

Cumberlands Workforce Development Board
Meeting Minutes
February 15, 2022

The Cumberlands Workforce Development Board (CWDB) met via zoom (video conferencing) on February 15th 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 twenty-three (23) of the twenty-eight (28) members present via zoom, thus constituting a quorum of the board. Seventeen (17) members present via zoom were Business and Workforce representatives which meets the requirement of 51% of members present must be a combination of Business and Workforce representatives.

All members were e-mailed copies of the minutes from December 14, 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; Shanna Darnell-Youth Committee and Randall Thomas-One-Stop Committee. Motion was made by Brad Hall to ratify the appointments to the various committees as presented, seconded by Wendell Emerson. Motion carried.

Ms. Vickie Wells, Chairman of the Budget and Finance Committee gave an update for the committee. The Budget for WIOA Programs for PY'21 is \$3,778,481.09. The expenditures from 7/1/21 to 01/28/22 was \$1,802,138.60 which is 47.69% of the budget spent. Ms. Wells informed the Board that the budget was right on-line for the PY'21. The Board was given a breakdown of WIOA Expenditures by Grant Number. There are no additions to the budget at this time. Ms. Vickie Wells, made the motion on behalf of the Budget and Finance Committee to approve the budget as presented, seconded by Scott Pierce. Motion carried.

Ms. B.J. Wilkerson, Strategic Initiative for Transformational Employment (SITE) Representative from EKCEP gave a presentation to the Board. She serves thirteen counties in the State of Kentucky. She is a Job Entry and Retention Support Specialist. They provide services to their area to help people with barriers to employment. They serve the Opioid Use Disorder (OUD)/Substance Use Disorder (SUD) population and people that are in recovery or just coming out of recovery. She started in November of 2021 and she currently has thirty-five active clients in the region; one in Columbia, two in London, eleven in Russell Springs and twenty-one in Somerset. Some of the Areas of Services that she has assisted with so far are; thirty people had requested assistance with careers, she has placed fifteen people in new employment, three training request, they started a peer support training last week, they have twelve in the job market, twenty-nine are in the need of housing. She has twenty additional referrals that she will be getting by the end of the week. The grant runs until 2028. When she reaches her capacity of clients she will ask for assistance. She serves both the employee and the employer. The employer sometimes needs assistance understanding this population as they come back into the workforce.

Ms. Marsha Wells, WIOA Program Director gave an update of the WIOA Youth Program. She shared a breakdown by county of the number of youth that have been served for the past three years and also the number for the current Program Year. On average they are still at two hundred and ninety, this is a pretty solid number since they have been dealing with the COVID. In the middle of COVID they lost their Career Manager that covered Green and Taylor counties. So last year their numbers dropped. They are in talks with a lady about a Personal Service Contract that will serve the youth in Green and Taylor counties. She is currently housed in one of the high schools and is very capable of doing the job. Green County is the only county in our area that is not a poverty county. Youth have to be eligible by income and have a barrier as well. When they don't have an income barrier they have to look at the whole family's income and it changes dramatically. It's a small county and it will typically run between five and ten participants. Ms. Wells talked about a wage increase for the Out-of-School Paid Work Experience (PWE) program. The board had increased from \$8.00 per hour to \$10.00 per hour in August of 2021. She is asking the Board to consider an increase to \$12.00 per hour for 300 hours for the Out-of-School Youth PWE program this would begin immediately. We would also be competitive with places that are starting employees at this wage. This will decrease the number of participants that we will be able to serve but it will give the Career Managers more time for effective case management. Motion was made by Brad Hall to increase the hourly wage for the Out-of-School Youth PWE program to \$12.00 per hour for 300 hours, seconded by Wendell Emerson. Scott Pierce voted no. Motion carried.

Ms. Marsha Wells informed the Board that they were in the middle of their 3rd monitoring for the National Dislocated Worker Grant (NDWG). They do this every quarter. In the first two monitoring's they had no issues or findings. This grant started in October of 2020. They have served 250 participants and spent \$789,939.00 on top of the regular formula money they have spent. The biggest part of the NDWG funds were not allocated to our area. It's money that we absorbed from other areas and they spent it for them. She thanked her staff for all their hard work.

Ms. Marsha Wells told the Board that they are finalizing their proposal for the Direct Service Provider, its due on February 24th.

