

Cumberlands Workforce Development Board  
Meeting Minutes  
February 16, 2021

The Cumberlands Workforce Development Board met via zoom (video conferencing) on February 16, 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 eighteen (18) of the twenty-seven (27) members present via zoom, thus constituting a quorum of the board. Fourteen (14) 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 the December 8th, 2020 meeting. Questions/corrections were asked for; there being none, motion was made by Scott Pierce to approve the minutes as presented, seconded by Connie Schell. Motion carried.

Mr. Sam Brown made the following nominations to the One-Stop Committee; Ms. JoAnn Siler-Chairman of the One Stop Committee, Jessica Gleason-Representing CDO, Eric Harris-Representing KCTCS, and Katie Edwards-Representing KY Farmworkers. Motion was made by Mike Buckles to ratify the One-Stop Committee as presented, seconded by Alesa Johnson. Motion carried.

Mr. Sam Brown made the following nomination to the Youth Committee. Mr. Brad Hall-Chairman of the Youth Committee. Motion was made Vickie Wells to ratify the Youth Committee as presented, seconded by Wendell Emerson. Motion carried.

Ms. Lyndsey Brown gave an update on the National Dislocated Worker Grant.

She shared a slide with the board. It included Justin Browning, Project Manager and Myra Wilson, Cumberlands Workforce Director pictured with the participants in the program. They rolled out BC Skills in mid-January. They are in week six of a fifteen week program. There are 20 participants enrolled in the 13 county region. This week they have been helping them with resumes, portrait photos and building their portfolio through BC Skills. Ms. Brown is working on materials for job placement, this will be the marketing material, which will able them to get with employers so they can get job placement.

Ms. Lyndsey Brown introduced Mr. Justin Browning, He is the CEO/Project Manager of this Web Development Computer Coding Academy. He said that it had been 5 solid weeks. Last week they were totally virtual due to the snow storm. The local paper in Bowling Green published an article about the program, which mentioned the Cumberlands Workforce Development Board and the South Central Development Board while highlighting some of the students. The goal is to get the news out about the good things that are happening with

this program. There are some great people in our region that are working hard on Coding and Programming. The next 2 weeks will be the deep dive learning pit for these participants. We have a partner out of Kansas City, her name is Rebecca MacKinnon. She is going to be making a visit to Kentucky in the next few weeks. She will be meeting with all of the participants in the BC Skills program. She has hired 6 of the current participants to work remotely. She has started a company with those participants. Mr. Browning met with several directors from across the State. Many of them were interested in how they could become a part of this program. It's clear with the success stories they could share. They are a third of the way through and they are excited about what the future holds.

Mr. Matt Bacon, Director of Post-Secondary Programming gave an update on Post-Secondary Programming. He spoke about some activities they have been doing the last couple of months. He has begun to mirror what he has been doing in South Central within the Cumberland. In adjust for the differences between the Colleges and the Universities. He is collaborating with college and university administration to collect student & post-graduation data and providing services. For the current student data they get; Name, Date of Birth, Major, Address, Dates of Attendance, Degrees they have already been awarded and most recent institution they have attended. This information will be used to forecast what type of jobs will be needed and when to retain those college graduates. He is working with the Registrar's at Somerset Community College and University of the Cumberland. To get the post-graduation activities data he has been working with a larger group; Registrar's Office, Student Affairs, Career Services, Student Services and Alumni Associations. There are several touch points that this information can be collected. While each school is similar in structure and each office in function, responsibilities differ at each. They are looking at what ways to capture data to fit in their already established systems and processes. Some of the information we are looking to gather; have students found full-time employment after they graduate, have they found full-time employment in their field, where did they have employment and what is their position and title, are they staying in their region or are they going on for more education, if so where are they going. By gathering all this information they can determine who needs help in finding a job in their field.

The Business Solutions team will know what jobs are available and where. He will be working with the Community Organizations to try and connect that piece as well. He has just begun to tap into the college students at each of the schools. Assisting students and Alumni in all parts of their job searches whether it be a part-time college job preferably related to their field of study, internship, summer job, first job out of college, a career change, a job after a plant closure, first job after returning to the region, these services include searching for the positions and helping with a resume and cover letter preparation, update of their social media accounts, job specific interview & follow-up preparation.

The next group is the HS College & Career Counselors. He has not tapped into the region yet. Once he starts getting the pieces in place that is one group he will go to as well.

High School and Secondary is not his area, but it's prior to Post Secondary. He is trying to bridge those pieces as well, students choosing to go on to college or students that want to go on to a career.

He has been working with a couple of gentleman from the Kentucky Department of Education for some new reports. With our new reports, we will be able to build our new dashboard so we will have all that information on the run. We will not have names, but each student will be identified by numbers. Some of the information they will have is, what county their school is in, the school's name, grade level, pathway they are enrolled in, what pathways they have completed, certificate's they may be enrolled in or have completed. This information will help us identify where pockets of students are and how many of them may be available for employment. We may be able to connect employers to students or students to employers.

