



Carroll County Workforce Development Board Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, September 18, 2024

Exploration Commons, 9:30am

Attendees: Zach Tomlin, Bryan Zuber, Alyce Verville, Suzy Dyer Gear, Bill Eckles, Matti Franzén, Denise Beaver, Karen Bernard, Steve Berry, Mike McHale, Brandon Schweitzer, Margaret Welliver, Susan Torpey, Julie Givens, Jesse McCree, Heather Powell, Stan Whiteman, Eileen Vozzella, Tammy Haines, Tammi Casson, Scott Singleton, and Shelby O’Leary.

Guests: Tammi Ledley, Ed Singer, Corey Hardinger, Teresa Mena.

Meeting began at 9:35am.

1. **Welcome and Introductions-** Mr. Tomlin thanked the Board for attending and began introductions.
2. **Action Items-**
 - a. Approve Minutes from April 25th, 2024, meeting- Mr. Zuber motioned to approve the minutes, Ms. Beaver seconded. Approval was unanimous.
 - b. Nominate a New Vice President- Mr. Tomlin informed the Board that Chris Abell has taken a position with the Western Maryland Consortium and has resigned from the Board, leaving the Vice President position vacant. The executive committee has recommended Bryan Zuber for the position. Mr. Tomlin invited nominations from the floor but there were none. The vote for the Vice President position will take place via email directly following the meeting.
 - c. Motion to Approve FY25 WIOA Funding- Ms. Powell shared with the Board that the FY25 WIOA allocations have come in at \$579,517 for adult and dislocated worker. Mr. Tomlin motioned to approve the FY25 WIOA Funding. Mr. McHale seconded the motion. Approval was unanimous.
3. **Old Business-**
 - a. American Job Center Construction Update- Mr. Whiteman shared that the third and final phase of the HVAC construction project will begin on September 23rd and run until October 30th. The resource room will be closed between Monday September 23rd to Friday October 4th and will reopen Monday October 7th, provided construction goes as planned. During the two-week period, services will be available virtually and by phone. The plan is to move fully back into the center by the end of October or early November.

He shared that most of the staff have been working out of the Cove Building on 115 Stoner Avenue and this move has allowed more outreach in the community as well.

- Mr. Berry informed the Board that Adult Education department of Carroll Community College will be moving back into the building on January 6th, 2025.

4. **New Business-**

- a. One-Stop Operator- Mr. McCree reviewed the work that was done for the US Department of Labor (US DOL) audit from March. He also stated that the Memorandum of Understanding for the Resource Sharing Agreement (RSA) between the WIOA mandated partners of the American Job Center is under review for the upcoming year and he will be sending it out in the following weeks for signatures from each of the partners. The RSA is a federally mandated document requiring all the partners to contribute to the operation of the American Job Center, updated annually.
 - Ms. Powell added that one of the outcomes of the US DOL audit was to better brand the American Job Center. She stated that there are plans to have a showcase wall with all the partner logos, increasing visibility of the partners of the American Job Center.
 - b. Board Member Responsibilities- Ms. Powell shared a handout with the Board that highlights the role of a board member. She stated that although Carroll County Workforce department takes on a lot of the daily responsibilities, the Board provides oversight and input. She emphasized that Board members bring their expertise and knowledge to the table, communicate the Board's purpose to the community at large, focus on strategic planning and setting goals and directions, and stays abreast of local labor market and economic conditions.
 - c. Executive Committee Updates- Mr. Tomlin reminded the Board that there were several Board member reappointment letters that have come from the Commissioner's Office. He reminded the members to sign and return the letters as soon as possible. Mr. Tomlin informed the board that in addition to Chris Abell leaving, Anita Hammond has also resigned her position at LifeBridge Health and is now the Director of Workforce Development with John Hopkins University. This has created two vacancies on the Board, he encouraged the Board to recommend potential replacements. Ms. Powell is working on contacting Anita's replacement at LifeBridge Health. Mr. Tomlin mentioned that the executive committee will be looking at the by-laws and providing revisions shortly. He also announced that the executive committee voted to appoint Bryan Zuber to the committee.
5. **Focus: Summer Youth Employment Program Review**- Ms. Vozzella reviewed the summer youth employment program. Each year, the youth program recruits 16–18-year-olds who meet qualifications to the barriers to employment such as low income, low literacy, juvenile justice system connected, pregnant or parenting, disability, foster care program, etc. The barriers are self attested, they are not asked to prove them. They also recruit businesses and match the youth up and they work for 6 weeks at the businesses and have enrichment days every Wednesday during the program. DORS and CCWD partner via a multi-year MOU to direct Carroll County Government as the employer of record for up to 50 DORS summer youth participants. This year the partnership expanded for the first time with a cohort of DORS participants joining