Ms. Marsha Wells told the Board that they had been approached about adding a Sector to our local Sectors, that being Hospitality. From what research that she has done it seems to be tied more to Business Administration type degrees. She wanted to hear what the Board thinks, because they will do whatever the Board decides. Mr. Sam Brown commented that we live in a high tourism area around Lake Cumberland. He knows of employers in Wayne and surrounding counties that have trouble getting employees, but also qualified employees especially some of the fast food restaurants and hotels. The people they do hire don't have the work ethics or soft skills they need to succeed. In some of these places there are opportunities for advancement. He said that Ms. Alesa Johnson with Somerset Community College (SCC) said there was education but it's in various areas and not combined at one location. If we contact some of the owners of hotels & restaurants we could probably put people in there to learn. It's something to think about, tourism plays a very important role in our area. Mr. Brad Hall thought that was a great idea. In the Hospitality area we have nursing homes in all our rural communities. They have trouble finding people to work in their dietary positions. We could add this under our hospitality sector. Ms. Johnson had informed staff by e-mail that

there is a Hospitality Management program that is sixty-two credit hours and a Hospitality Certificate program that is seventeen credit hours that is offered at some of the other Kentucky Community and Technical College System (KCTCS), but not SCC. She also sent an attachment that showed program details from other schools. She did mention the Culinary School in McCreary County, which is either a Certificate or Associates Degree. She also mentioned setting up a non-credit workforce training. Mr. Brown thought it would be a good idea if they asked Ms. Johnson to put together a model program criteria/curriculum for the Hospitality program. Ms. Myra Wilson stated that one of Ms. Johnson concerns was finding the participants for the classes.

Mr. Scott Pierce voted No on the wage increase for the Out-of-School PWE Youth program. He informed the Board that in 2011 the Kentucky Workforce Innovation Board (KWIB) established \$35,000.00 as the wage target, which is \$15.00 per hour. They are in the process of studying/revising their Strategic Plan. He thinks the wage should be \$15.00 per hour, not \$12.00 per hour.

Ms. Lisa Gosser, WIOA Business Liaison is attending a conference in Lexington, so Ms. Marsha Wells gave the WIOA Business Services Update. Ms. Gosser, Ms. Michelle Whitis and Ms. Sandy Birkholz are meeting every week. They have posted over forty job openings on Focus Career and the Facebook Page. They have completed employer visits. They have handed out the 2022 Planners to employers and County Judges. They have provided Labor Market Information and Wage Comparison Data to Economic Development for grant purposes. Labor Law information has been given to eighteen employers. They have been doing activities in Salesforce. Anytime they have a new business that comes in whether it's a Youth PWE Contract or NDW they enter that into Salesforce. They have given job description assistance, pre-screened and scheduled interviews. They have attended & participated in Area Tech Planning Meetings with the high schools and career counselors. They have attended several Ribbon Cuttings along with local tourism and chamber meetings. They are working on a new Incumbent Worker Contract with Aspen Compressor in Somerset, KY. They are meeting on-site with employers for eligible for On-the-Job Training (OJT) contracts. They update job postings every day. They have assisted with three hiring events. They are continuing to help people that come in our Career Centers, but the majority of those are still unemployment issues. They are in beginning talks for a Logistics Job Fair with SCC in the spring.

Ms. Karen Miller spoke about the Re-Opening Numbers for the Career Centers. The chart presented to the Board was for November 2021-January 2022. They collected data to see why participants were coming into the Career Centers. The highest volume of traffic was at the Comprehensive Career Center in Somerset, mainly because Somerset is the hub and the point of contact for unemployment issues. Campbellsville Career Center experienced a high volume of traffic and assisted a large number of Unemployment Insurance (UI) customers without the presents of Career Development Office (CDO) staff. Our overall numbers were lower for these three months due to each month having a holiday and being absent a couple of days from the office due to weather. Some of our locations had little to no foot traffic. Things that may affect this are as follows;

- Burkesville Career Center is located in the Senior Center and is open two days a week. One day Ms. Kim Gibson serves adults and dislocated workers and the other day Mr. Larry Hatfield serves youth.
- Rockcastle County has one full-time employee that splits her time between Adult Education and WIOA. She closes the office for three hours on Tuesdays and Thursdays to assist inmates at the jail in getting their GED.
- Wayne County office has not officially opened back up yet. There is a full-time CDO Staff and Mr. Larry Hatfield is there four days a week. Mr. Hatfield meets with participants by appointment only. He has to bring them in through the back door.
- Most WIOA Career Managers split their time between two counties. Ms. Miller is going to try and make herself more available. If the Career Managers need her in any way she will do her best to help.

Overall our twelve Career Centers assisted 2,758 individuals in-person during these three months. She is going to continue to collect these numbers monthly, to keep track of why people are coming in and how they can serve them better. Beginning this month they are going to be tracking phone and virtual customers to actually reflect the work that our staff is doing. She wants staff to get credit for their hard work.

Ms. Karen Miller told the Board that they are finalizing their proposal for the One-Stop Operator, its due on February 24th.

