

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

7:30 a.m.

June 16, 2017

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

Members Present

Ms. Debra Antol
Ms. Ashley Chambers (via conference call)
Mr. John DeVere
Ms. Marianne Egolf (via conference call)
Mr. Modesto Fiume
Ms. Kristi Gage-Linderman
Mr. Robert Harrop
Mr. Tom Herman (via conference call)
Ms. Carole Homolash
Mr. William Hornberger (via conference call)
Ms. Joanne Judge
Mr. Lewis McCoy, Jr.
Mr. Thomas McKeon
Mr. John Morahan
Mr. James Nichols
Ms. Jeannine O'Neill-Rohrbach
Mr. Michael Rowley
Mr. Russell Showers (via conference call)
Ms. Connie Skipper
Mr. Edward Swoyer (via conference call)
Mr. Pablo Tejada (via conference call)
Mr. Barry Unger
Dr. Anna Weitz (via conference call)
Ms. Tammy White
Mr. Chester Winters

Members Absent

Mr. Thomas Brizek
Mr. Michael Fischetti
Ms. Peggy Kershner
Mr. Brian McMahon
Mr. Mark Pinkasavage
Mr. Gregg Riefenstahl
Mr. Mark Schlott
Ms. Karyn Troxell

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. Rebecca VanderMeulen	Penn State Educational Opportunity Center

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

Ms. Judge then presented the consent agenda items for approval:

- Approval of March 17, 2017 meeting minutes
- Oversight Plan (revised) effective July 1, 2017
- WDB Procurement Policy effective July 1, 2017
- Supportive Services for Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Related Programs effective July 1, 2017

All members voted their approval.

Ms. Judge introduced the Finance Committee Report and asked Mr. Fineman to comment on the handouts. Mr. Fineman said that the Expenditures vs. Budget (7/1/16 – 4/30/17) are on target and in good shape. Referring to the proposed Program Year 2017 Operating Budget, he reminded members that only 13% of the total expected is received in the first quarter beginning July 1, 2017. The County will no longer provide Title I services at the PA CareerLink® Berks County. A contract for Title I services was awarded to Educational Data Systems, Inc. (EDSI). He added that a provision in the contract states that if funds received are reduced, the contractor's funds will also be reduced. Mr. McKeon moved to approve the Program Year 2017 Operating Budget, and the motion was seconded by Mr. Winters. All members voted their approval.

Ms. Judge referred to the Berks WDB Discretionary/Competitive Grants – Status Update 6/5/17 Report and stated that the staff spent a lot of time and effort to obtain over \$2M in grants which require very specific regulations to spend the money.

The Executive Committee report was presented by Ms. Judge who commented on the Board's PY2017 Composition. Ms. Rodriguez-Priest resigned from the WDB effective April 6, 2017 due to a career change that caused her to lose her eligibility as an employer representative under current state guidance. She has agreed to remain on the WDB's Youth Committee as a non-Board member. Twelve WDB members whose current terms end on June 30, 2017 were re-appointed by the County Board of Commissioners to new three-year terms beginning July 1, 2017. After twenty-four years of service to the WDB and its predecessor, the Private Industry Council, Mr. Swoyer asked not to be reappointed and the County Commissioners have appointed Mr. Randolph Peers, President and CEO of the Greater Reading Chamber and Economic Development Corporation (GRCEDC) to the Board as an economic development representative effective July 1, 2017. Mr. Winters' final term on the WDB will also be completed June 30, 2017. Ms. Judge thanked Mr. Swoyer and Mr. Winters for their many years of productive and positive service. Mr. Fogarty added that Mr. Winters would continue to serve on the Policy, Planning and Priorities Committee as a non-Board member, and would also join the Training and Industry Partnership Committee in the same capacity.

As a result of the significant progress made over the past nine months by the Working Group on Employment of Individuals with Disabilities, it was recommended by the Policy, Planning and Priorities Committee that a permanent standing committee be established beginning July 1, 2017 to continue this important work. Ms. Homolash moved to establish the permanent committee and the motion was seconded by Mr. Winters. All members voted their approval. The WDB Chairperson will appoint a committee chairperson who will also join the Executive Committee.

Ms. Judge briefly commented on the PY2015 Monitoring Review. After an extended and often difficult series of communications with the Bureau of Workforce Development Admin-

istration (BWDA) over the course of a year, all findings determined by a new monitor were satisfactorily resolved. Mr. Fogarty thanked the staff for their diligence in seeking resolution. Following the PY2016 monitoring visit in April 2017, BWDA issued a letter confirming that there were no findings for PY2016.

The Policy, Planning and Priorities Committee report was reviewed by Mr. Winters. He said that the Industry Sector Priorities (2017-2021) recommendation was presented to the full Board by the Policy, Planning and Priorities Committee but had been contributed to by the Training and Industry Partnerships Committee. The document is an important reference so that when grant opportunities arise, there is proof of the sector priorities. Following are the Priorities in the report:

- Priority A (Driver Industry): Manufacturing.
- Priority B (Sustaining Industry): Healthcare and Social Assistance.
- Priority B (Recovering Industry): Construction
- Priority C (Watch Industries): Transportation and Warehousing; Agriculture

Mr. Winters moved to approve the Industry Sector Priorities (2017-2021) as recommended and the motion was seconded by Mr. Unger. All members voted their approval.

The timeline for the composition, review and submittal of a four-year local/regional plan is still September 1, 2017. Mr. Moser commented that the final template for planning was recently received and that he went to Harrisburg for a meeting about the process. The Committee will meet to approve the plan and will make a recommendation for approval before the September Board meeting. Mr. Fogarty added that there is thirty-day public comment period as well.

