



The Southwest Ohio Region  
WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD

**SWORWIB QUARTERLY BOARD MEETING  
(WebEx Video Conference due to COVID-19)  
August 12, 2021  
8:00 a.m. – 10 a.m.  
Minutes**

**SWORWIB Members Present:** Uche Agomuo, Peg Albert, Jackie Alf, Paula Brehm-Heeger, Markiea Carter, Leo Chan, Natasha Chesnut, Scott Conklin, Chad Day, Renee Dean, Mark Dierig, Margaret Fox, Chris Fridel, Shanel Gentry, DeJuan Gossett, Jesse Grissom, Stephanie Hall, Myron Hughes, Melissa Johnson, Matthew Jones, Shawntay Mallory, Rene McPhedran, Nick Milazzo, Deval Motka, Rhema Nwaneri, Matthew Owens, Denisha Porter, Jerry Porter, Eric Rademacher, Alicia Reece, Maureen Reilly, Jennifer Roeder, Diana Small, Harry Snyder, Carol Sorenson-Williams, Roberta Thomas, Amy Waldbillig.

**SWORWIB Members Absent:** Khurram Altaf, Michael Beck, Heath Boucher, David Cook, Jamie D'Agostino, Laurence Jones, Peter McLinden, Bridget Patton, Kevin Powell, Michael Prus, Trisha Rogers-Lowey, Dani Watkins

**SWORWIB Staff Team:** Jason Ashbrook, Pat Bready, Karen Saterfield

**Resources:** Tim Dingler, Kevin Holt

**Guests:** Sarah Adams, Rory Brown, Jules Camarda, Abria Drummonds, Brandy Hermann, Edgar Malcom, Monika Royal-Fisher, Lynn Murphy, H.A. Musser, Amy Story, Chuck Walters, Leta White, Bridget Wolf

### **I. Opening - Welcome and Introduction**

Having exceeded a quorum, Vice Chair Carol Sorenson-Williams welcomed everyone to the third quarterly Board Meeting of 2021 via WebEx at 8:05 a.m. Vice Chair Sorenson-Williams thanked everyone for taking time out of their busy schedules to attend this meeting, expressed her appreciation that we can use technology to keep business going, and reviewed the online protocol. Vice Chair Sorenson-Williams 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, Vice Chair Sorenson-Williams asked the Executive Board Members to be ready to make a first and/or second a motion. Moving forward, to maximize efficiency, Vice Chair Sorenson-Williams stated that we will not ask for a roll call of yes votes during action items. The meeting will proceed assuming yes and we will ask for no's and abstentions for the duration of the meeting. Executive Director Ashbrook conducted roll call for board members and acknowledged the guests in attendance. After the roll call, Vice Chair Sorenson-Williams reminded everyone to use their mute button until they are ready to speak.

### **II. Approval of Agenda**

Vice Chair Sorenson-Williams 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 of items vetted 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, H. Snyder moved, M. Hughes seconded the motion to approve the agenda as presented. Vice Chair Sorenson-Williams asked if there were any abstentions or nay's, hearing none the agenda was unanimously approved.

### **III. Approval of Consent Agenda**

Vice Chair Sorenson-Williams 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. Vice Chair Sorenson-Williams asked that if anyone has questions regarding an item within the consent agenda, please ask questions now or they can be addressed during the Executive Director's report. With no other comments, concerns, questions or requests for agenda item changes, H. Snyder moved, L. Chan seconded the motion to approve the consent agenda as presented. Vice Chair Sorenson-Williams asked if there were any abstentions or nay's, hearing none the agenda was unanimously approved.

- 05.13.2021 Quarterly Board Meeting Minutes
- FY2022 Budget
- Policy Updates (Apprenticeship & Support Services, Eligible Training Provider Process Policy & Industry Sector, SWORWIB Employee Guide & Independent Contractor (1099) Agreement)
- Executive Director's Report
  - Audit & Grant Update
  - Board Meeting Calendar - 2022
    - FY2022 Scorecard
- Committee Reports
  - OMJ4PWD
- NewsWIB digital newsletter (Separate Packet)

### **IV. CCMEP & WIOA Youth Annual Report & Performance Report**

Vice Chair Sorenson-Williams asked Tim Dinger to share the Youth Reports.

