

Western Indiana Workforce Development Board, Inc.
Quarterly Meeting
June 27, 2023 – The Hub Conference Room – 7:30 AM

Members Present: President Rick Burger, Chairperson Claudia Tanoos, Chairperson Doug Dillion, Bill Dory, Jim Meece, Dr. Lea Anne Crooks, Laura Sparks, Bobby Moore, Joe Bolk, Margie Anshutz, and Tom Wilson.

Others Present: Terre Haute Mayor Duke Bennett, Vigo County Commissioner Mark Clinkenbeard, Clay County Commissioner Marty Heffner, Kara Wright, Bryant Wolfe, David Tucker, Carmen Upchurch, Greg Lee, Maggie McCormick, Lisa Lee, Mike Smith, Nikkie Spurr, and Richard Shagley Jr., Attorney.

President Rick Burger called the meeting to order, and asked for any public comments; there were none.

Jim Meece moved to approve the minutes of the March 9, 2023 WIWDB meeting. Lea Ann Crooks seconded, and the motion was approved.

Claudia Tanoos stated that the Budget and Finance Committee did not meet this quarter.

Mike Smith presented an overview of the Business Service Team activity for the period of February 22, 2023 through June 6, 2023. There were 10 new employers registered and 1,459 internal job orders created on Indiana Career Connect for Region 7 for this review period. There were 149 WorkKeys tests administered. Mr. Smith congratulated Brad Trusler and Nancy Inman for their hard work engaging employers for the Next Level Jobs Employer Training Grant. From July 1, 2022 through December 31, 2023, Region 7 has submitted training agreements to the State in the amount of \$617,062.00. The Business Services Team has also been very active in community events and job fairs throughout the six-county region. Of special note this quarter is the West Central Indiana Workforce Workshop, sponsored by the Western Indiana Workforce Development Board (WDB), WorkOne, Indiana Department of Workforce Development, and the City of Terre Haute. The event was well attended and a number of companies followed up with the WDB and WorkOne staff.

Nikkie Spurr presented the Youth Activities Report and the quarterly JAG activities. She stated that in the third quarter of PY22 Region 7 had a total of 590 WIOA Youth and State JAG Students being served. The annual WIOA goal for work experience is 20% of the total youth students being served. As of the end of the third program quarter, Region 7 has spent 26% of the annual WIOA youth expenditure on work experience throughout the region. Ms. Lee discussed a potential JAG expansion across the State that was discussed during a joint Executive Director and Operations meeting with the Department of Workforce Development on June 7th. If the expansion goes through as outlined by the State, it will allow Region 7 to implement the requests made earlier to DWD to expand JAG programs into both Greencastle High School and South Vermillion High School. Ms. Spurr stated that Region 7, once again, received the JAG 6 of 6 Award for the performance of its JAG programs. Ms. Lee noted how big of an achievement it is to receive this award year after year. Region 7 was one of the first regions in the state to implement JAG, the first year it was available. The region has since achieved the performance goals set by the national JAG Board every year with the exception of year one because the measures are based on one year follow-up data. Ms. Spurr highlighted some additional JAG student accomplishments that happened throughout the quarter.

Ms. Lee discussed the Regional JAG budget for PY23. The budget includes an increase to staff salaries based on the information provided by the State regarding the expected expansions to come.

Bill Dory motioned to approve the JAG Budget. Lea Ann Crooks seconded, and the motion was approved.

Lisa Lee presented the Performance Report for Quarter ending March 31, 2023. Measurable Skill Gains for Dislocated Workers continued to be a difficult measure to reach along with Employment Rate 4th quarter after exit for youth. This trend is also visible at the State level.

Doug Dillion highlighted the State's RESEA Monitoring Report. There were no compliance findings. There were some suggestions made by the State aimed at optimize program performance. Word was also received that during the upcoming program year, funding will be provided to deliver RESEA services to some outer county WorkOne offices. It is anticipated that RESEA services will be expanded to the Sullivan, Vermillion, and Putnam County WorkOne Express offices.

Joe Bolk motioned to accept the State's RESEA monitoring report. Jim Meece seconded, and the motion was approved.

Ms. Lee gave a brief update on Region 7's Apprenticeship programs.

Ms. Lee presented information about the Apprenticeship Building America (ABA) Grant. The region 7 allocation is \$154,500.00 and is intended to support national investment strategy to strengthen and modernize the RAP system, center growth with a focus on strengthening equity and accessibility, and promote Registered Apprenticeship as a workforce development solution. Ms. Lee provided a suggested breakdown of the grant award. Doug Dillion explained a potential model for Pre-apprenticeship with the Plumbers and Steamfitters.

Bobby Moore motioned to accept the suggested budget breakdown of the ABA Grant award. Jim Meece seconded, and the motion was approved.

Lea Ann Crooks motioned to accept the additions to the R7 Demand Occupations List, to include the following additions:

- **Helpers, Laborers, Movers, & Material Handlers**
- **Battery Technician**
- **Industrial Maintenance and Repair Workers, General**
- **Human Resources**
- **Health & Safety Management**
- **Facilities Maintenance;** and no deletions.

