



The Southwest Ohio Region
WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD

**SWORWIB QUARTERLY BOARD MEETING
(WebEx Video Conference due to COVID-19)**

May 13, 2021

8:00 a.m. – 10 a.m.

Minutes

SWORWIB Members Present: Uche Agomuo, Peg Albert, Jackie Alf, Michael Beck, Heath Boucher, Paula Brehm-Heeger, Markiea Carter, Natasha Chesnut, Scott Conklin, Jamie D'Agostino, Renee Dean, Margaret Fox, Chris Fridel, DeJuan Gossett, Jesse Grissom, Stephanie Hall, Melissa Johnson, Laurence Jones, Shawntay Mallory, Tim McCartney, Renee McPhedran, Nick Milazzo, Deval Motka, Matthew Owens, Bridget Patton, Eric Rademacher, Alicia Reece, Jennifer Roeder, Harry Snyder, Carol Sorenson-Williams, Roberta Thomas, Amy Waldbillig, Dani Watkins

SWORWIB Members Absent: David Cook, Chad Day, Mark Dierig, Shanel Gentry, Myron Hughes, Matthew Jones, Peter McLinden, Denisha Porter, Jerry Porter, Kevin Powell, Michael Prus, Maureen Reilly, Trisha Rogers-Lowey, Diana Small

SWORWIB Staff Team: Jason Ashbrook, Deborah Jordan, Sherry Kelley Marshall, Karen Saterfield

Resources: Tim Dingler, Kevin Holt, Teri Jones-Morris

Guests: Ethan Arguello, Thomas Balzer, Mohamed Camara, Leo Chan, Kevin Davis, Mike Davis, Miss Kruse, Edgar Malcom, H.A. Musser, Stephanie Parker, Monika Royal-Fisher, Sean Stanbro, Keshawn Townsend, Brandy Taylor, Leta White, Bridget Wolf

I. Opening - Welcome and Introduction

Having exceeded a quorum, Chair Laurence Jones welcomed everyone to the second quarterly Board Meeting of 2021 via WebEx at 8:04 a.m. Chair Jones thanked everyone for taking time out of their busy schedules to attend this meeting, expressed his appreciation that we can use technology to keep business going, and reviewed the online protocol. Chair Jones asked that everyone be ready for roll call as it will be done in alphabetical order, and please click your mute buttons and click them again when you are ready to speak. Due to the size of the Board, Chair Jones asked the Executive Board Members to be ready to make a first and/or second a motion. Moving forward, Chair Jones stated that we will not ask for any yes votes. The meeting will proceed assuming yes and we will ask for no's and abstentions for the duration of the meeting. President Marshall conducted roll call for board members and acknowledged the guests in attendance. After the roll call, Chair Jones reminded everyone to use their mute button until they are ready to speak.

II. Approval of Agenda

Chair Jones reviewed the agenda and reminded members that the SWORWIB has two Agendas at each meeting. The First Agenda approval is for the presentation of the order of business. The second agenda business item is for review and approval of "the consent agenda" which is used by larger boards to handle the business of the organization addressed in committee meetings or other venues in an efficient fashion, in order to have time to focus on essential educational or training presentations and discussions. The ideal practice is that everyone reviews the entire agenda before approval, including a close review of the consent agenda items, and then indicates during the "Approval of the Agenda" any consent agenda item

they wish to move from the consent agenda to "Other Business" for separate discussion. With no questions or concerns raised, Chair Jones asked if there were any abstentions or nay's, hearing none, the agenda was approved.

III. Approval of Consent Agenda

Chairman Jones stated that with a Board of this size much of the work is done within the committees and reports were provided in the book you received ahead of today's meeting. The consent agenda items are listed in section. Chairman Jones asked that if anyone has questions regarding an item within the consent agenda, please ask questions now or they can be addressed during the President/Executive Director's report. With no questions or concerns raised, Chair Jones asked if there were any abstentions or nay's, hearing none the agenda was approved.

- 02.11.2021 Annual Meeting Minutes
- President/Executive Director's List
 - Audit & Grant Update
 - Budget – Revised FY20-21 & Proposed FY 21-22
 - 2021 Calendar of Meetings
 - FY2021 Scorecard
 - Area #13 Re-Designation (State Plan 2022)
 - Re-Certification of the Board
- OMJ Business Engagement Report
- OMJ Operator Report
- Administrative Entity & Fiscal Agent Report
- Youth Report(s): CCMEP/TANF & WIOA
- NewsWIB's (Separate Packet)

IV. CDL Advocacy

Chair Jones asked Marshall to introduce this topic as Thomas Balzer of the Ohio Trucking Association was not in the meeting yet. Marshall then summarized the concern. While Ohio has the lowest truck accident rate in the region, the State is proposing a change that's more stringent than the federal law prescribes, which would impact training and, ultimately the supply chain. We are being asked to support a request to reconsider this proposed change. With no questions or concerns raised, Chair Jones made a motion, Waldbillig seconded the motion to support a reconsideration of the change in CDL requirements. Chair Jones asked if there were any abstentions or nay's, hearing none the motion carried.