Mr. Aaron Poynter gave an update on Re-Entry & Transformational programs. He shared his numbers from December & January. The numbers for December was a little less, than January. In December he had 15-Intakes, 11-Employed and 4-In Progress and in January he had 29-Intakes, 23-Employed and 5 In-Progress.

He gave a big shout out to Faye Howell for facilitating a meeting with the Taylor County Chamber of Commerce. We are moving heavily into Taylor Co. He informed them about his program and what they have to offer. He will be having a meeting with some of the judicial partners that they will be partnering with.

He has been meeting with the individuals that service the different areas for Kentucky SKILLS U.

They are looking at Kiosk's in detentions. We have tremendous support from our judicial partners with this initiative that's going to give us access to individuals that we may not have had access too previously or that don't know about the services. It's going to be an intake sheet, it has been awesome in helping identify some of the problems the individuals are running into, but on the back end we are going to be able to take data that we collect and find holes in services within these respected communities and push to eliminate those barriers.

He presented the Resource Guide to the Board. It can be found on the [cumberlandworkforce.com](http://cumberlandworkforce.com) web-site. It contains all of the counties that Mr. Poynter covers. There is a wealth of local, federal and state information, broken down by counties. Partners can contact him if they find information that is not correct or something that needs to be added. He thinks this will be a time saver.

On the web-site there is a list of second chance friendly employers called Re-Entry /Transformation Employer. All the counties that he covers is listed at the bottom of the page.

Russell County Public Library Achieve Network were able to obtain a grant for 5 laptops that are housed at the local library. The library has 5 hotspots.

Individuals are able to check a laptop out for 30 days. We have a direct partnership with them, if we have a participant that doesn't have access to the Internet we can make an appointment and they can go check out one of these laptops. They can go to our web-site and use all the information that Mr. Poynter has shared, help with their resume, help do some of that Career Edge & Skills Training and things that are virtual, it's equipped with a web-cam. It's going to break down that barrier to everyone not having access to the Internet. They will be working with Mr. Poynter and members of the library to facilitate and overcome some of those initial barriers that may have prevented them from applying for certain jobs.

Mr. Bill Sandell is with the Office of Employer and Apprenticeship Services, they are part of the Education and Workforce Development Cabinet. He is the Regional Consultant for the Cumberland and South Central. They promote the Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC). WOTC is a federal tax credit (\$1,200-\$9,600) available to employers for hiring and retaining recipients from the following specified target groups; Veterans, Long-term Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) recipients, Short-term TANF recipients, SNAP (food stamps) recipients, Designated community residents, Vocational rehabilitation referrals, Summer youth employee, Ex-felons, Long-term unemployed individuals & Supplemental Security Income (SSI) recipients. It's an easy program to participate in, there are 2 short IRS Forms that have to be filled out; IRS Form 8850 & ETA Form 9061. They can then be submitted to the on line system <https://wotc.ky.gov> . Forms must be submitted within 28 calendar days of the employee's start date. The employer will take their certificate to their tax person to get the tax credit. In Adair out of 852 businesses only 11 utilize the program, in Casey out of 536 businesses only 8 utilize the program, in Clinton out of 375 businesses only 17 utilize the program, in Cumberland out of 295 businesses only 1 utilize the program, in Green out of 504 businesses only 5 utilize the program, in Laurel out of 2,290 businesses only 65 utilize the program, in McCreary out of 420 businesses only 5 utilize the program, in Pulaski out of 3,023 businesses only 60 utilize the program, in Rockcastle out of 423 businesses only 9 utilize the program, in Russell out of 916 businesses only 10 utilize the program, in Taylor out of 1,368 businesses only 26 utilize the program, in Wayne out of 604 businesses only 13 utilize the program & in Whitley out of 1,800 businesses only 50 utilize the program. The Employer has to submit the form & track the employee's hours. They have to work at least 120 hours to get a portion of the credit and 400 to get the full credit. Jeff Vanhook made the comment it's more helpful if he could see an example of the bottom line, what the tax credit did for them, how they got it and they can look at it in real dollars.

Mr. Jeremy Coffey with the City of Russell Springs gave a success story of Mr. Brayton Scales. He thanked the Lake Cumberland Area Development District for allowing them to participate in the Paid Work Experience (PWE). The City of Russell Springs has participated by hiring participants for the past 2 years. Brayton started the PWE in March of 2020. After his 300 hours were up they kept him on seasonal until the first of the year. He is now a full-time employee with benefits for the City of Russell Springs. He thanked Jennifer Burton and Marsha Wells for getting them kids when they needed them.

Ms. Vickie Wells gave an update for the Budget and Finance Committee. The Budget for WIOA Programs for PY'19 is \$3,904,887.50. The expenditures from 7/1/20 to 1/29/21 is \$1,806,129.88 leaving 46.25%. Motion was made by Scott Pierce to approve the budget as presented, seconded by Daryl Hammond. Motion carried.

Ms. Marsha Wells gave a WIOA Update. When they talked about the presentation they decided to use 2019 & 2020 information due to the pandemic. These numbers are ran as new registrations/enrollments. You are not going to see people that might be in the middle of a two year program. In 2019 the total was 656 and 2020 the total was 443. She feels like the Career Managers are doing a good job since they are working from home. The process that they have been doing over the past 20 years have changed completely, but they have continued to serve people and serve them well. The Work Experience (WEX) number was only down 3 from 254 in 2019 to 251 in 2020.