Laura Sparks seconded, and the motion carried.

Joe Bolk motioned to approve the Planning Committee report. Bobby Moore seconded, and the motion carried.

Mr. Burger stated that the Personnel Committee did not meet this quarter.

Nikkie Spurr presented the Grants Report:

BC2207 #1 – funds connect employers to the WorkOne system, conduct business analysis of local talent demand and assist in the development of a Regional Workforce/Economic Development partnership by developing relationships with regional businesses, Local Economic Development Organization (LEDO/s) and Small Business Development Centers. The period of this grant is from *July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2023*. Amendment #1 added \$60,000.00 making the total obligation of this grant \$120,000.00.

RESEA2107 #3 – funds are to pay for case management and administrative costs incurred in conducting the RESEA program. Amendment #1 decreased the previously obligated funds by \$35,000.00 and made the total obligation for this grant \$233,000.00 with an expiration date of September 30, 2022. Amendment #2 changed the grant expiration date to August 15, 2023. Amendment #3 decreased the previously obligated funds by \$140,000. The total obligation of the grant is \$93,000.00.

JAG2207 #1 & #2 – funds provide services for students with barriers to receive instruction on employability skills, leadership skills, and support attainment of a high school diploma while also supporting employer marketing, post-secondary enrollment, and one full year of follow up contact and guidance. The period of the grant is from July 1, 2022 through December 31, 2023. Amendment #1 increased the previously obligated funds by \$43,750.00. Amendment #2 increased the previously obligated funds by \$2,000.00. The total obligation of the grant is \$552,000.00.

ABA2207 – funds are to implement a variety of strategies to significantly expand Registered Apprenticeship Programs (RAP) opportunities to Indiana's employers and job seekers. The period of the grant is from January 1, 2022 through May 15, 2026. The total obligation of the grant is \$154,500.00.

PRETS2207 – funds provide services for students with barriers to receive instruction on employability skills, leadership skills, and support attainment of a high school diploma while also supporting employer marketing, post-secondary enrollment, and one full year of follow up contact and guidance. The additional funding support will assist the Workforce Development Board with maintaining current programs and increasing program capacity using both WIOA and new grant funds. The period of the grant is from January 1, 2023 through June 30, 2023 with a total of \$75,000 in funding.

Claudia Tanoos motioned to accept the Grant Report. Laura Sparks seconded, and the motion was approved.

Lisa Lee presented the Expenditure Report through April 30, 2023. Because this report does not cover most recent activity, Ms. Lee said that based on recent spending, it is expected that PY'21 funding will be completely expended by June 30, 2023. For example, as of the end of May, the service provider reported a WIOA Youth program balance of \$40,000.00.

Ms. Lee presented the Region 7 PY23 WIOA formula allocations. As with the rest of the State, Region 7 is once again seeing a reduction in formula funding for PY23. This is due in large part to Indiana's low unemployment rate. This decrease also makes operating with only 25% of the awarded allocation of WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker program funding the first quarter very difficult to implement unless additional provisions are made, such as the planned 30% carry-in.

With that in mind, Jim Meece motioned to continue to set aside 30% of formula funding for PY23. Lea Ann Crooks seconded, and the motion was approved.

Ms. Lee then presented a draft copy of the proposed PY23 Operating Budget. Some items highlighted included rent at the Clinton WorkOne office. This office has not had a rent increase in a number of years. The property has just changed ownership and the new owner has requested an increase of \$50/month which calculates to \$600.00 annually. Of note, this \$50/month increase was requested by the landlord to become effective June 1, 2023. Executive Committee members were contacted prior to June 1 regarding this request, and approved it to begin effective June 1, 2023.

Claudia Tanoos motioned to accept the \$50/month increase for the Clinton WorkOne office, with an effective date of June 1, 2023 as previously requested and approved by the Executive Committee. Bill Dory seconded, and the motion was approved.

A second item discussed was a one-time allocation of \$36,000.00 under personnel costs to train and transition a new Board Executive Director, in light of the fact that the current Executive Director, Lisa Lee, has notified the Executive Committee that she will retire effective June 30, 2024, after 30 years of service in the workforce development sector. Committee members reserve the right to adjust the amount of funds allocated for this purpose based on circumstances as time moves forward.

Regarding board personnel, members discussed a raise for staff to the Board. After some discussion, calculation of a 3% raise for staff, with the exception of the Executive Director, would be an increase to the budget of \$5,986.00. Lisa Lee emphasized that with retirement, her current wage rate is acceptable.

Lea Ann Crooks made a motion to increase Board staff wages by 3% to Mike Smith, Nikkie Spurr, Jon B. Trusler, and Nancy Inman effective July 1, 2023. Bobby Moore seconded, and the motion carried.