Tim Dinger reported that spending was down this past year by about 18%, and that is due to lowered demand for services, there was a great influx of pandemic funding that came from the federal government. So, a lot of the things that we do in CCMEP, and also, to some extent in WIOA, we were able to refer folks to services that were offered through OhioMeansJobs as well as pandemic funding and Cares Act funding. We expect that this decrease in need may continue even through this year. We did see 975 job attainments with the CCMEP/TANF funding, and that was down only slightly from 2020. The one increase that we did see more of that we are very excited about was the CCMEP incentives, those increase by about 20%. this year over last, and the funding for that increased, we raise the number, the amount that we gave out for incentives. The other thing that both WIOA and CCMEP did was we met or exceeded all five of the state mandated performance measures, which was the direct result of the service providers that we work with. So that's a shout out to CYC and Leta White, to Equus and Jules Carmada, as well as Santa Maria and H.A. Musser and team. On the CCMEP/WIOA side we have the same five performance measures. Four of those we met or exceeded, and the fifth one, which is one of the most difficult is the measurable skills gains, we are close to meeting that area as well.

### **V. OMJ Annual Report & Performance Results | Cohear Report**

Vice Chair Sorenson-Williams - With that, we would love to hear from Kevin Holt, who is the director of the OhioMeansJobs Center to learn about OMJs performance and outcomes. I really want to thank Kevin and the rest of the staff at the OMJ Center for the great job they've been doing, and Kevin especially, for the

consistent leadership at OMJ center. And Kevin's also been serving in another leadership role with Ohio Department of Job and Family services. We do look forward very much to the OMJ report and results from this most challenging program year.

Kevin Holt - This year we had 309 WIOA enrollments and the prior year we were at 347. Laurence made this suggestion a long time ago, they provide these year-to-year comparisons just to give you all an idea of scale. Obviously, our in-person opportunities were down, and it really reflects the first half of this year when many of the schools were closed due to the pandemic's lockdown and a lot of job seekers being served in the latter half of the year. Recently, the volume has really picked up. There is a lot of demand for training dollars and a lot of demand for upskilling. And we're just trying to make sure we invest these dollars in trainings that folks will genuinely get good wages from. So, speaking of those median wages for training, people who completed our trainings came out with a median wage of \$28.16, which is great. I'm using median because the mean got really thrown off by some extreme examples of high wages. And I just didn't think it was reflective. The non-training related wages \$15.88 an hour, that to us is a good benchmark, we want to see wages at or above \$14 an hour. For people we work with, specifically those we fund training for, and our goal really is \$20 hour. Something that is a little embarrassing, and again, it reflects on the year behind us with COVID, are the onsite visits to the OMJ Center, which was 1,391. That to me is embarrassing. The previous year, we had 9,324 visits. Obviously, the dramatic fall reflects entirely the impacts of the COVID experience. For much of this year, our doors were not open to walk-in customers but we were always open to schedule one on one interviews and scheduling job searches. But everybody was kind of hiding from in person experiences out of concerns over safety and health. We are now fully open for walk-ins without appointment now and foot traffic remains kind of low, I have to say, much of the job seeking activity, much of employer activities moved online and people made that adjustment. And we're upping our technology skills to match that change in demand. Training enrollments were at 304. It's not as good as the prior year. But it's an interesting dynamic on individual training accounts. And for those of you who aren't familiar, this job training is for in-demand careers. So, when we pay a school to train somebody, we actually serve more customers. For example, we served 297, rather than the prior year 264. A big drop-off was in on-the-job training. The prior year was 74. This year was down to just 7. That's a combination of the pandemic as well as a federal auditor providing stern guidance on OJT's. The Feds said we had to be much more exhaustive in documenting that a jobseeker would not have gotten a job in the absence of an on-the-job training agreement. That's not how we traditionally treated those instances. We encouraged employers to take risks on people that they may or may not have otherwise hired. That approach made us reevaluate how we do OJT agreements. We're reinvigorating that opportunity moving into this year. We'll do more OJT's this year. That number should rise meaningfully over the next several months, which brings me to another interesting highlight. Most of our tuition-based training came in three industries, including healthcare, information technology and logistics. The majority of logistics training demand was in truck driving. So those tended to be, in our experience, the best, easiest, quickest, most reliable ways to take people from struggling with income to middle class wages. So that relatively quick transition is an example of why we're trying to infuse our dollars with more opportunities in short-term training experiences. I'd love to do more with manufacturing in the coming year. And we've got active initiatives on both those fronts. For the coming year fundings, we are funding direct services at 57% of our total spending and that's a failure on my part. And that's for a few reasons. It's really because we staffed-up to address some audit concerns. So, we spent more on staff salaries. And shared costs, things like IT and HR and fiscal work really rose so as costs rose in the pandemic, because we had to adjust a lot of what we were doing, both within OMJ, but also within the fuller HCJFS. And it really affected those numbers. I think we're on our way out of that though. And I do expect this year trends are going to go up pretty quickly. So, we should meet or exceed that 60% goal. In terms of monitoring one of the things we never take for granted is we live and die on the idea that we get five or six sets of auditors who come into us every year, and any one of them can take our money, or more to the point, we can lose money on behalf of Area 13. And this year behind us is the same we did not have any findings for recovery or any corrective action plans. Auditors like to give corrective action plans

