



The Southwest Ohio Region
WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD

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

November 18, 2021

8:00 a.m. – 10 a.m.

Minutes

SWORWIB Members Present: Uche Agomuo, Peg Albert, Jackie Alf, Michael Beck, Paula Brehm-Heeger, Markiea Carter, Leo Chan, Natasha Chesnut, Margaret Fox, Shanel Gentry, DeJuan Gossett, Jesse Grissom, Stephanie Hall, Myron Hughes, Laurence Jones, Matthew Jones, Shawntay Mallory, Rene McPhedran, Nick Milazzo, Rhema Nwaneri, Matthew Owens, Bridget Patton, Eric Rademacher, Maureen Reilly, Jennifer Roeder, Trisha Rogers-Lowey, Diana Small, Harry Snyder, Carol Sorenson-Williams, Roberta Thomas, Amy Waldbillig, Dani Watkins

SWORWIB Members Absent: Heath Boucher, Scott Conklin, David Cook, Chad Day, Renee Dean, Mark Dierig, Chris Fridel, Peter McLinden, Deval Motka, Denisha Porter, Jerry Porter, Michael Prus, Alicia Reece

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

Resources: Sarah Adams, Tim Dingler, Kevin Holt, Bonita Wood

Guests: Sarah Adams, Hope Arthur, Mercedes Bello, Jules Camarda, Meg Corwin, Andrew Crum, Jilson Daniels, Megan Earle, Brian Griffin, Rodney Hardin, Kelly Holden, Mary Ann Lawrence, Julie McGregor, H.A. Musser, Shwetha Pai, Asha Parker, Walter Petit, Monika Royal-Fischer, Jesse Simmons, Janet Staderman, Amy Story, Timothy Thornton, Jordan Vogel, Rhonda Whitaker-Hurt, Leta White, Bryan Wright

I. Opening - Welcome and Introduction

Having exceeded a quorum, Chair Laurence Jones welcomed everyone to the last quarterly Board Meeting of 2021 via WebEx at 8:03 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. Also, 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, to maximize efficiency, Chair Jones stated that we will not conduct an individual 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, 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 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, N. Milazzo moved, N. Chesnut seconded the motion to approve the agenda as presented. Chair Jones asked if there were any abstentions or nay's, hearing none the agenda was unanimously approved.

III. Approval of Consent Agenda

Chair 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. Chair 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 Executive Director's report. There is one correction to the Fiscal Report on page 52, it should say 09.30.2021 in the top header to match the date in the body of the page. With no other comments, concerns, questions or requests for agenda item changes, C. Sorenson-Williams moved, H. Snyder seconded the motion, to approve the consent agenda as presented. Chair Jones asked if there were any abstentions or nay's, hearing none the agenda was unanimously approved.

- 08.12.2021 Quarterly Board Meeting Minutes
- FY2022 Budget
- Calendar 2022 - Board & Committee | SWORWIB Staff Holiday Schedule
- Policy Updates:
 - Code of Regulations/By-Laws Updates and Chair-Elect position
 - SWORWIB-OMJ Event Partnership Policy
 - Virtual Meeting Policy (draft) to Support New State Provision
 - WIOAPL 15-11.3,
- Committee Update: Executive Committee
- Audit & Grant Update
- FY2022 Scorecard
- HCJFS Administrative and Fiscal Reports
- CCMEP & WIOA Youth Reports

IV. OMJ Reports & WIOA Performance Updates

Fiscal Report- Starting with the fiscal report with data through September 30, 2021. The goal is to spend at least 60% of our funds on direct services and we are currently at 70%.