V. Status of WIOA 2020 – 2025 Regional Plan and Affinity Groups

Chair Jones asked Executive Director Ashbrook to report. Ashbrook shared a summary page covering this information. The regional plan is required by WIOA every four years to provide a framework for providing services and tracking outcomes. A timeline, starting in January 2021, was shared. As expected, the pandemic presented challenges to the process. SWORWIB reached out to Area 12 early on for their input into the regional plan since in the past; however, the SWORWIB Team/Area 13 has completed most of the work in this project.

Marshall devised an affinity group concept to get feedback from key stakeholders. Ashbrook executed the concept and facilitated nine affinity groups, starting with the Public Library Council. Overall, feedback came from approximately 100 attendees from 50 organizations. Key takeaways were around targeted sectors and occupations, access to the technology, childcare provision, transportation, workforce resources, and expanded collaborations/partnerships. Ashbrook also emphasized that inclusive capitalism and diversity/equity/inclusion were a significant part of the conversations, along with barriers made worse by COVID.

The next steps for finishing the plan are to post an online survey and obtain public comments. We requested a modest extension to the state's initial deadline to complete the process; and the State kindly agreed to do so. The Plan will be posted online for public comment on May 29th, and then submitted to the

state (with all public comments) by June 21, 2021. Ashbrook concluded by thanking all those who participated, including a number of individuals on the Board.

Paula Brehm-Heeger of the Public Library of Cincinnati and Hamilton County added that Ashbrook did a great job of facilitating their affinity group. She also credited Marshall with initiating the Regional Library Council in the past since that has been a valued partnership. Chair Jones thanked all for this important work.

VI. Presentation: Jobs for Cincinnati Graduates (JCG) Student Contest Winners

Chair Jones asked Marshall to introduce our next speakers. Marshall introduced Leta White with JCG who then introduced Kevin Davis of Schroder High School who was 1st Place Citywide Public Speaking and 2nd Place State Winner, Keshawn Townsend of Aiken New Tech High School who was 2nd Place Citywide Public Speaking Winner and Mohamed Camara also of Aiken who was 1st Place Cover Design Winner. Miss Kruse mentored and was present with the students from Aiken. After the students' speeches, many of the Board and guests expressed how impressed and inspired they were by the young people. Marshall said this program is always her (slightly early) birthday gift. As an appreciation and recognition, the students will each receive a gift card when their photos are taken. Marshall thinks every school system should have this program and named a few JCG alumni who are now principals in our region. Thanks were given to White for her dedication and to other program people involved.

VII. Nominating Committee Announcement

Chair Jones asked Scott Conklin to give this presentation in Matt Jones absence. Conklin explained the process that covers May – November with the slate being submitted to the Mayor for City Council approval after our November Quarterly Board Meeting. A nominating form was included in the Board packet. He also asked Board members whose terms expire in December to let the Committee know their plans to remain on the Board or not. The Board is carefully selected to make sure it is diverse in all aspects of its representation (employers, industry, gender, ethnicity, age). Marshall would like to add another consideration to their already long list to include a JCG alumni. Conklin also asked that Board members let him know if they would like to join the committee of 5 to 7 members. Finally, thanks were expressed to the members of committee for its past work, and particularly to Shantay Mallory and DeJuan Gossett for their great outreach. Chair Jones thanked Conklin for reporting and for the committee's excellent work.

VIII. President/Executive Director's Report

Chair Jones asked Marshall and Ashbrook to report.

- Consent Agenda: There being no questions on the consent agenda, Marshall noted the importance of keeping Area 13 confined to Cincinnati and Hamilton County in any future attempt for the State to re-designate a larger area. She also noted that we have the largest and most diverse workforce Board in Ohio and the four surrounding states. The Board has been recertified, and she applauded the Nominating Committee for the Board's composition. Chair Jones asked Conklin if they used a matrix for filling positions. Conklin replied yes and the key was to know the members who are returning, as well as those ending their terms, to determine the needs.
- Celebrating Marshall: To acknowledge Marshall's upcoming birthday, Chair Jones asked everyone to unmute to sing to her. Attendees joined-in to serenade Marshall.
- Combined WIOA Partners & OMJ Operations Report: We have combined the two groups for efficiency and effectiveness during continuing COVID challenges.
- OMJ Partners MOU Extension Agreement thru July 1, 2022: This step was helpful, due to the ongoing pandemic. Marshall asked Ashbrook to report. Ashbrook said that 16 out of 19 partners have signed so far. We still need signatures from Medicaid, Hamilton County Re-Entry and Volunteers of America by the end of the month- all of which are in progress.
- Youth, Friends, & Family Virtual Career Fair: Marshall reported that Jobs Ohio provided resources to the local areas to deliver virtual job fairs to help employers find talent. Given the need for summer jobs but the extra cost to clean the Convention Center led to the one-month push to create

this virtual career fair. She thought it was the best thing in twenty years. Ashbrook added that although there were competing events, this fair had 53 employers represented with 274 registered customers and 214 confirmed employer/candidate conversations held online. Employers could even view resumes and conduct interviews. The full list of employers represented is in the newsletter. He thanked all the partners for the great team effort. We will continue to offer virtual and in person fairs in the future.