because it gives demonstration that they are actually present. It's proven, they're adding value. We do expect to return to a more normal sort of interaction with our auditors in the coming year as more face-to-face monitoring reaction happens. We are totally revising our business services report based on some feedback we've gotten and based on how we want to motivate our staff to achieve specific outcomes. I'll be working on the latest one of those I should have it out to Jason, by the 15th of this month. Hamilton County has a lower unemployment rate than most of the state specifically than most of our metro peers. And we have maintained that rate throughout the pandemic so we have a more robust dynamic diversity of industry sectors. So, we should have gotten less money than those that our peers. That's just the way WIOA formula funds work. We didn't, we got more than most of our peers who got 10% or 20% cuts in the real money. And then we looked at the reason why, it's because those areas weren't spending their money. A lot of our peer counties around the state are a real danger of federal rescission of funds because they got their real money two years ago and they still haven't spent it; that's not our danger. We actually have been wildly robust in our spending and we've had to ramp it down because we were spending too much on training to be sustainable. We never want to send money back as there's always good work to be done here locally certainly job training is one of those good works. HCJFS has a ton of people in the building, or doing project ignite work, or doing TANF work, or doing Cares work, and all of those people help our bottom line because they contribute to supporting the building, which allows us to redirect some of our dollars away from infrastructure, and towards direct client services. Every workforce area in the country should have used this downtime to look at your long term or medium-term futures. So, we engaged Thomas P Miller, a workforce consultant, to look at our operations and help us work with how to get better. And I'll touch on the Cohear report later. But I did want to touch on a few of these innovations and highlight some of them. But some things are more obvious. We moved to contactless enrollment for WIOA. This approach provides more flexibility for customers to complete their enrollment documents onsite at the OMJ or from home, whichever is more convenient. The pandemic helped usher in that efficiency for customers and staff. We assumed responsibility for launching new programs, hiring new staff and are successfully rolling out the Re-Employment Services Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) program, previously performed by the state of Ohio, and Matt Owens, and his folks have been great partners in helping us take up that work. And I think we're doing it successfully. Again, in collaboration with our state of Ohio partners, we implemented Salesforce, a business service attraction reporting tool. Previously, we had a series of locally developed tools, and Salesforce gives us more tools to share that information with peers. So, we think it will serve as a stepping stone moving forward, the integration of CARES, IRAP, and PRC, specifically rent and utility assistance and baby items into an integrated service delivery model. That model allows people who are enrolled in WIOA, who may need help with housing or utilities or baby items. I realize when I say baby items, it sounds out of context. But we're really working hard to reduce infant mortality. And that's one of the things that we're helping with. So, when people who need those services in order to be successful in training, we can bring them to the table. We have initiated a comprehensive document to support service integration. We should have moved to paperless file management, three or four or five years ago, but we didn't. Now we have started that process. Probably a couple months in the future, we'll be putting all our new cases online. And some are document imaging systems, rather than having all these paper piles everywhere. I wanted to try a few other things and I mentioned rent utility. This is something based out of the OMJ center that I'm proud of. I think it's something I hope you all take some pride in as part of this effort. Since October of 2020 we've provided rent utility assistance to 8,213 families, that number goes up every single day. We've issued funds totaling \$8.5 million, and that number goes up every day, there's a ton of demand still out there. And we're going to keep working at this resource through at least 2024. But people can't get keep jobs if they are experiencing a crisis of potential eviction. So, we see that is very much consistent with the mission of the OMJ Center.

