

**Cumberlands Workforce Development Board  
Meeting Minutes  
October 19, 2021**

The Cumberlands Workforce Development Board (CWDB) met via zoom (video conferencing) on October 19, 2021 at the Lake Cumberland Area Development office in Russell Springs, due to Covid-19. Chairman Sam Brown called the meeting to order.

Ms. Beverly Grimes called the roll. There were nineteen (19) of the twenty-nine (29) members present via zoom, thus constituting a quorum of the board. Fifteen (15) members present were Business and Workforce representatives which meets the requirement of 51% of members present be a combination of Business and Workforce representatives.

All members were e-mailed copies of the minutes from August 17, 2021 meeting. Questions/corrections were asked for; there being none, motion was made by Brad Hall to approve the minutes as presented, seconded by Jay Shofner. Motion carried.

Mr. Sam Brown made appointments to the following committee's; Bill Sandell-Disability Committee, Emily James-Disability Committee, Anna Larson-Youth Committee and Mikhael Shaffer-Youth Committee. Motion was made by Wendell Emerson to ratify the appointments to the various committees as presented, seconded by JoAnn Siler. Motion carried.

Ms. Vickie Wells gave an update for the Budget and Finance Committee. The Budget for WIOA Programs for PY'21 is \$3,870,241.20. The expenditures from 7/1/21 to 10/01/21 was \$944,264.91 which is; Youth-36.64%, Adult-18.48%, Dislocated Adults-13.99%, COVID-19 Dislocated Worker National Emergency Grant-34.85%, Administration-14.03% for a total of 24.99% of the budget spent. Ms. Vickie Wells, Chairman of the Budget and Finance Committee made the motion on behalf of the Budget and Finance Committee to approve the budget as presented. Motion carried.

Ms. Karen Miller, Cumberlands One-Stop Operator presented a letter to the Board requesting their support and acceptance to proceed with the application process for the Kentucky Comprehensive Career Center re-certification for the Somerset Career Center. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) review was completed last month by Larry Perkins. Last week she received the new application review form that has to be completed. They have to redo the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and Infrastructure Funding Agreement (IFA). Both of these have to be completed and signed by the end of the year. The CWDB is required to approve a four person review team that matches the criteria that the Kentucky Workforce Investment Board (KWIB) has designated. Based on that designation Ms. Miller recommended the following people; Non-Board Member Business Representative-Larry Botzman-Certified Financial Planner (CFP)/Accountant and owner of Goldenrod Financial, Local Workforce Board Member from another area-Mike Riley, Non-Core Partner Entity that does not have an office located in the Somerset Career Center-Aaron Poynter-Director of Re-Entry Programming for the South Central/Cumberlands Workforce Development Boards and CWDB Member-Becky Wilson-Workforce Development Manager with Goodwill Industries of Kentucky. Motion was made by Mike Buckles to proceed with the application process for the

Kentucky Comprehensive Career Center re-certification for the Somerset Career Center and to accept the recommendations that were made for the review team, seconded by Brad Hall. Motion carried. The re-certification process now falls under the KWIB.

Ms. L. Elaine Sutton Mbiomwu, Covenant Collaborative Consulting, & Training, LLC (dba/The Justice Beat Talk Show) has an established partnership with the CWDB for the placement of WIOA participants in the Next Generation Media Internship Program. The participants are recent graduates of the 16 week intensive web development education and training program known as Commonwealth Coders. In June 2021, Elaine began hosting 3 individuals remotely who make-up the webmaster team. This allows dislocated and/or unemployed individuals opportunities to gain valuable on-the-job project based experimental learning experience along with the opportunity to apply knowledge, skills and abilities in a setting that affords additional learning with leading. Upon completion, participants will have accumulated over 600 hours of hands on experience, developed a portfolio to showcase to prospective employers and be recognized as an established and competent Web Developer. Ms. Mbiomwu is excited to have a program that serves as an intermediary experiential training grounding facilitating efforts of participants to secure an entry-level pathway into permanent professional employment within the IT industry.

