- December 9, 2016 minutes
- Oversight Plan effective 1/1/17
- Work-Based Training Policy effective 3/1/17
- Individual Training Account (ITA) Policy effective 1/1/17
- Residency Considerations for Adults and Dislocated Workers effective 3/1/17

All members voted their approval.

In Ms. White's absence, Mr. Moser introduced the Youth Committee Report. Mr. Moser explained that EARN (Employment, Advancement and Retention Network) performance funds had been used over the past several years to greatly expand the summer programs but beginning in PY15, the Commonwealth restricted EARN performance funds to only be spent in the EARN program. Additional TANF (Temporary Aid for Needy Families) funds had also been used in the past to support summer programs. To date no one knows whether there will be "special" TANF Youth funding allocated. The "normal" TANF Youth allocation is still expected to be received. With those realities and uncertainties, the TANF Youth programs cannot be funded at the same levels going forward.

The Youth Committee recommended the following to the Board:

- Continue to fund Earthrise Enterprises at the current level (\$28k-\$30k)
- Eliminate funding for Penn State University summer career exploration scholarships
- Reduce Goodwill funding to \$40k. Make whole (\$110k) if sufficient “special” TANF Youth funds are received
- Fund the ResCare summer program with a portion of remaining normal TANF Youth allocation and remaining EARN performance funds. Add “special” TANF Youth funds if received
- Set aside sufficient start-up funds for the 2018 summer program.

Mr. Tejada commented that he got his first job at 14 in a summer youth program. Ms. Homolash added that OVR will support 50 youth who qualify. Mr. Moser said that if the program is not funded adequately, approximately 150 kids will be served. If fully funded, 300 kids will be served.

An in-depth discussion followed on the Out-of-School Disconnected Young Adult Study which is cost shared between the Workforce Development Board and United Way. The study is being conducted by Thomas P. Miller and Associates of Indianapolis, IN. Mr. Fogarty said that the focus had previously been on in-school youth. The new regulations under WIOA direct Workforce Boards to focus on out-of-school youth and that 100% of funding received now is directed to this population.

The purpose of this study is to (a) better understand the reasons youth are disconnected, and whether these reasons are legitimately keeping youth from attending school or working; (b) better understand how poor disconnected youth are making ends meet; and (c) provide a context concerning disconnected youth in the development of workforce development strategies, policies and priorities to meet the needs of our local young adults.

The target group for this study are youth/young adults aged 16 to 24 who have neither been in school or employed for a period of at least six months at the time of the study or young adults age 21 to 24 who are underemployed (would like full-time work but have settled for part-time work or are employed in a position that is inadequate with respect to their skills/training). Individuals must be residents of Berks County, Pennsylvania at the time of the study.

Mr. Morahan commented that venues (such as Wawa) where this target group “hangs out” must be identified. Ms. Chambers said that United Community Services recently hired one of her students as a Recruiter who knows where to look for disconnected young adults. Mr. Tejada said that you must go knock on doors, go to rec centers, parks, etc. to connect. Ms. Betsy Adams, who is connected to dropout prevention programs in schools, was mentioned as a person who might be able to help distribute the study. Ms. Skipper agreed to reach out to Ms. Adams. Responding to Ms. Kershner’s question of whether people get out on the streets to connect with disconnected youth. Mr. Fogarty replied that there is not enough money in the grant to pay recruiters. However, he added, input was requested from Mr. Michael Toledo, Director of Centro Hispano Daniel Torres Inc., Mr. Angel Figueroa, Director of I-LEAD, and Mr. Eric Turman, Reading High School Principal. Mr. Fogarty said that the Miller report is due to be presented at the June Board meeting.

In Ms. Gage-Linderman's absence, Ms. Adamczyk introduced the CareerLink Oversight Committee's Report. Ms. Adamczyk said that the closing of three Unemployment Compensation Service Centers resulted in high volumes of claimants waiting for hours to access the single courtesy phone available here. She said some days a second phone line was available on a reverse call basis. Adding to the strain from high volumes, many local claimants have Limited English Proficiency and need extra time on the phone for interpretation. Ms. Adamczyk said that Ms. Brendaliz Cruz, CareerLink's receptionist, did a fabulous job dealing with customers. Mr. Fogarty complimented Ms. Adamczyk and her team. He also said that Mr. Nichols was very helpful in this situation. Mr. Nichols said that the language issues in Reading have been exacerbated by the laying off of some UC bilingual staff, leaving only two such staff to handle such high volumes of calls statewide. Ms. Adamczyk said that CareerLink's bilingual staff also assisted at the front desk.

Included in the Report was congratulations to Ms. Jean Heilman, Operations Support, who recently celebrated a thirty-year anniversary with the County, and who has been "Job Fair Queen" for several years confirming registrations, making table assignments and preparing the exhibitor folders for the date of the events. Employers are currently being recruited for the May 1 Job Fair at the Crowne Plaza.

A Job Corps Transition Specialist joined the CareerLink staff on March 1 and is responsible for job development and placement services for young adults leaving the Red Rock Job Corps Center and locating in the Berks and Lancaster workforce development areas.

Ms. Adamczyk reviewed "By the Numbers" (July 2016 – January 2017) and two charts included in the materials with the monthly average for new job postings, employers with Berks County job postings, and new employers and a chart showing PY16 customer satisfaction through January 2017. CareerLink now has two WorkKeys® profilers on staff. ACT® is in the process of changing some of the assessments of WorkKeys®. Additional information on the changes will be forthcoming.

