

Cumberlands Workforce Development Board  
Meeting Minutes  
2/20/2024

The Cumberlands Workforce Development Board (CWDB) met in-person and via zoom on February 20, 2024 at the Lake Cumberland Area Development office in Russell Springs. Chairman Sam Brown called the meeting to order and opened with prayer.

Ms. Jana Shell called the roll. There were twenty five (25) of the twenty-nine (29) member's present in-person or via zoom, thus constituting a quorum of the Board. There were 19 Members in-person or via zoom were Business and Workforce representatives which met the requirement of 51% of members present being a combination of Business and Workforce representatives.

Chairman Brown presented Katie Board to the Youth Committee and Ayla Hargis from Green River Ministries to the Workforce Board and asked for a motion to approve. Scott Pierce made the motion to approve both and Tina Cook seconded the motion.

Copies of the December 12, 2023 Meeting Minutes were sent to all of the members. Questions/corrections were asked for; there being none, motion made by Chairman Brown to approve the minutes as presented. Scott Pierce made the motion to accept the minutes and Wendell Emerson seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Ms. Vickie Wells, Treasurer gave the budget report stating our total budget for the year is \$2,350,681.93. As of 2023, we have expended \$957,263 which is 47.02 % of the budget. Ms. Wells noted that page 2 was the broken out expenditures by grant area and that we are on target. Mr. Brown asked Ms. Wells if she was making a motion on behalf of the committee and she said yes and the motion passed.

Chairman Brown shared that the Executive Committee met on February 12, 2024 and that for several years we have been looking for a new location for the Comprehensive Career Center in Somerset but to no avail. Mr. Brown gave Waylon Wright a tremendous amount of credit for all of his hard work in pursuing this project and working with Lonnie Lawson, Executive Director of The Center for Rural Development. The Executive Board approved the following proposal; The Rural Development Center is seeking funds to address a lot of workforce issues in the area. They are seeking approximately \$8,000,000 to purchase 13 acres of land on Monticello Street behind the Center and in close proximity to the college. The money would also be used for the construction and infrastructure of two buildings. One building would be deeded to Lake Cumberland ADD to provide comprehensive services. The staff would have input on the design of the building. The building would be 15,000 to 18,000 square feet with plenty of parking. The proximity to the college will enhance our relationship with the college and our services. The traffic count on Monticello Street is three times what it is on East Mt Vernon Street. Mr. Brown informed the group that the Executive Board had voted to commit to this proposal provided the

funding comes through. Mr. Brown spoke to Mr. Lawson who felt very encouraged that the revenue would be there from the State. Mr. Brown said there is a lot of behind the scenes work going on and in her report Myra will be discussing her efforts with funding and a lot of the legislators trying to get funding for the workforce areas statewide so workforce is becoming more noted in Frankfort than in any other years. It is a great opportunity for us.

Mr. Jeff Vanhook, Executive Director of the Rockcastle County Industrial Development Foundation shared a power point and presentation on Rockcastle County's MEGASITE project. Mr. Vanhook had a plan which he shared with the Solid Grounds Construction Consulting Firm. As they began to look at the project and realized this could really happen and engaged community partners to join in the talk. The discussion led to utilities and infrastructure and the 60 plus landowners who had to buy into the idea. Mr. Vanhook met confidently with each of those homeowners and they bought into the idea quickly. They assembled 55 different parcels of land totaling 1,380 acres under the option to put together this Mega Site for the Commonwealth of Kentucky. From there the process went to the Kentucky Development Project Investment (KDPI). The KDPI program was designated to be accessible and equitable so that communities over the commonwealth can have the seed money to make the most of the assets they already have where he spoke with many different individuals and shared his vision. There is a population of 900,000 people in a 60 mile radius in Rockcastle County who can provide the manpower that will be needed for the manufacturers who locate there. This will keep people from driving to other areas to work. This collaboration in Rockcastle County is between Rockcastle, Lincoln and Garrard Counties and has been a great partnership

Ms. Alesa Johnson, title KCTCS Somerset reported that classes started at the new Valley Oak location the second week in January. New programs being offered there are the Heavy Equipment Operator, and underground and overhead utility technicians. She thanked the WIOA Business Service Liaisons for all the help they have provided. She shared that the campus was offering additional areas of training in Health Science Technology programs. It incorporates three different certifications and the students have the option to choose 3 classes from the following: Phlebotomy, Nurse's Aide, Pharmacy Technician, medical transportation, Medical Technology and Medical Assistant. This is due to the increased need in hospitals and medical facilities who are seeking individuals who are trained and certified in multiple areas. They will also be offering new classes for EKG Technicians, Recovery Coaches, and Psychiatric Mental Health Technicians. Mr. Brown asked how many people had applied for the Heavy Equipment operator and how many do they allow in a class. Twelve constitutes a class and Ms. Johnson did not have the number who had applied but she said it was quite a few.