Ms. Lisa Gosser, Business Liaison gave an update from the Business Service Team. The board was presented a breakdown of the services that have been done by the Business Service Team. They helped out with unemployment insurance, drive through hiring events, job posting recruitment, recruitment for virtual hiring event, attending (via zoom or in-person) Chamber & Tourism Board/General Meeting, post job openings, deliver planners and work with OJT & IWT Contracts.

Kirby Stephens with Kinetic Strategic Design (KSD) gave an update on the Web-Site. There are two pop-ups on the main page. The first one is for unemployment insurance and the other is to locate your career center. Under the Career Center Locations there have been some information added; such as e-mail address and phone numbers. This has information regarding all of our WIOA offices. They have added a button, "Latest Job Listings on Facebook" it will take you directly to our Facebook Page. They have added Kentucky Career Edge to the home page. They have added Pandemic Economic Recovery Programs, Post- Secondary Program & Re-Entry/Transformational Programs to the home page, so if people are interested in one of these it's easy to find. The web-site is a very useful tool. It's updated on a regular basis. They get a report on a monthly basis about web-site traffic, top traffic on social media and where that traffic comes from.

Ms. Myra Wilson gave the Director's Update.

- At our last meeting we talked about the RFP for a Fiscal Agent. As of February 23, 2021 there was a change in the reversal of the policy, however there is a meeting that is going on today, but she doesn't know what the outcome of the meeting will be. She will let everyone know what decision is made.

- We had a call with 3 additional workforce boards and they are very interested in participating in the BC Skills program. They will know the outcome of that in a week or so.
- The NDWG budget has been approved. We are currently showing a deficit of \$240K, this budget was sent in intentionally in the red. We received additional funding of \$253,622.80 and this will take care of all the programs that we have in place to spend that money. A portion of that funding will be for BC Skills for August 2021. There are funds allotted to Somerset Community College (SCC), we are going to pilot a program with the Pulaski County Detention Center & SCC, each class will consist of 8 inmates that will be trained in Welding. They will be transported to SCC, when the class has ended they will receive their certification, but we have to have an employer that is willing to hire the inmates when the class is completed. This program has been approved by the State.
- We are partnering with the Talent Pipeline Management to prepare some information for the people that are in the BC Skills classes. So they can circulate it to their contacts across the State.
- Our Local and Regional plans are due by April 30<sup>th</sup>. We are working together to ensure the strategic goals align with the KWIB's goals.
- The Governor and LT. Governor will be going on a virtual bus tour of all Workforce regions beginning March 8-10. We are tentatively scheduled to present our region on March 9<sup>th</sup>. A white paper was sent in last week, it was a very detailed paper of what is going on in our area.
- At the KWIB meeting they were introduced to Sara Jagers, a representative from the KWIB that will be reaching out to discuss Work Ready Communities.
- The Labor Cabinet sent out a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to all the Workforce Directors and it provides the region with an unemployment list of the long term unemployed. We will have the opportunity to contact individuals and provide the appropriate services.
- There will be Unemployment Insurance (UI) staff hired for all the hubs. These people will be FFTL; the timeline will be as long as funding will allow for it. If you know of anyone that is interested in these jobs they will be posted on Indeed.
- The State will be opening a call center for unemployment issues. As of now, the locations are unknown to the board.
- The Youth Committee meeting notice will be sent out today. We have retained most of the members from the previous committee.
- There will be virtual monitoring with the State the week of April 5<sup>th</sup>. After the monitoring is completed it will be shared with the board.
- She shared just the shell of the Strategic Plan, how they plan to measure it, it's not the written document. If anyone would like to participate with us we are going to have our first meeting Monday to talk through this and make sure we are aligned with the KWIB. Goals 1-4 are almost the same wording as the KWIB. Please e-mail Myra if you are interested in working through this.

Mr. McGaha talked about the Career Centers. There is no date for opening the Career Centers. They have listed what types of Personal Protective Equipment they need in order to reopen and it's all ready and available.

He has given up on getting a new building for the Somerset Career Center. He has fought this for several years.

Mr. Brett Traver has been working with Highlands Diversified Services (HDS). He gets a text from Ian Hessel, President of (HDS) saying that they are short 90 people. They had 300 employees before COVID shut them down and when they opened back up 100 didn't show up. They started going through a weekly process of having a Zoom meeting with HDS and Workforce staff to work through all these issues. The transportation issue kept coming up. They worked with the Cars to Work Program. The participant pays the first \$500 down payment and Goodwill matches that. They provide Financial Literacy Training, they review the person's finances to make sure they can make the payment. Goodwill partners with Oxmoor Hyundai on providing the vehicles. They have a financial institution where they get a 5% fixed rate on the loans for the cars. When they get the car paid off they get the interest payments back. He would recommend this program to other employers.

Motion was made by Scott Pierce to adjourn, seconded by Brad Hall. Motion carried.

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Sam Brown, Chairman

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Virginia Dial, Secretary/Treasurer