OMJ Operator Report – During the last five audits conducted by the state, federal, and local entities, there were no findings for recovery. In the state performance measures we are number 1 in 14 of 15 measures. We are spending our money wisely while other communities are in danger of losing money back to the feds as a result of underspending. We have plenty of demand for training and we are utilizing funds to meet that demand. We have added 2 new staff members to the Service unit and hopefully will have a 3rd coming soon. We have recently spent \$55,000 on marketing for outreach to unemployed folks. While those activities did not generate a significant influx of new customers, the current customer flow speaks to something else going on in the economy (more to come in a later presentation this morning). As a result, we are continually updating our outreach strategies to reach more people, especially women and individuals of color, two groups with higher unemployment rates. We are going to spend \$150,000 this year on apprenticeship support services to cover supplies and other essential items needed for apprentices. So, when people enter apprenticeships, and they need boots, tools, union dues, or other support we will pay up to \$1,500 for each of those. We also have \$6 million to spend on childcare, and that is just rolling out (this is in addition to traditional childcare spending). Those resources will be a great

benefit to Hamilton County and will help address additional workforce needs. We received notification from the state regarding new flexibility about incumbent worker training which will allow us to better utilize those funds to upskill in high-demand industries. So for example, if a business needs to automate, we can train their folks to work in that new automated environment.

Wi-Fi at the OMJ Center- We're installing Wi Fi in the lower level of the OMJ as well as new Wi Fi throughout the center, new robust Wi Fi to help people connect to network. So, it's much more virtuous than our prior Wi Fi offering. That new service should be up in the next month or so.

Local OMJ website, Virtual, and In-Person services - we have had an occasion to look at it recently, and we're dissatisfied. We are making revisions as well as considering a new site. However, our in-person foot traffic has dropped from about 16,000 to go to 1,300 last year, and we are not seeing a meaningful increase this year, due to ongoing COVID concerns. Our doors are open and people can walk in anytime we're hosting workshops, we're hosting job fair. HCJFS and ODJFS are the only two we have had any dedicated or consistent physical presence in the building the last 18 months. In addition, even with that presence, we are all on hybrid schedules. Given how we are all struggling to retain our staff, offering hybrid schedules is a perk that supports retention among those team members. And so much of our work has moved remote, now that we're allowing people to work several days at home a week. We have a million remaining in unspent National Emergency grant dollars, which are primarily available for people who have been on unemployment or recently left unemployment. Since we are not seeing the volume coming in our doors, we've done outreach, we send emails, we do solicitations. DOL's stats showed 8.7 million people coming off unemployment in August and September. You'd think that change would lead to them clamoring to get in our doors. It is not however; they are getting jobs in other ways, or they are staying home to provide childcare and/or non-traditional instruction while others in their household family are working. There are two demographics that are adding to the challenges in the labor market, including retiring boomers and women, both of whom are leaving the workforce in record numbers. However, men 16 to 54 also have record low work rates. The U.S. birth rate is well below 2%. For decades now, the childcare provider labor force is under great assault, and it is likely not to improve anytime soon because of the low wages of workers in that industry. And we've got a 61% labor force participation rate, which is at a historic low. Some of that rate reflected COVID's impact, but much of it is also part of much longer-term trends. We have fewer people in the labor force, fewer people in the country, fewer people in the labor market and increased barriers to entry for those who want to come in, particularly childcare.

Opportunities - When I look at our opportunity to add value in this economy, while maintaining WIOA performance measures and maintaining our direct service spending rates, if we presume those three values, we have six things we can and are doing... 1. We're building up the Business Services Unit with new members serving reentry and recovery populations, 2. we're going to hire to hire an employee or service navigator. 3. job postings are at record level job fairs, we've had real success with working in-person events such as the Jobs That Rock Career Fair at the Hard Rock Casino, 4. Employer trainings have had good attendance and the MOU is further supported by business services. That's been a real bright spot in our services. It has no duties, training dollars are going out the door we're having to restrain and we can only do about 20 enrollments a month now, because of limited funds. 5. We're going to work with Jason to try and go get more funds from the state we could probably can. 6. incumbent worker training gives us more latitude apprenticeships, I talked about promoting top jobs, who got a one pager, we're putting on our website every month, showing off the best jobs in the community and the kind of jobs everybody should be aspiring to that don't require a college degree, something that we've heard from employers and job seekers that they want to see. And finally, we're leveraging a ton of other funds.

Chair Jones thanked Kevin and team at the OMJ center for constantly being focused on the need the community, trying to adjust as rapidly as you possibly can, and with work from home requirements and trying to balance the people who will be on site as the dynamic is constantly changed. So, kudos to the

group, you continue to be innovative in the workforce system and, and really trying to gear these things up to be in alignment with the regional strategic plan that we put out.