in the enrichment activities on Wednesdays. She stated that they seamlessly joined the rest of the youth participants. Ms. Vozzella thanked Carroll Community College for hosting the enrichment days since the CCWD building was under construction. This provided the opportunity to do an admissions and continuing education tour of the community college for the participants. They were able to see the technical programs and visit the nursing and dental labs.

Ms. Vozzella also highlighted that the WIOA funding allocated to summer youth employment program has been trending down every year since 2022. The WIOA funding is formulaic, and Carroll County's average income and poverty numbers come into play. Another problematic thing is that the minimum wage has been increasing in recent years as well. The funding levels have decreased while the minimum wage has increased, resulting in less youth that are able to participate. She reported that this year there were able to fund 37 participants due to the funding from the American Rescue Plan Act.

Ms. Vozzella acknowledged the work that Mr. Singleton did to recruit businesses to the program. She mentioned that it is not easy or automatic for a business to choose to participate in the program. This year the program had more businesses than ever before and many new businesses as well. Ms. Vozzella also acknowledged the work of the two summer interns who did fantastic work with supporting the businesses and the participants.

She stated that the work is so impactful for youth- for most of the participants this is a first job, and for some it's their first job with meaning. The youth program team works diligently to place them in roles that they will want to be successful in and want to finish the program. In addition to the employment piece of the program, the participants are required to attend enrichment days on Wednesdays. These days consisted of career interest surveys, virtual reality goggles for career exploration, mock interviews, business panels, resume development, soft skills, etc.

The program grew by 131% in youth participants and 87% in businesses this year. Results from a survey sent out to the participants at the end of the program were that 86% noted being better prepared for an interview and 86% also stated they feel better prepared for their next job. Out of the 32 that participated in the mock interviews, 18 believed that mock interviews were one of the best activities of the program.

Ms. Powell praised Ms. Vozzella and the youth services team for all their hard work to make the summer youth employment program a success. She shared that Scott Yard from HSP mentioned in a Local Management Board meeting that he hosted two youth for the program. He said that initially they would have never hired the youth, but by the end of the program, their work skills were much improved, they communicated well, showed maturity, and he was pleased that they took the time to invest into those participants.

Mr. Tomlin shared his experience as a business panelist for one of the enrichment days. He stated that one of the youth participants said that they felt inspired that they could go into the technology field, when they initially did not think they were capable of doing or would have the opportunity to do.