Cohear is a great local partner who was awarded a bit to conduct an analysis of the OMJ and develop ideas for innovation. We have seen them do a bunch of good work with other partners and peers. So, we engaged them to look at our system, not so much how we operate, but how our customers operate. We

couldn't figure out what the labor market was doing, I still don't fully understand. And frankly, I don't think anybody understands what labor market we're moving into. So, they did a great job of creating this group of constituents, employers, job seekers, trainers, schools, and created what must have been a dozen focus groups. I sat in on with them to go through a bunch of questions the main being where are we going and what do people need? And this is actually much smaller version of a much larger report, if anybody wants to look at the report just let me know and I will be happy to share. But I think this report highlights them. I'm not going to read all of them, except to say, I'm looking at a list of 12 of them that we could talk to you about today, including they're recommended changes. This report will inform but certainly not determine our future this coming year and the following year in light of COVID. Also, how we procure the, for example, youth services, those kinds of things. This report will inform those efforts. I'll be happy to share the Cohear Report details with anyone who is interested.

Vice Chair Sorenson-Williams - That's true, we do have a couple requests in the chat for the report. So, I'll ask Jason to help make a note of that as well. I really want to thank Terry, Tim and Kevin, for writing the comprehensive reports and we all appreciate so much the great work that you guys have accomplished. Even when you can't have folks come through the front door of OMJ Center, you guys still dug in and kept working.

#### **VI. ETP Evaluation Review and Approve ETP List**

Vice Chair Sorenson-Williams - We'd love an update on our eligible training provider evaluation committee. The information is found in the reports on page 87 and 88 in your packet. I'd love to have Dr. Eric Radmacher, co-chair of the Institute for Policy Research and chairperson of the board's ETP evaluation committee, to provide an update.

Dr. Eric Radmacher - First of all, before I start, I want to say thanks to the Eligible Training Provider (ETP) evaluation committee members, Elisa Bates, Mark Dierig, H.A. Musser, Diana Small, Dani Watson, and our old friend Charles Wright. Kevin from the OMJ staff and Jason, Karen, & Sherry with SWORWIB. So, I want to give you our report, two acronyms, we love acronyms to keep in mind. One is ETP, which is eligible training provider, and the other is ITA, which is individual training accounts. So just to give you a little bit of background, the individual training accounts are the training support that we provide to improve workplace occupational skills in order to obtain employment. But it's not just employment, we're also looking at retention, we're looking at high demand credentials and most important, a living wage. One of the most valuable things that I've learned in being part of the board is sometimes we oversimplify employment, and we oversimplify training to getting the job and we forget about long term retention, the degree to which the jobs that we're helping folks to find are in-demand so that there's a future with those positions, and then earning a livable wage. So, the committee comes together each year, and we have some pretty hard questions about the ETPs. We look at the completion of the programs, we look at whether or not they're providing industry credentials or college credit. We look at the employment record, and are they staying, and then of course wages. We have some other rules that come along with making sure that their various completion rates and that sort of stuff, I won't bore you with all that. But we really do a good bit of work, digging into some of the finer details of the operations of these providers. And then we evaluate them, make recommendations. Many of the enrollments are in truck driving/logistics supply chain, for those of you that are new Logistics is something you're really going to become familiar with, in Greater Cincinnati, that I don't know if we talked enough about how many positions are available, how many positions that pay very well, in supply chain and logistics; were also doing a lot of work in it. And of course, healthcare, which is not surprising. That's the case and in many regional economies. So, we go through and we do some evaluation of each of the providers, we look at their records, we look at the information they've provided to score them about their performance. The challenge can be if any of you have ever done this work, evaluating outside providers that unfortunately, even though we're providing funds, and their job in accepting those funds is to provide us data back, we don't always get full data back. That can be for a variety of reasons. I like to think of errors as commission and omission. Commission is