Ms. Lindsey Brown provided information on the Lake Area Foundation scholarship opportunities for academic year 24-25. The Lake Area Foundation is a nonprofit organization that began in 2012 and it consists of scholarships, grants and ways to give back to the community throughout the 10 counties that we serve. The funds remain intact forever, but its income is always generated and annually invested back into each county. There are several scholarships available for the in-school youth. One is the Billy Boyd Scholarship 24 which is a 1 time scholarship

\$500 for residents of Adair county who will be graduating Adair County High School with a 3.25 GPA or higher, and an ACT composite score of 25 or higher. They must be enrolled in an accredited college or university as a full time student. Students must submit an essay and a committee reviews and awards the scholarship. The next scholarship is the David Stephens Science Scholarship for Russell County students who also must have a 3.25 GPA or higher and an ACT composite score of 25 or higher. They must be enrolled in a Kentucky college or university as a full time student who is pursuing a B.S. degree with a major in Biology or Chemistry. The scholarship awards \$750 per semester for up to 8 semesters of undergraduate studies. A new scholarship is the James and Betty Beck College Scholarship. This is specifically for Russell County students who demonstrate a financial need or a family household income need. The scholarship is \$2,500 for 2 semesters for a total of \$5,000 per year fully funded. The next scholarship is the George and Joan Whitehouse environmental science scholarship that is available to freshmen students in all 10 counties that will be attending Campbellsville College. It is a one-time \$1,000 scholarship. The student can also apply to work at the Clay Hill Memorial Forest for an additional \$1,000. Another brand new scholarship is a one-time annual scholarship of \$1,000 to Casey County students who are majoring in the healthcare field and is funded by the Casey County Hospital. Jane Todd Crawford Hospital scholarship is another new scholarship that will award a senior from Green County a one-time \$1,000 scholarship who is going into the Healthcare field. Somerset High school also has a Dorothy Weigel scholarship that they offer internally to graduates of Somerset High School. Ms. Brown shared a slide to highlight the need in healthcare for Practitioners and technical occupations in the medical field that average \$83,200 per year and over the next 10 years, healthcare and social assistance industry is expected to grow by 0.5%

Ms. Karen Miller, One Stop Operator provided an update on the customer count and activity at the 11 Career Centers. In the month of January 3,969 customers were served.

Ms. Lisa Gosser, Business Services Team Coordinator for the Cumberland Workforce reported on the activities of the four Business Service Liaisons (BSL) that serve the entire area. Since the last WIB meeting they have attended a Work Ethics Seal meeting as we serve on a committee for the work ethics group. We have attended Chamber and Chamber board meetings, weekly Rotary Meetings, we attend regional meetings and network with libraries and other partners. Some staff attended a networking event hosted by Citizens National Bank and we have been to several ribbon cuttings. We are promoting a survey for the WIOA State plan which is on the website that you can go to and complete. It is a lengthy survey but we would greatly appreciate your input. We did Mock Interviews in the schools with our high school seniors again last month. We helped to locate and set up the employers for the event. We continue to promote the Kentucky Labor Exchange along with posting Job Openings on our Regional Facebook page. We are currently meeting with school Superintends on working on setting up a tour for teachers to take on the local industry and business in Russell County to expose them to manufacturing jobs available in our county. We will be working with our other counties to do this. We assisted the Career Development staff and also took 6 laptops to help the staff losing their jobs register for UI. They were very appreciative.

Ms. Marsha Wells, WIOA Program Manager, shared that they had a great success story to share so she would be brief. They are working with 67 people currently. We have almost used the entire \$200,000 received earlier in the year. We received the rolling four quarters report. There are five measures for each program of Youth, Adult and Dislocated Worker. We only had three decreases from the end of September to the end of December. Barb Miller, WIOA quality monitor, uses the template from the State when they monitor. The case notes could always be better and tell a story. The monitors want to see a live story with progression. We are also monitoring to ensure our data entry is completed within the required time period. We can always improve in documenting.

Ms. BJ Wilkerson with the SITE Program reported that since January 1, she has served 51 people in the 13 county area. During the time from November 2021 to January 2, 2024, I served 1,312 people in all of the thirteen county areas. For 2023, our area has 722 clients that are employed, 112 training provided and 147 presentations given. For January, 38 clients were employed, 52 referrals, seven training and 50 presentations.

Aaron Poynter with TSB Putting Kentuckians First (PKF) provided the update. For the Cumberlands region, we are at 72% employment and retention. Within the Cumberlands area, there are two staff members that cover the 13 counties. We are driving traffic to the adult education offices for orientation classes of all services offered through the cabinet.

Ms. Myra Wilson, Director of Cumberlands Workforce Development Board, reminded everyone that Fostering Success is still looking for employers for the Foster kids. A huge thank you to Marsha and the WIOA team for spending the Quest Grant Funding. We will be requesting additional funding within the next couple of weeks when we meet the obligation requirement. As workforce directors, we are continuing to pursue funding in the budget session. She gave accolades to the board members, County Judge Executives and others for reaching out to the legislators in an effort to secure any funding. That is the primary focus until the session ends.

The adjournment motion was made by Ms. Juwanna Sampson.

---

Sam Brown, Chairman

---

Vickie Wells, Secretary/Treasurer