- Other
 - Work Patterns: Marshall shared thought leaders have noted a shift in work patterns which means an economic adjustment as well. Re-employment gains last month were with men while women continue to stay at home.
 - COVID: The County removed the requirement for temperature checks, but we will continue for now since we have the equipment. This could catch other illnesses as well.
 - RESEA: The State is requiring that local groups follow State practices which will impact our operation. Marshall asked Holt to comment. Holt said this a great opportunity to leverage our work. We will do well with this chore using data to guide us. Marshall complimented Holt as among the best in the region and the country.
 - Ohio Trucking Association: Marshall invited Tom Balzer to report now that he was in the meeting. Balzer commented on how inspirational the youth speakers were earlier. He then talked about the State changes in entry level driver requirements. The CDL test was formerly a low barrier to entry, but now there is a requirement to go to truck driving school. The trainer-driver ratio is lower, and more land is needed for the practice required. Both requirements are costly to institute. This is also more onerous than the Federal rules and a challenge for the trucking industry with the current shortage of drivers. 20 to 30% of fleets are not operating due to this driver shortage. The industry was not consulted about the rule change either. Marshall added that the supply chain is the fastest growing industry so this will cause a problem. This problem needs alternative options. We will advance a letter of concern from the Board as discussed earlier. Waldbillig said that truck driver training was an expensive program to start; Cincinnati State refers students to Butler Tech. Chair Jones thanked Balzer for his report and update.
 - Unemployment Benefits: Chair Jones asked Holt if we are prepared when the unemployment benefits subside. Holt said we are ready for a thoughtful, incremental re-opening. Almost all services are open remotely now except the Resource Room which will re-open slowly. There are 10,000 people on unemployment in Hamilton County with a lot of money available. This is a dynamic environment. Fox asked if there is a breakdown of categories like male/female numbers. Holt says he does not know exactly but the State has great tools to find out. This is the first recession that has disproportionately impacted women, especially white women without a bachelor's degree. It could be partly the challenge of childcare. Fox commented on Ashbrook's regional plan report; she asked whether training or hardware was more of a problem and concluded that virtual options could be inaccessible to some as well. She also asked how we make childcare more of a local responsibility. Ashbrook said that those are hot topics. There has not been as much discussion about hardware. In terms of virtual, we will not be dependent on any delivery format but responsive to workforce needs. There are lots of resources right now; we need better tools to reach job seekers who are eligible and help them connect with resources. Holt says he will get more data on decreased childcare options. If there is a shortage of childcare, it may be due to the challenge of re-opening childcare centers. JFS funds a lot of childcare; we fund one child at a time. McCartney of JFS added that one issue is whether parents are willing to take their children back to childcare. This might change with the Governor's announcement that the mask mandate and remaining health orders will end June 2. Chesnut asked Holt if PUA numbers were included in his figures. Holt said that half of all the metro numbers in Ohio are from that group. Chair Jones commented that our economy is more diverse.

IX. Public Comments and Announcements

- Marshall announced that Tim McCartney will be retiring. She appreciated their 20-year work relationship.
- Shawntay Mallory reminded everyone that we will sadly celebrate Marshall's retirement May 14th and show her some love.
- Roberta Thomas announced that Cincinnati Inspire is open with hybrid options. Most attend live instruction through Google Meets. They have partnered with City Link to offer some new classes in coding and phlebotomy.
- White announced that JCG is looking for three internship placements: electrician, mechanical engineer and sociologist. WIOA supports these paid internships.
- Marshall has talked to Chris Fridel about apprenticeships; we have expanded our policy to support apprenticeships as a result. She wondered what other supports are needed. Fridel thanked the team of Marshall, Holt and Ashbrook for their help. He said certainly gas cards are helpful to get people to work if there's a need and a way to pay for Uber is another idea.

X. Next Board Meetings (see 2021 Calendar of Meetings for Committees):

Chair Jones reviewed the upcoming Board meetings which may be in person with a virtual option. He pointed out the November date change from the 11th to the 18th due to Veteran's Day.

- **August 12, 2021** - Quarterly Board Meeting 8:00 - 10:00 am
- **November 18, 2021** - Quarterly Board Meeting 8:00 - 10:00 am

XI. Adjournment

Chair Jones commented this was a sad moment as Marshall retires, but the soiree will be a time to share all the impact she has made. He then asked for a motion to adjourn. McPhedran moved, Snyder seconded the motion. Chair Jones asked if there were any abstentions or nay's, hearing none the motion carried. Chair Jones thanked everyone for their attendance, noting they were getting back some time in their day as we close early. The meeting ended at 9:45 a.m.

Respectfully,



René McPhedran
Secretary