Mr. Aaron Poynter, Director of the Re-Entry Programming for the South Central/Cumberlands Workforce Development Boards gave a presentation on the Kentucky Area Resources (KARES) program. Through a partnership with the CWDB, Russell County Fiscal Court, City of Russell Springs and City of Jamestown they were able to plan, develop and launch a web-based application known as KARES. When he started his position they would interact with justice involved individuals, people that were in need of resources and try to eliminate barriers to get them back into the workforce. They knew they needed to development something that was easy to access, that became the Resource Guide. KARES is the next step in this process, this makes everything accessible. The purpose of this is to put the access of resources in the local communities. KARES has been launched in Russell County. They plan to expand this into all of our thirteen counties. You can access KARES by going to: [www.kares.us](http://www.kares.us). You have three areas, Explore KARES in Your Community - this would be used if a person wanted to know what resources were available in their county, Request KARES Assistance - this is for individuals that need help, they need to be in contact with the Re-Entry Program. The information they gather from this is a quick needs assessment, it gives the staff a snapshot of what the individual needs as far as barriers. When they call them back they want to have a solution so they don't have to ask a lot of questions. Register with KARES – This is for the justice involved, County Attorney Partners, Recovery, Re-Entry Partners & Jails/Correction Facilities. This is also a quick needs assessment for staff. They will start developing a plan before they make the initial contact. Their target goal is to return individuals to the workforce.

Mr. Kevin Shearer, County Attorney for Russell County spoke about the benefit of KARES in his profession. This is a game changer for what they do in court. It diminishes the time they have to get people what they actually need. They can log into KARES and put people into particular situations instead of sending a text or an e-mail to the Re-Entry Staff. It makes connecting people so much more efficient.

Ms. Myra Wilson gave an update on the Strategic Plan.

- **Goal #1 – Active participation with employers and stakeholders to increase workforce opportunities across the region, and increase new entrance into the workforce.**
  - Launched a Welding Program in partnership with Somerset Community College and Pulaski County Detention Center, there were 8 that graduated from this class. There are 11 women that are in the second welding class that started October 11<sup>th</sup>. They are planning on having additional trainings. They are meeting with all the Business Services Partners in the area to see what types of trainings are needed and if they fell within our sectors.
  - Commonwealth Coders was launched in August 2021. We have 20 participants from the Cumberland Area, that's with 4 workforce board involved. There were a total of 48 participants.
  - Commonwealth Coders have a partnership with The Justice Beat Talk Show.
  - Mr. Bill Sandell, Workforce Development Consultant with the Office of Employer & Apprenticeship Services met with the members of the WIOA team to discuss ways to integrate WIOA services with registered apprenticeships.
- **Goal #2- Align and integrate education P-12, adult education and post-secondary education to provide career progression to prepare them for work in the future.**
  - We have received the MOU with KYSTATS on September 30<sup>th</sup>. The Board and KYSTATS are working back and forth in the report-writing phase towards and end-product that allows for students to be more easily identified for post-secondary training and employment opportunities. With the data, we will be able to see student attributes such as; grade level, career pathways enrolled in or completed, certifications earned and whether or not a student is co-op.
  - We will be launching the second welding program with SCC and PCDC on October 11<sup>th</sup>.
  - We encourage the people that we work with to be upskilled and complete their Adult Education and transition into post-secondary or a different job with the workforce.
  - The additional \$300,000 we received will be used to upskill the people that are in the National Dislocated Worker category that we might help to retrain and get into another industry.
- **Goal #3- Increase regional workforce participation by creating opportunities, incenting workforce participation, and removing barriers to employment.**
  - Aaron Poynter covered the KARES initiative earlier. KARES is getting a lot of attention from the KWIB. The University of Kentucky Extension Office contacted us last week wanting to know if they could have the rights to this. They have been looking for a platform like this for many years.
  - We participated in Goodwill's Fall Festival Expungement & Job Fair.
  - Lisa Gosser will be presenting the Business Services Update to share the work that is being done to support our 13 counties.
  - We are working with the PCDC to implement a work release program for our graduates of the SCC classes.