one where people are holding back data from us. I don't think we find too much of that. But there can be some omission, which is where for whatever reason, maybe they're having some issues related to getting all their numbers together because of COVID and staffing or those sorts of things. Or maybe they've got some completion issues that they haven't provided. Not quite an approval, but either a conditional, or what we call provisional, kind of approval. When we'll be in communication with you on a regular basis about the data you're providing, to make sure that we can ultimately get you to our meets or exceeds our criteria standard, which is approved. So, our highest level, which is meets or exceeds the criteria, that's the approved level this year, Great Oaks, Napier, Making a Change, Mercy Neighborhood Ministries, Tech, elevator, Max Technical Training, Max solutions and the Kable Group are all approved providers on the conditional and provisional side, I won't read them all, you can see those folks. Some of those folks are doing well. But there's some gaps, and we really need to work with them. Others, we're trying some pilots where we might work with them on say, five or 10 folks that come in for training, and we sort of study how they do. And if they do well, they have a chance to move up into that approval position, or the conditional position. I think that's pretty good for a report for today. You do have all the highlights and things in your packet. I should also say there were four that were absolutely not approved, because they didn't meet our criteria in there to who the data was nearly completely insufficient. And so, we did hold back with them. Speaking about all the jobs Kevin does with his team, the next step is that we go ahead and we say here's your approved, here's your conditional, and here's your provisional. Karen and others will then have to then go and find out some more information and really work with those trainers and providers. Obviously, that's what we'd want to do, because we want as many providers as possible. But it does, of course, add to the other things that that they need to do in their daily work. But it also just gives you a real good idea about just how much work goes into each of these providers. It's not as simple as we award the money, and then we say go to work. The OMJ staff and the SWORWIB team have to really do a ton of work afterwards to make sure that we come up with the results that we're getting. So, unless there any questions, that's my report for today. If there are no questions, I (Eric Rademacher) make a motion that we approve this report. But if there are questions, I'll be glad to answer them. Thank you.

Vice Chair Sorenson-Williams - It does not appear that we have questions. Margaret Fox seconded. Are there any nays? Any abstentions? Motion passes. Thank you so much, Dr. Rademacher, for the for the report. We appreciate it.

## **VII. Nominating Committee Report & Nomination Form**

Vice Chair Sorenson-Williams I really want to thank co-chairs DJ Gossett and Matt Jones for spearheading this year's nominating process. I want to turn it over to DJ for the updates.

DJ Gossett - So as you know, we are underway in regards to the board member nomination process for 2022 so you can expect to hear from us over the coming weeks. We welcome current nominations from board members, as well as supporters of SWORWIB. Therefore, in your nomination packet, you'll have materials to nominate candidates for the SWORWIB two-year term from January 2022, until December of 2023. Now, you might want to say, what does the SWORWIB nominating committee do? What we do is we coordinate the recruitment, interviewing recommendation process and new board members to the board and chief local elected official mayor, consistent with the Code of Regulations. We also recruit officers and committee leadership and advise the board on the needs of new committees. And lastly, governance related issues such as onboarding members or assisting the executive director with orientation and mentoring of new board members. So don't get nervous if we do ask for your services on the board. Once the committee agrees upon nominations, the co-chairs will present the full slate of nominations at the quarterly board meeting on November 18 2021, then subsequently submit to the mayor for approval. So, the following great individuals have agreed to participate in this year's committee. We have Jackie Alf, Markiea Carter, Scott Conklin, David Cook, Rene Dean, Chris Fridel, Myself, Myron Hughes, Melissa Johnson, Matthew Jones, Shawntay Mallory, Deval Motka, and Jason Ashbrook. Thank