Mr. Winters referred to a document prepared by Labor and Industry entitled “Berks LMI Data June 10, 2017” which he said provides very interesting reading. Ms. Judge directed Ms. Spencer to send a link to the document to the Board following the meeting.

The CareerLink Oversight Committee report was presented by Ms. Gage-Linderman. Educational Data Systems, Inc. (EDSI), who was awarded contracts for One Stop Operator and Title I Adult and Dislocated Worker Services, has been interviewing both internal and external candidates for available positions effective July 1, 2017. Ms. Adamczyk will continue as the PA CareerLink® Administrator under the One Stop Operator contract. Ms. Gage-Linderman commented that the incumbent staff has been really fantastic and the transition to a new contractor has not impacted their ability to serve customers in the interim. Mr. Fogarty added that Ms. Patricia Murr and her Title I staff have always excelled in customer focus. Mr. Fogarty also acknowledged the valuable time and attention given to review of the contract proposals by three members of the Board—Mr. Hornberger, Ms. Chambers and Mr. Swoyer.

Dislocated Worker activities listed in the report were Reading China and Glass, Santander Bank, and XO Communications. Mr. Fogarty commented that the Career Services Team, led by Ms. Murr as the point person, has also been the dislocated worker team. He said that responsibility will be picked up by EDSI.

The Spring Job Fair held at the Crowne Plaza in May was the 30th job fair and a record-breaker for the number of reserved tables. Employer registrations were the highest on record. Job Seeker turnout was 641.

The By the Numbers (July 2016 – April 2017) report was reviewed by Ms. Adamczyk.

Mr. DeVere presented the Training and Industry Partnership Committee's report. He said there have been big changes in statewide high priority occupations over the years and CareerLink uses the current list to prioritize training. Mr. Fogarty had shared with the Committee a list of at-risk occupations that the WDB staff feels are priority occupations in Berks. Recommendations for occupations deserving of corrective action were solicited from Committee members and the intent is to appeal for reinstatement of these locally critical HPOs through a collective SE PA regional petition initiative. Mr. Fogarty commented that petitions in draft form would be submitted on June 16, 2017.

The Training and Industry Partnership Committee endorsed the new Industry Sector Priorities (2017-2021) that have been approved by the Policy, Planning and Priorities Committee.

A 2016-2017 Advanced Manufacturing Industry Partnerships chart listed 143 persons trained in high-end manufacturing jobs totaling over \$127,000 to date in incumbent worker training grant subsidies to Berks County manufacturers on a dollar for dollar matching basis.

The Youth Committee report was presented by Ms. White. Referring to the Berks County Disconnected Young Adult Study Update included in the members' packets, she said a lot of time has been invested by our partners on this study. The Youth Committee has been actively engaged with Thomas P. Miller & Associates and the information derived from the study will be utilized by the partners for very useful outcomes. The next steps are for the draft to be finalized and then the Youth Committee will determine how best to tie the outcomes to the Board's work and how funding might be utilized to benefit out-of-school disconnected youth.

Ms. Homolash and Mr. Moser attended and presented at the PA Workforce Development Association's Youth Day at Dixon University in Harrisburg on June 6. Ms. Homolash commented that the WDB Board, staff and OVR have great collaboration. She added that OVR has focused on community-based worksites to help students experience real world situations and to achieve success in their efforts.

Mr. Moser commented on the number of young people hired for this year's summer program: 45 from Goodwill; 120 from OVR; and 225 (plus 25 in reserve) from ResCare.

The first comment made by Mr. Fogarty to the Board about his COO Update was to thank Board members for completing and submitting their 2016 Statements of Financial Interests ahead of the May 1, 2017 deadline and, as a result, 100% compliance was achieved on this important annual requirement.

Late Breaking News from the Report: On June 13 the federal WIOA Title I funding allocations for PY2017 were received. There was a 6.08% increase over the current year (PY2016) to a level of \$2,319,257. The budget was adjusted accordingly.

The local labor market continues to be favorable to job seekers with April's local unemployment rate at 4.7%

Quoting from the report: "The Return of Churn: Local data on new hires was recently released by the *PA Center for Workforce Information and Analysis (CWIA)* for last year's third quarter (2016Q3). The data show Berks County had **15,620 new hires in 2016Q3** and a percentage of new hires (9.0%) that was more than 50% higher than that of all other WD areas in the state. CWIA confirms that within a relatively stable-size labor force such "churning" is normally associated with higher confidence among job-seekers that they can benefit from changing employers, generally for higher total compensation, improved working conditions or greater growth opportunities. Additionally, in a stable or modestly expanding economy such as ours, high numbers of retirements often create space within the labor market for such "churning."

Mr. Fogarty added that generally people leave jobs for more money. He said, a local business person recently stated: "\$12 is the new \$10 to attract and retain entry level people."

Ms. Judge opened the meeting for Market Intelligence Discussion. No comments from Board members were offered. She then introduced Ms. Becky VanderMeulen, Counselor from the Penn State Educational Opportunity Center, who had requested to speak to the Board about the new program offered by Penn State.

Ms. VanderMeulen explained that her position is a guidance counselor for adults, with an emphasis on veterans, first generation college students and recent dropouts who are within one year of getting their GED. Penn State is operating under a five-year grant to serve 1,000 persons. The office is also a resource for people who need English GED training. The office is located in the Reading School District Educational Opportunity Center at Eighth and Penn Streets in Reading.

Ms. Adamczyk added that Ms. VanderMeulen is scheduled to present at the CareerLink staff meeting on June 28.

There being no further business to come before the Board, Ms. Judge wished everyone a "lovely summer" and adjourned the meeting at 8:55 a.m.