V. Committee Update: OMJ Business Engagement

Chair Jones introduced Uche Agomuo the chair of the OMJ Business Engagement Committee. Chair Agomuo explained that after the September committee meeting it was decided that they needed a longer working meeting to dive deeper into committee purpose. The committee determined 3 Key takeaways and next steps.

Key Takeaways and Next Steps

Members reviewed the committee charter/mission and identified the following top focus areas/objectives for the committee to support:

1. Training, Certification, and Upskilling
2. Employer support through value-added benefits (e.g. talent recruitment and retention, hiring incentives/tax credits, training, LMI data, and job quality)
3. Leveraging existing funding and pursuing new/innovative funds (less restrictive) to support business services

It was also decided that this committee would meeting 4 times a year and the next four meeting are January 13, 2022, April 14, 2022, July 14, 2022, and October 13, 2022. Meetings will be held from 11:30-1:00PM at the Great Oaks-Scarlet Oaks Campus.

Chair Jones thanked Uche and committee for their dedication and invited any other board members that are committed to this type of work to participate by letting Uche or Jason know so they can add you to the email notifications.

VI. Committee Update: Nominating Committee

Chair Jones introduced Matt Jones and DJ Gossett as the co-chairs of the Nominating Committee and DJ will be presenting their report.

DJ thanks everyone for the nominations that were proved to the committee. He then thanked the committee. Jackie Alf, Markiea, Carter, Scott Conklin, David Cook, Renee Dean, myself, Myron Hughes, Matthew Jones, Shawntay Mallory, Deval Motka, and Jason.

Part of the job of this committee is to not only recruit but help set up interviews. Before the slate of board members can be voted on by the board and then presented to the mayor for his approval, we must meet the following requirements. We must have at least 51% of business employer representation, we've traditionally maintained 55% or above, we're at 58%. Additional Board requirements include representation from labor, economic development, education, and workforce partners.

We are going to have a refresher session in January of 2022 for all existing members who are interested in learning more about not only the functions and responsibilities of this board.

Nominees for the Board are Hope Arthur, Andrew Crum, Jilson Daniels, Regina Gray, Brian Griffin, Rodney Hardin, Shwetha Pai, Asha Parker, Kelly Schoening Holden, Jesse Simmons, Jon Thomas, Timothy Thornton, Jordan Vogel, Rhonda Whitaker-Hurt, & Bryan Wright.

Board Leadership:

Laurence F. Jones III, President, RiskVersity – **Board Chair**

Carol Sorenson-Williams, HR Business Partner, Cincinnati Children's - **Chair-Elect**

Natasha Chestnut, Talent Acquisition Director, Skyline Chili (Corporate) - **Vice Chair**

Shawntay Mallory, Human Resources, David J. Joseph Company/NUCOR - **Vice Chair**
Nick Milazzo, Senior Talent Acquisition, Fifth Third Bank - **Vice Chair**
René McPhedran, Executive Director, Melanoma Know More - **Secretary**
Andrew Crum, Vice President/Business Banking Relationship Manager, US Bank - **Treasurer**
Also note the addition of Chair elect to support board succession planning and leadership development.

Board Committees - the following represents the 2022 Board Committees and Leadership roles:

- ETP Evaluation Review Committee: Chair, Eric Rademacher, University of Cincinnati
- Executive Committee: Chair, Laurence F. Jones III, President, RiskVersity
- Nominating Committee: Chair, DJ Gossett, Vice President, USI Insurance Services LLC
- OMJ Business Engagement Committee: Uche Agomuo, President & CEO, Glovon & Clovon Engineering Consulting
- OMJ4PWD (OhioMeansJobs For People with Disabilities): Jennifer Roeder, Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities
- WIOA Core Partners and OMJ Operations Council: Co-Chairs- Jason Ashbrook, SWORWIB Executive Director and Kevin Holt, OMJ Director

Special Committees –the following Ad-Hoc committees and/or Task Forces will be convened in 2022 to meet Board needs and regional workforce development demands.