you to all the new and returning committee members! The committee will convene on August 26, and October 21. So those individuals whose terms are expiring at the end of December 2021, I believe that you should have already been contacted by us as a group. It is critical for us to hear from each expiring term member, so we know how many new board members we need to recruit, as well as balance industry sector, gender, and diversity as we select for those memberships. Also, board membership is reviewed by the state and federal monitors on an annual basis. And so therefore, we must meet state federal requirements to continue to serve as a designated board for Cincinnati and Hamilton County. We have exceeded or met all compliance standards since 2008, and we are not going to stop now. If you haven't informed us of your status for 2022, please do so as early as possible. Equally important, we invited private sector business representatives, elected officials, chambers, unions, industry groups and other community leaders to submit nominations. We've been very fortunate to have support from these groups during the nomination process, and we expect that to continue. If you have any questions or concerns, you can reach out to myself, Matt Jones, or Jason with any questions and for more information about the process. We just look forward to bringing on new great members to join this already awesome team.

Vice Chair Sorenson-Williams - Well, we appreciate the nominating committee's work on this and appreciate you as board members and visitors suggesting folks for the board it is very worthwhile endeavor to participate with. So, thank you, DJ for all the great work, we really appreciate it.

### **VIII. Executive Director's Report**

Vice Chair Sorenson-Williams noted that we get to hear from our new Executive Director, Jason Ashbrook. We have seen a significant amount of regional state national activity of the workforce development area. And so, we're really interested in the highlights that Jason has for us.

Ashbrook thanked Chair Sorenson-Williams and greeted the members, adding how it was great to see such an awesome virtual turnout and participation today, in the midst of crazy schedules, including summer coming to an end, and kids going back to school. That said... we appreciate your valuable time and leadership today.

Although I provided a detailed Executive Director's Report on pages 44 and 45 in your meeting packet, I just wanted to share some highlights from that report, along with some other topics relevant to regional workforce development.

We submitted our **Regional Strategic Plan (2021-2025)** to the state on June 21, 2021; currently awaiting the approval letter from Ohio Department of Job and Family Services. This four-year plan was led by the SWORWIB team, with *some* involvement from the Butler, Clermont, and Warren County Workforce Board. The development of the Plan involved over 90 organizations, including the city and county as well as local government, community-based organizations, industry partners, was modernized to include more strategies to help support an effective and equitable regional workforce system. We received over 100 public comments and feedback on the plan as well as participation from over 90 community organizations, businesses, and industry sector partners. For more details, we included a one-pager in your meeting packet, with additional specifics on this project, including the affinity groups, common themes/takeaways and strategies. Special thanks to Robbie Jennings Michels for assisting us with aggregating the Plan's content and materials.

**In terms of Contracts, Agreements, & MOUs-** it's definitely that time of year!

- 1916/OMJ Partner MOU Extension Agreement – this agreement was recently signed by all local partners and then subsequently approved by the state. A new MOU for 2022-2024 will be developed,

negotiated, and signed in 2022. We are monitoring infrastructure costs as more partners/customers return to onsite services at the OMJ Center, with respect to state/federal COVID guidance.