- **Goal #4- Focus resources on the most effective initiatives and improve the return on our workforce investment, utilizing data to constantly improve workforce development in Kentucky.**
  - **The South Central and Cumberlands Workforce Boards have been selected by the KWIB to pilot, "Putting Kentuckians First". We were selected because of the work that has been put in with Re-Entry. We will be participating with the KWIB, Goodwill, Education and Labor Cabinet and Workforce Cabinet. The goal is to develop a toolkit that can be launched in other workforce areas around the State. There has been a meeting scheduled for Wednesday, October 20<sup>th</sup> hosted by the KWIB Executive Director, Stefanie Ebbens Kingsley. Their entire goal is employer outreach and partner concepts. They will be talking about how we will launch this in all areas, what a platform would look like in urban and rural areas, how we provide total wrap around services and ensure that there high completion rate of the program for fair chance of employment, then go to Phase 2.**
  - They are applying for another grant that will advance digital jobs and Local Career Pathways related to those who graduate the Commonwealth Coders program. It is due November 1<sup>st</sup> in the amount of \$55,000.00.**

**Ms. Marsha Wells, WIOA Program Director gave a WIOA Program Update. She received an e-mail back in September from Rachel Adams, Division Director, Division of Technical Assistance for the Department of Workforce Investment. It stated, "I'm happy to report for PY2020 Kentucky has exceeded every performance measure in all WIOA programs as well as Wagner-Peyser. As we continue to strive for better data integrity and input I greatly appreciate the work you and your staff are doing to ensure the validation of the data". In the twenty years that she has been here she cannot ever remember getting an e-mail with any kind of praise. She just wanted the Board to know that this is a reflection of the work being done by direct services. She gave an update on the Out-of-School Youth Program, July 1, 2021 thru Sept. 30, 2021. They have a 150 new participants, 65 new youth, 55 in the National Dislocated Worker Grant (NDWG) and 30 in the Adult program. She wanted to reiterate that 55 new NDWG on top of the 143 NDWG that we served last year, we have spent at the end of September \$600,000 and are on track to spend around \$878,000 by the end of March. This is a testament to the dedication and the work that the Career Managers are doing to provider direct services in the Cumberlands.**

**Ms. Marsha Wells introduced Ms. Tammy Walker, Career Manager for Whitley and Laurel counties. She has worked with the youth in these counties for 20 plus years. She meets with all the seniors in her counties and they talk about careers, filling out Free Application for Federal Student Aids (FAFSA), how to fill out college applications, college visits, how to write their essays because some college applications require an essay. A lot of the students don't get help at home. They have a lot of Foster Kids in their school system. The ones that do need extra help give her their name, phone number and tell her what they need extra help with. Some students think that they cannot go to college because they can't afford it. They can get FAFSA but they would have Student Loans that they couldn't pay back. If a student will search around there are a lot of scholarships out there, but you have to be prompt about applying. After Christmas she will see what students are on target to graduate. She will then start talking to them about summer jobs**

or jobs while they are in college. They talk about vocational training because several of the boys are interested in Welding, HVAC, Plumbing, Electricity and Carpentry. They have a welding class that they have started in Corbin. This is offered 2 nights a week, it's for out-of-school youth. She has companies that call her weekly wanting to know if she has students that have completed Welding, HVAC, Electricity, Carpentry or Plumbing. She has no problem finding jobs for her participants. Her office is connected to the Corbin High School so the students have easy access to her help.