A third item line item discussed in the budget was that of "Outreach." Ms. Lee stated that during a recent DWD meeting, board staff was notified of the availability of up to \$750,000.00 statewide in Rapid Response funding, aimed at outreach activities. Each region can apply for \$25,000.00 in outreach funding, up to four times, but funds must be expended or obligated before additional requests are made, it was also explained that outreach done with these funds does not have to address Rapid Response issues directly. DWD stated that funds can be aimed at things such as the general promotion of WorkOne services and benefits.

Members discussed, and instructed staff to include a request to continue the 30 second television spots on one local television station, and to update the messages with community impact and success stories, and other specific achievements. In conjunction with outreach, it was suggested, that while Lara Beck and Associates has been an outstanding public relations provider and staff learned a lot from her, it would be best to end such services at the end of the current program year. Lara was great to work with. She provided many services and taught staff an immense amount about dealing with the press and leveraging coverage.

Doug Dillion motioned for the region to apply for the Rapid Response Outreach funding as mentioned above, and to thank Lara Beck for her services but to end contracted services effective June 30, 2023. Jim Meece seconded, and the motion was approved.

Dave Tucker stated that non-grant funded VU staff will be receiving 4% salary increases beginning July 1, 2023. This, coupled with the fact that DWD staff received substantial increases from the State during the current program year, has made it increasingly harder to attract and retain staff. Given the highly regulated services provided by WorkOne, it is imperative that quality staff is attracted to and remain as part of the local WorkOne system. Mr. Tucker then requested a 4% wage increase for all non-JAG Specialist service provider staff, effective July 1, 2023. This would include a staff of 16, with a cost of approximately \$23,663.00. Also, in relationship to a service provider wage increase, DWD is very confident that there will be an opportunity to increase the wage rates of JAG Specialists with the planned program expansion. With that in mind, an approximate 4% wage increase was included in the Region 7 JAG Budget, which DWD encouraged. While JAG expansion funding seems likely, if for some reason this would not take place, then the request made by VU for staff to receive a 4% wage increase, effective July 1, 2023, would include JAG Specialist staff with an increase by approximately \$9,820.00.

It was noted that Personnel Committee Chair, and Executive Committee member, Laurence Cross was informed of the proposed board staff and VU service provider pay increases and both supported and approved each.

Doug Dillion motioned to accept the 4% salary increase for all Region 7 grant funded VU staff effective July 1, 2023. Bill Dory seconded, and the motion was approved.

Doug Dillion motioned to accept the PY23 Operating Budget. Lea Ann Crooks seconded, and the motion was approved.

Lea Anne Crooks motioned to approve the Budget and Finance Committee report. Bill Dory seconded, and the motion was approved.

The next item of business was the State Monitoring report for program year 2022-2023. The management team was shocked to discover four findings in the report. The Exit Conference for this monitoring was held on March 17, 2023. The purpose of an Exit Conference is to review how monitoring went – with good things noted along with any areas of concern, especially an issue or issues which have a chance of elevating to a finding. By doing this, local staff can respond with any information that might have been missed and are allowed to ask questions back and forth to ensure a clear understanding of anything related to monitoring. On March 17 there was never any mention of any issue that the State team viewed as a finding or possible finding. In fact, the tone of the discussion was quite positive. Of course, everything was qualified by monitors stating that the final desk review would be completed upon staff return to their offices. It has always been the case in the past that local staff may or may not know if an issue will be cited in a final report as a finding, but the local staff has always known in the past if there was a possibility of a finding or findings; this was not the case in this instance. Board members expressed feelings that this report does not properly represent of all the work the Board does. One example is the fact that during PY'22 the board had no audit findings, the board had not state monitoring findings, and had no findings after a DOL monitoring of the regional Dislocated Worker and Rapid Response programs. Yet, on this most recent monitoring report, Region 7 is considered a "moderate risk" based on PY'22 performance.

Bill Dory motioned for the WDB to compose a formal letter addressing the dissatisfaction with the State's conclusions. Laura Sparks seconded, and the motion was approved.

Ms. Lee stated that the Board will request for re-certification, effective July 1, 2023, and would like to thank new members to be appointed effective July 1, 2023; Julie Schlosser from First Financial Bank, Carmen Upchurch from DWD, and Bryant Wolfe from Saturn Pet Care.

The annual Executive Director review was discussed and it was concluded that the Executive Director is doing an outstanding job and continues to meet or exceed board expectations.

Bobby Moore motioned to accept the annual Executive Director review. Margie Anshutz seconded, and the motion was approved.

The Executive Committee reviewed and nominated the following slate of officers for PY23:

President	Rick Burger
Vice President	Daryl Andrews
Secretary/Treasurer	Claudia Tanoos

Lea Ann Crooks motioned to accept the PY23 officer nominations. Joe Bolk seconded, and the motion was approved.

President Rick Burger stated that committee assignments will remain unchanged for the upcoming year, with the exception of new members being added to the roster. A list of committee members will be released soon. If any member would like to change committees, please see Mr. Burger.

Bill Dory motioned to approve the Executive Committee report. Laura Sparks seconded and the motion was approved.

The Next Quarterly Board Meeting will be Thursday, September 14, 2023 at 7:30am.

There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,


 Claudia Tanoos, Secretary/Treasurer