- Youth Services Procurement Review Team (February – June 2022)
- OhioMeansJobs (OMJ) Operator Procurement Review Team (July 2022 – December 2022)
- Workforce Crisis Partner Taskforce (helping to address the area's top workforce challenges ie: talent shortage, training, job quality, equitable wages, childcare, transportation, and more) – 2022
- OMJ Center Certification (review team to oversee the re-certification of the OMJ Center in accordance with WIOA Guidance)

DJ Gossett made a motion to accept the Nominating Committee report, along with the 2022 recommended slate of members, officers, committees and corresponding attachments, for approval by the Board.

Chair Jones as you know, most board chairs want to leave thumb stamp on their time chairing the board. And that was the suggestion to have a chair elect for succession planning as a risk manager. That was a gaping hole, as I saw in terms of a board continuity and succession. So thankful that Carol said yes to be the chair elected. We'll start that transition process in the back half of this year. So, it's seamless to the rest of the board. And with that, I will ask for a second to the motion. Harry Snyder seconded the motion. All are in favor. Are there any objections? Are there any abstention? The officers abstained. The Motion passes. Thank you so much.

VII. Recognition of Board Members Completing their Service to the SWORWIB

Executive Director Ashbrook thanked Khurram Altaf, Scott Conklin, Jamie D'Agostino, Stephanie Hall, Melissa Johnson, Timothy McCartney, Peter McLinden, Jerry Porter, Kevin Powell, and Maureen Reilly for their service to SWORWIB. Ashbrook also asked to let the office know if you would like our gift mailed, picked up at the SWORWIB office at Great Oaks, or a meet and deliver option. Chair Jones also reminded them that we would like a photo of them accepting their gift or to send us a photo.

VIII. Presentation: Regional Workforce Updates and Challenges

Chair Jones stated we have some regional workforce update and challenges. Dr. Eric Rademacher will be presenting to us we are so fortunate to have talented leaders and subject matter experts here supporting the organization. This presentation will be providing you with data and research to help us understand

where the workforce is today, but also where it is going, which will help us to deliver the appropriate services to our community.

The baby boom was going to catch up to this labor market. And the baby boom was going to go away. And there was no boom, there were a little boom, let's but really no boom behind it. And that's a big part about what I want to talk about today. I think there's been an acceleration of change in our labor market. And I think it's really important that we start to consider not only how things have changed, but perhaps even how things have changed permanently beyond those things we're thinking about just with COVID.

The unemployment rate went from 4.6% to very low unemployment numbers. We went in April of 2020, from about 60,000 folks in Hamilton County and about 150,000 folks who were unemployed. The seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for African Americans continues to exceed the national rate but if you look back over the last 10 years you see somewhat of a familiar gap. Post COVID those gaps remain similar.

COVID-19 and Greater Cincinnati Unemployment

The Greater Cincinnati region's unemployment rate is 4.1% in September, down from 4.4% in August.

46,685 region residents were unemployed in September amid the COVID-19 health crisis.

Unemployment Rate by County, September 2021

Ohio - Hamilton 4.6% /19,300 | Clermont 4.1%/4,400 | Butler 4.3%/8,400 | Warren 3.8%/4,500

When we look at the labor force participation, right, I wanted to show you that this, to a small degree, has a racial component to it. But by and large, it's a problem across the workforce, whether we're talking about white or black or African American, when we look at the 20-year-old population different than the younger population, but when we look at the 20-year-old population, 20 plus population, let me get that right. I want you to see two things. One, yes, the narrative about women not participating is there. And there's a big gap with men 20 and older, but look back across time. Okay. The gap has been there for some time. This is just a gap that we've seen before. Again, not minimizing it, but a gap that we have seen before. So, we have labor force participation rates, I don't want to be too tough, but you know it. I'm getting tired of that people are lazy sort of narrative. Now, that's sometimes couched in federal financial assistance, fear of COVID-19. As Jason's brought up recently, there's been a lot of discussion around childcare costs. And then there are folks who are staying home because they have children and you know, there's concerns about schooling. All of these, from my perspective, are really good reasons to be concerned or if you've got financial assistance to take a step back and look about your own safety and health.