Ms. Lisa Gosser, Business Service Representative gave an update on the Business Service Team. They have posted over 50 jobs, planned, coordinated or attended 10 Hiring Events. They have 4 Hire Events in the next 2 weeks. They have provided Labor Market Information to 8 different companies, which includes 2 cities that has used this information for recruiting and 2 local school systems. They have added a 130 worksite placements in Salesforce along with their normal reporting duties. In August they started meeting weekly with their local Business Service staff. This will allow them to improve on their regional communication. They are going to meet quarterly on Dunn and Bradstreet, which Bill Sandell provides them with that information so they can go through the companies that might be at high risk, maybe having a financial issue or something is going on. We can re-look and reach out to them to see if we can offer a service that would provide assistance that would fill their gap. They were privileged to attend the Kentucky Community Technical College System (KCTCS) Equitable, Agile, Responsive and Streamlined (EARS), the future and direction of KCTCS. They had an interactive meeting with local legislators and business leaders, which was very productive. They are planning an informational meeting with the Principals of the Area Technology Centers and the Career Counselors, just to keep them familiar with what we do. The Strategies to fill the Workforce Gap meeting with Dr. Schneider and Maximus main concern is high vacancies and not a motivated workforce. They have potential On-the-Job Training and Incumbent Worker prospects.

Ms. Myra Wilson gave the Director's Update.

- Ms. Wilson shared the 2022 Workforce Collaborative State Planning meeting that is going to be virtual. She would love for the Board to attend this meeting. The KWIB usually writes the four strategic goals and passes it down to the local Workforce Areas. They are taking a different view this year and they are asking the local area to be involved, prior to them finalizing anything. The KWIB is going around the State and meeting with the Workforce Areas. Our meeting is scheduled for November 18<sup>th</sup> @ 2:00 CT. They suggested that we invite the members of the Board, local Chambers, ADD Partners, Kentucky Career Center (KCC) and our Chief Local Elected Official (CLEO). The Stakeholders that will be invited are KWIB, Department of Workforce Investment, Career Development Office, Office of Employer & Apprenticeship Services, Office of Vocational Rehabilitation, Skills U, Kentucky Career Center Partners, other community organizations providing support services to Career Center participants, KCTCS and other educational partners. They really want to focus on Virtual Services and how we are going to move forward.
- Tyler Martin resigned his position as the Re-Entry Coordinator. He has chosen to work with his family at the Galilean Ministries. The position was reposted and interviews conducted. Ms. Jana Shell was selected to fill the role of Re-Entry

Coordinator. She will be supporting South Central and Cumberlands Workforce Boards. This is a grant funded position.

- Unemployment numbers-From opening April 15<sup>th</sup> through September 30<sup>th</sup>, there have been 3,743 appointments in person for UI services. This is the actual number that they have completed, not counting no shows, or cancelled appointments. Ms. Wilson thanked Jessica Gleason and the staff at the Kentucky Career Center-Somerset. At the Workforce Directors meeting they asked Buddy Hoskinson, UI Executive Director and he said they were continuing to work claims and evaluate fraud cases. They have launched TIGER TEAMS- This is a national technical team established by DOL and the states. We were selected to participate in the second cohort. The goal here is to evaluate all of our processes and systems to look for assistance, which could include funding. This deep dive will be an eight week connection between the national team and each state. Kentucky's goal is to help us with backlog issues and fraud.
- They were told on the Workforce Director's call on Friday that our next allocation of funds would be coming down in the next couple of weeks. They have received the allocation and are working through the formulas to get the NFA's to the local workforce areas.
- At our board meeting in December she will be asking for approval to put the RFP's out in January for the One-Stop Operator and Director Service Provider. Once it's been made public, the timeline for it to be posted is 30 days. She will also be asking for an ad hoc committee made up of 6 board members to review the proposals. The plan is to get board approval in December, have the committee selected and post it in January. The committee will review the responses to the RFP's within the February/March timeframe and announce their decision at the April board meeting.

Motion was made by Jeff Vanhook to move our December meeting to December 14<sup>th</sup>, seconded by Jeff Sams. Motion carried.

Motion was made by Wendell Emerson to adjourn, seconded by Mike Buckles. Motion carried.

DocuSigned by:

Sam Brown

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Sam Brown, Chairman

DocuSigned by:

Vickie Wells

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Vickie Wells, Secretary/Treasurer