- One Stop Operator and Services Contract Renewal (#1 of 2) - negotiated and mutually approved by SWORWIB and HCJFS; submitted for signatures to the Board of County Commissioners. Next procurement cycle is scheduled to begin in late 2022.
- Parking Lot Agreements (1916) – four out of five agreements have been signed/executed. Awaiting final signature from River of Life, which shares a structural easement with our parking lot
- Youth Services Contract Renewals (#2 of 2) – currently in-progress; contract renewals for Equus, CYC, and Santa Maria have been processed by the county, signed by SWORWIB, and sent to the mayor's office for final signatures. Next procurement cycle is scheduled to begin in early 2022.
- Other agreements including our MOU with HCJFS for the OMJ facility management with its updated budget, along with the adjusted budget for the Systems-Wide Agreements, are both underway.
- Bookkeeping – an RFP was issued in June 2021 to procure a new entity to perform these critical functions, provide more consistency, and improve fiscal controls. Local accounting firm, Sheldon Reder, received the contract. Current Bookkeeper, Betty Robinson, is assisting with the transition as well as resolving the backlog of invoices from FY2021. Special thanks to HCJFS for their flexibility and understanding as our team implements solutions to address these challenges.

**Committees** –ETP Evaluation, and Nominating Committees have met or had significant activity since the last quarterly Board meeting (we just heard these Committee Reports earlier in the meeting). I wanted to share another shout-out to Eric Rademacher and DJ Gossett for their great reports! Additionally, I met with the Chair of the Business Engagement Committee, to map-out some new data dashboards and relevant topics to support OMJ business services. Uche, thank you for your commitment and support! The **OMJ4PWD Committee** also met in June. I wanted to give a shout-out to the new Chairperson of that Committee, Jennifer Roeder, with Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities.

**Grants Update-** this report (also included in the meeting packet) highlights some of the newer grants: *Pathway Home* program for returning/re-entry citizens and the *Re-Employment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA)* Program (now locally administered) for Dislocated Workers.

**WIOA Funding** - FY2022 DOL funding allocations were recently provided to Ohio's 20 local workforce areas. These funding levels included significant reductions for several areas/counties. However, Area 13-Cincinnati/Hamilton County, received a 7% increase in funds.

**Scorecard-** the updated Scorecard (located on pages 49-51 in your packet) provides the framework of measured activities for FY2022. These activities will be updated with progress reports and other information, and submitted in future meetings. There are a variety of new activities, including outreach, marketing, promotion, awareness, innovations, and continuous quality improvement.

**Audits and Monitoring-** the Audit and Monitoring Review Sheet is included in the consent agenda for this August report. We continue to experience several monitoring's/audits from a variety of state agencies. The next scheduled event is our annual independent fiscal audit, which takes place in October, with a formal report provided during December's Executive Committee meeting.

**Infrastructure Bill and Workforce Provisions-** we recently participated in a Zoom call facilitated by the Office of Intergovernmental Affairs, a department within The White House. The purpose of this call among workforce development leaders from across the nation, was to highlight the current Infrastructure Bill and its impact on workforce development. The current iteration of the Bill includes over \$100 Billion in workforce development investments, organized in three buckets:

1. Job Creation, Job training, and Work Supports

2. Targeting under-served communities (youth, minorities, individuals with disabilities, formerly incarcerated, etc.)
3. Strengthening the existing workforce system to enhance the talent pipeline

Revisions to and/or reauthorization of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) was also mentioned as a possible item included in the Infrastructure Bill; however, details on these items were not provided during the call. The Administration views the local workforce boards as the driver of workforce solutions and innovations among communities.

Infrastructure and workforce development are often interwoven as major economic contributors to a community. A recent example of this connection includes the Western Hills Viaduct, a structure that was recently highlighted by the SWORWIB Leadership Team in a letter to Transportation Secretary Buttigieg. The letter expressed support for the City of Cincinnati's recent INFRA application for federal funds to replace the 89-year old viaduct, given its critical impact on the regional economy and workforce.

**TechCred**- Ohio businesses looking to upskill their workforce can begin applying for the tenth round of TechCred on **August 1<sup>st</sup>**. The application period will close on **August 31<sup>st</sup>**. In partnership with a local training provider, the employer can apply online at TechCred.Ohio.gov, and the state will reimburse up to \$2,000 per trained employee upon completion of a credential.

**Ohio Workforce Association (OWA) Updates** – we resumed in-person meetings in July 2021. OWA is hosting a statewide Board Chair and Director Luncheon in Columbus on August 25. OWA Annual Workforce Conference is scheduled for October 14-15.