Ms. Myra Wilson, Director of Workforce Development spoke about the program, "Putting Kentuckians First", on behalf of Mr. Aaron Poynter, Director of Reentry Programming with the South Central and Cumberlands Workforce Development Board. Mr. Poynter was attending the Kentucky Chamber meeting as a guest speaker representing the work being done by the Reentry Division. The Board was shown a slide regarding this topic. Ms. Stefanie Ebbens Kingsley and several other partners have been meeting in regards to this pilot. Ms. Wilson believes we have the final model for the pilot program, which is awaiting final approval from Russell County Attorney Kevin Shearer. When approved at the County Attorney Level, participants in the pilot will complete a needs assessment and barrier removal process. One of the partners is a Case Management organization which has been approved by the Kentucky Department of Corrections as a diversion provider. The Russell County Attorney's office has been using this case management organization and the pilot will expand on some already in place processes. The pilot will utilize all local partnerships to ensure participants are provided the resources they need, as well as when applicable direct employment referrals. Utilizing this process will allow the expansion of services across the board for our community. Ms. Ebbens is trying to finish this up so she can present it to the KWIB before the March WIOA Directors meeting.

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.

- We partnered with SCC and Pulaski County Detention Center (PCDC) for the 3rd welding cohort to begin in March.
 - The Commonwealth Coders December graduating class had twenty participants for the Cumberlands. We have twelve that have positive employment outcomes and eight still in the process of securing employment.
 - We have entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Teleworks that will assist with placement of some of our Coding Class Graduates. There were three referrals that came through over the weekend. Ms. Marsha Wells and the WIOA team should be able to track these if they were participants with the NDWG. They have some part-time four hour shifts available for people looking for a second job. These are for anyone, not just Coding Class Graduates.
 - The Commonwealth Coders launched on January 18, 2022 with fifteen participants from our area and a total of thirty-five participants among five workforce boards; TENCO, Northern KY, Bluegrass, South Central and the Cumberlands.
 - Ms. Stephanie Ebbens Kingsley, KWIB Executive Director and the collaborative have submitted the grant for the Good Job Challenge. We have submitted a support letter and an employer support letter for this grant as well.
- Goal #2- Align and integrate educate P-12, adult education and post-secondary education to provide career progression to prepare them for work in the future.
 - This is a credit to Ms. Alesa Johnson, Vice President Workforce Solutions at SCC, who came up with the idea. We are working with the Business Service Team and partners that Ms. Johnson and her team has contacted to organize an outdoor hiring event (festival style) focused on Logistics. It is tentatively scheduled for April. They are planning to have it in the parking lot at SCC. If all goes well they are planning to have another one in the fall focusing on a different sector.
 - In the Youth Committee meetings we are spotlighting our Local High Schools, Area Technology Centers and WIOA Youth Career Managers for the work they are doing with our youth. Every year we prepare a summary that goes to the Lake Cumberland Area Development District and the KWIB. We are focusing on what each area is doing well, what we can put in the summary and what those numbers look like compared to the work they done prior to COVID. We are excited to put this together and see how the Career Pathways work out for the seniors that are graduating.
 - As a group of Workforce Directors, we are working with the State to continue the use of Career Edge with expanded usage for resume building, interview practice and modules for education. We are waiting on information from the State regarding renewal of the contract that is set to expire at the end of March.
 - Ms. Hilary Writt who serves as the Workforce and Adult Services Consultant for the Kentucky Department for Libraries and Archives

has contacted all of the Workforce Directors and they want to promote awareness and partnerships in relation to education and building a workforce. They are going to have their first Job Fair event April 3rd-9th. We will have our first call within the next few days to work out the details. It's concentrated on their National Library Week-Connect with Your Library in hopes of promoting what they have to offer.

- Goal #3- Increase regional workforce participation by creating opportunities, incenting workforce participation, and removing barriers to employment.
 - Virtual Outreach is where we get more of an audience than anywhere else. We have started seeing more of an audience of professionals on LinkedIn. Facebook continues to be the most used social media account we have.
 - Ms. Jenny Hughes, WIOA Career Manager at the Campbellsville Career Center shared some things that have been going on at the center. They have been working with Campbellsville Apparel since their closure. Elite Personal Protective Equipment is moving into Campbellsville. They have fifteen scheduled to interview this week, it's some of the ladies that lost their jobs at Campbellsville Apparel. It's been very difficult because technology is moving so fast and these ladies have flip phones and no e-mail addresses so they need all the help they can get. They have a Workforce Committee Team, that consists of Ron McMahan-Executive Director/CEO at Team Taylor County and several manufacturing companies that are trying to come up with ways to get employees whether their full-time or part-time. Ms. Hughes has introduced the team to Ms. Myra Wilson. They wanted to hear about what Mr. Aaron Poynter was doing with the Reentry Program and the Welding Program. There will be a meeting in the near future. Several of the businesses are offering four hour shifts. They have two WIOA Staff and a dislocated worker that is working the front desk. Ms. Wilson and Ms. Karen Miller have been instrumental in trying to get them some staff from Career Development Office (CDO).
 - The Steering Committee for the Alliance for a Drug-Free Owensboro-Davies County want to meet with Ms. Wilson, Ms. Alesa Johnson, Mr. Aaron Poynter, Ms. Becky Wilson and Pulaski County Jailer-Anthony McCollum. Their committee consists of representatives from Economic Development, Owensboro Health, Davies County Detention Center and other key community partner stake holders. They want to replicate the welding program at Pulaski County Detention Center. They shared the presentation that Ms. Johnson created and Mr. Poynter was the spokesman.
 - We have begun using the Pilot Transportation with Probation and Parole. It's for anyone on supervised probation. The individual has to contact their probation officer to get the transportation set up seventy-two hours prior. Mr. Aaron Poynter used this model successfully this month.