6. CCWD Updates

- a. Workforce Updates-

- Ms. Powell invited Tammi Ledley and Mr. Berry with Carroll Community College to speak about the Hospitality Apprenticeship Program. They applied for a grant from the Maryland Department of Labor and were awarded the grant to start a hospitality apprenticeship program, with the goal of helping the hospitality industry increase their labor pool, especially in entry level management. They were able to fund the position of Apprenticeship Navigator, Tammi Ledley accepted the position. She has been working with the workforce in the county to identify hospitality partners that are willing to take on an apprentice at their location. The program operates with the student enrolling at the college in a degree program in technical and professional studies, with their coursework consisting of business management, economics, general education, financial accounting, and non-credit courses specific to hospitality. At the same time, they will work at a location and earn credit for their apprenticeship. It is designed to be completed in two to three years. The obstacle is that the program does not pay for the education of the student, that cost falls on the employer. The college is working with Maryland Department of Labor to identify ways to help offset the cost of the education in addition to FAFSA, Pell grants, and scholarships. Tammi Ledley is working on outreach to employers in the county and she has received commitments from some employers. The program is set to begin in the spring semester. Ms. Powell commended the work of Board members that worked on the grant with the Community College- Suzy Dyer Gear with Lutheran Social Ministries of Maryland, Matti Franzén with Best Western Hotel, and Bryan Zuber with Stratosphere Social.
- Ms. Powell commended the work of her staff on their work on the fiscal federal and state audits. She informed the Board about the U.S. Department of Labor Region 2 conference in Philadelphia that she attended. She said that they are encouraging local workforce boards to look at alternative funding since the WIOA funding could potentially decrease in coming years. Ms. Powell also reported that the Maryland Workforce Association has incorporated as a non-profit and can serve as a training entity to workforce development professionals as well as a repository for grants. Ms. Powell stated that Carroll County is a subrecipient of Maryland Department of Labor for the ARPA funding, meaning that funds can be obligated through June of 2026. Ms. Powell and her team are currently working on how to obligate the funds, such as training contracts with Carroll Community College. She encouraged Board members to reach out to her if they identify areas that need skilled workers. Ms. Powell also informed the Board of the Raising the Bar conference on Tuesday September 24th through Thursday September 26th at Maryland Live!, presented by the Maryland Workforce Association.
- Mr. Singleton informed of the Board of the monthly Premier Virtual job fair events. The event opens on the first of the month, allowing time for employers and job seekers to go in and register for the event. The live event encourages interaction between employers and jobseekers through chats, video interviewing, etc. This month, there were 30 employers registered and 265 jobseekers registered. He said that this has been a successful tool that produces results when the employers and jobseekers put forth the effort to use it. He

thanked the Professional Outplacement Assistance Center (POAC) and Maryland Department of Labor for advertising these events. Mr. Singleton invited the Board to join the events in the future. They are working on planning the next in-person job fair as well.

- b. **Blueprint Updates-** Mr. Eckles reported that the Blueprint plan is now in year two and the collaboration with Carroll County Public Schools, CCWD, and Carroll Community College has been going very well. As part of pillar 3, the focus is on apprenticeship and earning industry-recognized credentials. Ms. Casson and Mr. Whiteman reported that the CCWD Blueprint team has been focusing on building relationships with CCPS career coaches and coordinators to better support the middle and high school students with career readiness. Ms. Casson has begun a pilot resume instruction program with the senior high school students at FSK High School. It includes an 8-week resume interview training program for the seniors and then those seniors will work with the juniors on their preparation for mock interviews. The seniors will be acknowledged at the senior awards night and have a medal for graduation. This is also applicable for service-learning hours. Ms. Casson also stated that they are working on a job-shadow program in the high schools, in both fall and spring. Mr. Eckles said that the career coaches and the CTE office will attend the post-conference Blueprint-focused day of Raising the Bar.
 - c. **Youth Standing Committee Update-** Ms. Vozzella stated that the youth standing committee is a WIOA mandated advisory committee designed for state and local boards to coordinate area-wide youth services, assist with planning, and oversee operational programs related to youth services. The committee was founded in April 2023 and has met five times so far. She said the first few meetings were used to share with members the demographic data, barriers, and economic positions of the customers that the youth team works with. They also used the initial meetings for listening and feedback sessions. The October meeting will be a planning session for a second convening event to focus on the issues of the emerging workforce and steps that need to be taken to assist them.
7. **Upcoming Meeting Dates-** Mr. Tomlin shared the upcoming meeting dates with the Board: Wednesday November 13th 2024, February 19th 2025, May 21st 2025, and a tentative meeting on June 18th 2025.
8. **Member Updates-**
- a. Teresa Mena, Maryland Department of Labor, shared an employer information session on November 13th, location is to be determined. This event is designed to help promote apprenticeship and help answer any questions employers might have.
 - b. Mr. McHale reported that IBEW took on the largest apprenticeship class of 162 apprentices in Baltimore. He stressed that there will be a need in the next 6-9 months of over 700 people to complete the projected work.

Mr. Zuber motioned to adjourn the meeting at 11:10 am. Mr. Eckles seconded the motion.