**President Biden Visit to Cincinnati**- during Biden's recent visit to Cincinnati, his first stop took him to the IBEW-NECA Electrical Training Center in Westwood to tout the importance of trade and other union jobs. Chris Fridel, Assistant Director of the Center (and a SWORWIB member) participated in this unique event and snapped a photo with the WH Press Secretary!

**In terms of "Other" items, Ashbrook shared the following, additional highlights:**

- The first item relates to **Child Care**. One of the key topics and takeaways during the recent development of our new Regional Plan was Child Care, and specifically the critical challenges that our region is facing with the availability and affordability of *quality* Child Care. Meeting the childcare needs of our clients who are parents is central to achieving our mission of helping people overcome barriers to work, supporting our local workforce, and meeting the needs of employers. The Urban Institute actually published a research report that highlighted five local workforce boards from across the country and identified some key strategies on how Boards can help reduce child care barriers. Some of these solutions included: increasing our supportive services to help fund child care, leading or participating in a local task force to help address regional child care challenges, strengthening our partnerships with local child care organizations, and partnering with state agencies to leverage additional resources. I say all that to say... We are pursuing the opportunity to help mobilize or expand a regional task force with community partners and businesses around this topic to help individuals and families meet their childcare needs and ultimately help support long-term employment. If you or your organization would like to get involved in this cause, please email me for more details. I anticipate having some additional updates at our next Board meeting, so stay tuned for more details.
- In terms of **WIOA Performance**, the state just sent us the preliminary WIOA performance reports from Quarter 4 of FY2021. We are on track to Exceed 11 measures, Meet one, and Fail three measures (the latter being in post-exited employment) However, the State is having similar difficulties in that measurement. More positives... our area outperformed statewide achievement in 13 of 15 categories and substantially out-performed our metro counterparts of Cleveland and Columbus. I also

want to announce that our WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker programs achieved the HIGHEST wage earnings in the entire state. So once again, great job to the OMJ on those achievements during a very challenging year.

- In terms of our team and partner announcements, most of you are aware that Sherry Marshall has retired from her role as President & CEO. However, Sherry will be serving in an advisory capacity over the next few months with some key projects that she will be supporting, including the Annual Report for FY2021.
- Next, I would like to announce and congratulate Amy Story as recently being appointed to the role of Interim Director of Hamilton County Job and Family Services. Amy fills the role previously occupied by Tim McCartney. Congratulations and welcome, Amy!
- In terms of our meeting scheduled for 2022, we included the new Board Meeting Calendar for 2022; please take a look and mark your calendars accordingly

I believe that information concludes my report. I'll turn it back over to Vice Chair Sorenson-Williams.

#### **IX. Public Comments and Announcements**

- Jules Carmada – Kroger Wellness Event for Youth
- H. A. Musser – 20 GED Graduates at the end of July
- Denisha Porter – Coalition Meeting Aug 26<sup>th</sup> 3-5pm
- Leta White – Summer Youth – World Affairs International Fellow for the Summer, 2 Kable Grads for IT
- Jackie Alf – I Build America Ohio Video
- Carol Sorenson-Williams – Hiring Blitz ongoing for Cincinnati Children's

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

Vice Chair Sorenson-Williams reviewed the upcoming Board meetings which may be in person with a virtual option. She pointed out the November date change from the 11<sup>th</sup> to the 18<sup>th</sup> due to Veteran's Day.

- **November 18, 2021** - Quarterly Board Meetings 8:00 - 10:00 am IN-PERSON at the OMJ Center (pending local/state protocols on COVID-19)

#### **XI. Adjournment**

Vice Chair Sorenson-Williams asked for a motion to adjourn. C. Fridel moved, H. Snyder seconded the motion. Vice Chair Sorenson-Williams asked if there were any abstentions or nay's, hearing none the motion carried. Vice Chair Sorenson-Williams thanked everyone for their attendance, noting they were getting back some time in their day as we close early. The meeting ended at 9:25 a.m.

Respectfully,



René McPhedran  
Secretary