- 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 final approval of the pilot, "Putting Kentuckians First" should be completed this month. We have continued to meet with other departments in our government to provide information for the toolkit on the KWIB web-site that can be used across our Commonwealth.
 - Ms. Marsha Wells had previously informed the Board that they were in the middle of their 3rd monitoring for the National Dislocated Worker Grant (NDWG).

Ms. Myra Wilson gave the Director's Update.

- House Bill 4 seeks to change the duration of unemployment insurance based on the average of unemployment across the Commonwealth. The bill would also require participants to engage in at least five verifiable work search activities each week to obtain benefits. Proponents said the measure is solely needed to address workforce shortages and attract more jobs. Critics, however, argued that the legislation would disproportionately impact rural areas of Kentucky where unemployment is highest. The bill passed off the floor after several hours of debate and now heads to the Senate.
- On January 16th, Marty Hammons accepted the role of Executive Advisor in the Office of the Secretary.
- Dr. Kish Cumi Price was appointed as Commissioner of the Department of Workforce Investment, effective February 1st and will also serve as Special Advisor to the Governor.
- Ms. Anna Larson has been appointed as the Executive Director of the Career Development Office (CDO). We appreciate the time and support she gave while serving on the CWDB. Dr. John Gregory will be naming her replacement on the CWDB.
- Ms. Lyndsey Brown has accepted the position of Director of Community and Economic Development with the Lake Cumberland Area Development District, effective February 21st. Ms. Wilson will let the Board know how they are going to fill the void this will leave with the Commonwealth Coders.
- Ms. Wilson and Mr. Sam Brown thanked Mr. Mike Buckles for his many years of service on the CWDB and wished him a very happy retirement.
- From April 15th, 2021 through January 31, 2022, there have been 6,081 appointments in person for UI services. Just for the month of January 2022, the CDO staff has completed 638 UI appointments either by phone or in person. They also assisted 499 customers, this included filing claims, looking for work or to request their checks. The phones are back on at the Somerset Career Center.
- Ms. Jenny Hughes, Ms. Marsha Wells, Mr. Jonathon Pendergrass, Mr. Jason Hutchinson, Ms. Anna Larson and Ms. Wilson met to discuss the

Campbellsville Career Center and the need for CDO staff at that location. Ms. Larson is taking this back to the leadership team for discussion.

- Secretary Link will be visiting the Somerset Career Center on Friday, March 4th. They want him to tour the Somerset Career Center and on his next visit tour the Campbellsville Career Center. They will have an opportunity to share our concerns and also highlight our successes.
- Ms. Wilson will be attending the Kentucky Chamber meeting tomorrow. Ms. Lisa Gosser and Mr. Aaron Poynter are in attendance today.

Other Business:

Ms. Lyndsey Brown, Economic Recovery Coordinator introduced our Success Story; Pulaski County resident Jessica Bryant. She was a former middle school teacher who left this profession due to personal health reasons. Over the last decade she has searched for an opportunity that would be a good fit for her. While she was doing this she worked several part-time jobs. Last summer she came across an advertisement for the Commonwealth Coders, she was very depressed and hesitated because she didn't have advanced computer skills. She did realize that after a decade that structured work did ease the pain. The Cumberland Workforce Development Board's Ad said that no previous Coding Skills were required, so she applied for the 16-week virtual training program and was accepted. The Commonwealth Coders team coached their group in both web development and career confidence training. It was hard every day because they had projects to work on, families to care for and part-time jobs. She graduated Commonwealth Coders in December 2021. She has development several web-sites and has a career that is in high demand all over the world both on-site and virtually. She has now secured a full time job as a Web Content Specialist with Eastern Kentucky University. If you are a Kentuckian looking for a new path to your journey definitely apply to Commonwealth Coders.

Motion was made by Sam Brown to adjourn, seconded by Scott Pierce. 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