Mr. Fogarty reported that two proposals were received as a result of the Request for Proposals for a One Stop Operator/Title I Adult and Dislocated Worker Services required by WIOA regulations issued by the State. Three Board members and three staff members (identified previously in the minutes) will be reviewing and evaluating the two proposals. The County will issue the notice of the contract award on May 5 and the work will commence on July 1, 2017.

The Training and Industry Partnership Committee Report was introduced by Mr. DeVere. Two of the policy statements approved during the consent agenda items earlier in the Board meeting—Individual Training Account Policy and Residency Considerations for Adults and Dislocated Workers—had been reviewed and approved by the Training Committee at its March 8, 2017 meeting.

Mr. DeVere referred to the chart titled "Industry Snapshot in Berks County, Pennsylvania 2016 vs. 2006. Based on the statistics noted, he said the Committee recommends to the Board that Construction be added to the Berks County Industry Sector Priorities as a priority industry. The recommendation will be reviewed by the Policy Committee. The Sector Priorities (2015-2020) Report was last updated June 10, 2015. Mr. Unger who operates a very successful apprenticeship program had conveyed to the Training Committee that construction is definitely a focus

worth including. Ms. Chambers said UCS has been getting calls for students with construction skills.

The Committee's report also included updates on the Berks Manufacturing Industry Sector and several grant initiatives that are being pursued. An update by Ms. Lampe on the "What's So Cool about Manufacturing" video contest awards ceremony held on March 7 was provided to the Training Committee and included in the report in the Board's printed materials.

Mr. Fogarty presented the COO update which covered several areas: SE PA Regional Planning and Cooperation; Potential Priorities and Strategies for 4-Year Local Plan; Berks County Local Labor Market (*Berks County ranked #14 in one-year average weekly wage growth at 9.2%, just ahead of Santa Clara, CA*); Greater Reading Labor Market Image (NPR Marketplace Reports); MRC's What's So Cool About Manufacturing Contest/Manufacturing Day 2017; Randy Peers now leads the Greater Reading Chamber and Economic Development Corp. (GRCEDC); and a reminder to the Board that completed Statements of Financial Interests should be returned to the WDB office ahead of the May 1, 2017 deadline so they can be reviewed.

Amy Scott, National Public Radio (NPR) reporter, by invitation, spent two days visiting the Greater Reading area in January interviewing local employers, educators, students and job seekers about past challenges and current opportunities in the highly resilient manufacturing sector. Her interviews led to four balanced (and mostly positive) stories on NPR's Marketplace Business Report in February. Following Amy's visit, WDB member Mr. Fischetti, Cambridge-Lee Industries, shared with Mr. Fogarty that he received complimentary feedback from customers and suppliers across the country who heard the broadcasts.

Mr. Fogarty stressed the implications of the Potential Priorities and Strategies for the local 4-Year Plan. His chart included in the report indicated that the most significant change taking place within the Berks County labor market is the aging of the valuable workforce.

The COO's report also stated: *"If you are one of our Board members whose current term expires on 6/30/2017, please contact us no later than March 31, 2017 only if you do **not** wish to be reappointed. This notice will allow us sufficient time to have a qualified replacement nominated and approved prior to 7/1/2017. Otherwise, we will plan to submit your name for re-appointment."*

Opening the meeting for Market Intelligence Discussion, Ms. Judge asked for any comments from the Board either on previously mentioned or additional topics.

Ms. Lampe thanked the Board for all the support received for the manufacturing video contest and said she is very excited about the next opportunity. Ms. Antol added that the contest was outstanding and met expectations. Mr. Fogarty said the vibe was terrific. Mr. Fogarty said that \$60,000 to support expansion of the contest next year in Berks County was included in the application for a Business Education Partnership grant which is pending.

Mr. Tejada commented that applications for funding must be creative and flexible. We must get "out of the box" to give good services.

Mr. Fogarty thanked Mr. Moser, Mr. Fineman and Mr. Stevenson for their work on preparing the grant applications.

Replying to Ms. Judge who asked whether the kids can be tracked who will continue on that career path. Ms. Lampe replied that the impact on numbers of CTC entrants can and will be tracked.

Mr. McKeon commented that there have been discussions on holding a Manufacturing Summit the same time as the next Manufacturing Week. This has been successful in the Lehigh Valley and in Philadelphia. He said it's a natural for Berks County since there is a great support from great manufacturers who utilize unbelievable technology which in turn makes manufacturers more successful. He added that discussions should continue with the Ride to Prosperity group and its initiatives.

Mr. Tejada complimented Mr. Fogarty and his team for doing a fine job.

Ms. Judge said that all of our freshmen Congressmen have business backgrounds. She said our programs must be talked about. She, along with several other Board Chairs and staff, met with Congressman Smucker recently to discuss workforce development.

A "Happy St. Patrick's Day" was declared to all by Ms. Judge.

Ms. Adamczyk mentioned that a local socks manufacturer—This Night LLC—donates 50 cents per pair of socks sold through their website to the Olivet Boys & Girls Club of Reading, PA. Their website for reference is: www.this-night.com.

No public comment was offered.

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