Labor Force Participation Rates ("Aging Out") – Baby Boomers, age 16-34 in 1980 are now 56-74 in 2020 and starting to retire.

Impact on the OMJ – Job Postings way up, Employers Served Up, Average Wages Up, Emphasis on Training and Upscaling, & Foot Traffic Down for several reasons including that "Come to OMJ" meaning has evolved.

IX. Executive Director's Report

Chair Jones noting the time asked Executive Director Ashbrook to provide highlights of his report in a timely manner.

Ashbrook directed the board to his report and highlighted the following;

Policy Updates

Virtual Meeting Policy, Code of Regulations/By-laws, Event Partnerships, & the WIOAPL 15-11.3 policy on Individual Training Accounts (ITAs).

Upcoming Projects and Opportunities for Impact

Marketing/Outreach, Engagement, and Communication Services RFP – we received several bids to provide marketing outreach, engagement and communication services to the board and also with some supporting with a supporting line to the ohm J and that's going to really put some power behind our outreach and awareness and engagement efforts with the community with job seekers with employers, the community at large. And so, I'm so excited. These enhancements are really going to help us increase our not only our online presence but our social media presence. It's going to help us connect better with those in the community but also those that may feel disenfranchised from the workforce, we will have some new tools to help connect with them, along with our existing tools. As, as an aside, we're also going to have the development of a new sworn web website. And that's going to be robust and allow a section of that website to be accessible for board members to view information, we'll be able to host lots of media and documents on that site for viewing and some other opportunities as well to tweak our branding a little bit on that website. So, we're really excited we received five proposals for that work. In the in the request for proposals, we specifically encouraged local companies that were women owned and or minority owned, to apply. And we were really pleased that the majority of the applicants fit those criteria.

Regional/National Affiliations, Memberships, and Representation

Executive Director Ashbrook explained that the SWORWIB has reinvested in memberships and representation in the following affiliations; Midwest Urban Strategies (MUS), US Conference of Mayors Workforce Development Council, National Association of Workforce Boards (NAWB), National Association of Workforce Development Professionals (NAWDP).

Infrastructure Bill and WIOA Funding/Reauthorization

The \$1.2 trillion infrastructure bill recently passed by the US House of Representatives is expected to be signed by President Biden. Although this Bill contains very little in social program spending, there are several components impacting workforce as well as the potential for major infrastructure projects right here in Greater Cincinnati. In terms of WIOA funds/reauthorization, NAWB and other organizations are lobbying for revisions to make WIOA more integrated and user-friendly.

Annual Board Meeting and SuperAwards - save the date of **February 10, 2022** for our Board's Annual Meeting and SuperAwards Ceremony. The nomination forms for SuperAwards were included in your packet. He asked the board to participate in making recommendations for SuperAward winners. The form the packet can be electronically filled out and returned to JAshbrook@SWORWIB.org. The event will likely be held downtown (more info to follow).

Ashbrook concluded his highlights and referred the Board to the full Executive Director's Report for further details on additional topics such as: WIOA Youth Services Procurement/RFP, OMJ Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), and OMJ Re-Certification

X. Public Comments and Announcements

Chair Jones asked if anyone had any announcements or comments.

- Mercedes Bello with Vantage Aging Workforce Solutions introduced herself. What I do is very related to the presentation that we just heard, which is how to help seniors to stay within the workforce development. We're looking for people to assist in our training.

Chair Jones reminded everyone that the Annual Report is in the Packet as well on page 98.

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

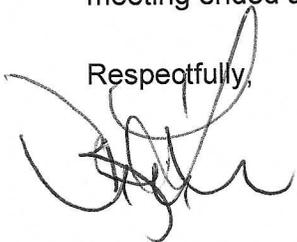
Chair Jones reviewed the upcoming Board meeting which will be held in person.

- **February 10, 2022 – Annual Meeting and SuperAwards Ceremony 8 am – 10 am (location TBA)**

XI. Adjournment

Chair Jones asked for a motion to adjourn. N. Milazzo moved, N. Chesnut 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 10:02 a.m.

Respectfully,



René McPhedran
Secretary