

Cumberlands Workforce Development Board  
Meeting Minutes  
April 19, 2022

The Cumberlands Workforce Development Board (CWDB) met via zoom (video conferencing) on April 19, 2022 at the Lake Cumberland Area Development office in Russell Springs, due to gas prices. Chairman Sam Brown called the meeting to order.

Ms. Beverly Grimes called the roll. There were twenty-one (21) of the twenty-eight (28) members present via zoom, thus constituting a quorum of the board. Fifteen (15) 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.

Ms. Stefanie Ebbens Kingsley, Executive Director for the Kentucky Workforce Innovation Board (KWIB) gave a presentation on Putting Kentuckians First. Mr. Scott Pierce is an Executive Committee Member of the KWIB. They have been working with the Cumberlands and Southcentral regions to design a Re-Entry Pilot. The KWIB, prior to her taking her seat in July 20, 2021 had picked the Cumberlands and Southcentral regions of where they were going to support a lot of the flag ship programs of this State around a particular area and sub-population of Kentuckians who experience barriers to employment. When they started meeting with the re-entry team; Ms. Myra Wilson, Mr. Aaron Poynter, Ms. Jana Shell and Mr. Jon Sowards they started putting together all the connecting pieces for individuals that experience Opioid Use Disorder (OUD)/Substance Use Disorder (SUD), general justice Involvement and untreated mental health.

With Putting Kentuckians First they have decided on two individual pathways in which people that have entered the Justice System are referred for both mental health services, workforce services, education and further training. Phase 2 is the Russell County Detention Center. They are working with Mr. Kevin Shearer and his team in the District Court on a diversion program along with the Re-Entry Team and all of the other State partners that exist in the Kentucky Career Center. They are trying to connect all of the pieces to create one functional workforce system that supports and partnerships that encompass the individuals that have found themselves before the District Court in Russell County. They have been working with a team of employers, who are willing to identify as fair chance employers, to place these individuals who are working with the Re-Entry Team and providing an individualized employment team for each individual coming through the system. They will get a Career Coach from the Strategic Initiative for Transformational Employment (SITE) that will provide wrap around services and other financial supports for individuals that are returning to the workforce as well as either; Wagner-Peyser, Adult Education, any of our case managers for workforce services to get them up scaled, get their resume completed and credentialing in the short-term time that they have these individuals. They can then put together the career coaching, up scaling and mental health to get these individuals into a good job.

Addiction is a powerful force in our communities. We are not going to incarcerate our way out of this problem. Research shows that the single most impactful factor of a

person coming out of detention or recovery is a good job where they feel connected and invested in the community.

Mr. Aaron Poynter and Mr. Kevin Shearer already had Phase 1 in progress before the KWIB got involved with the referrals from the County Attorney and District Court. They are both diversion programs as well as individuals coming into the system through the office. They have put themselves in the courthouse with the individuals and a Kiosk. When they get a referral from the County Attorney someone from the team will do the intake form and get all the information needed to set up that individual in the system for success. Mr. Poynter or Ms. Shell do a quick assessment of the individual to see if they have checked any of the individual boxes. Does the individual have a disability that could require the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation services? Is this individual a Military Veteran that needs to be referred to the Veteran's Office? They have to determine what the greatest needs are for these individuals. In summary; the Kiosk populates it to a list, Mr. Poynter and Ms. Shell makes sure they get assigned a mental health provider, a supervisor for if there is a diversion or other court order supervision, workforce participation partner and their Career Coach. This team is already working with that individual with the digital touch that one of the team members has through an application or they contact the individual by phone to make sure they are going to their interviews, appointments and anything else they need to do to stay out of jail and stay on their job. The Career Coach's at Eastern Kentucky Concentrated Employment Program (EKCEP) SITE Team provide ongoing touches and support. Mr. Poynter can get these individuals placed into jobs and they can have people in education and training to get them better qualified so they can obtain a self-sustaining wage. This population has so many barriers to employment and stability, if they don't catch them immediately they will not be successful.

The system they have setup with the constant touches, accountability, mental health service provision, upscaling and workforce services allows them to catch these individuals before they get to far. This is what the Weekly Roll-Up Meetings are all about. All of the service providers and partners working in this phase knows who has been assigned to them and if someone is having trouble. Our team can reach out to those individuals to see what the problem is before it gets too far gone. They are tracking this system to see how it is working. They are in Phase 1 - Russell County District Court/County Attorney and then they will be moving into Phase 2 – Russell County Detention Center. The Adult Education partners will be providing the initial first touch service in the Detention Center 90, 60 and 30 days before release. Research shows that if you get them on that plan for workforce services and education before they leave the facility the likelihood that they will continue with it, is a lot higher. They are trying to implement both pre-release and post-release so they don't lose anybody in that transition.

All members were e-mailed copies of the minutes from the February 15, 2022 meeting. Questions/corrections were asked for; there being none, motion was made by Mr. Brad Hall to approve the minutes as presented, seconded by Mr. Jay Shofner. Motion carried.

Mr. Sam Brown made appointments to the following committee's; Ms. Alisha Bolin-Disability Committee and Ms. Gail Cummins-Disability Committee. Motion was made by Mr. Wendell Emerson to ratify the appointments to the Disability Committee as presented, seconded by Mr. Brad Hall. 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 3/5/22 was \$2,571,347.47 which is 68.05% of the budget spent. Ms. Wells informed the Board that the budget was right on-line for PY'21. The Board was given a breakdown of WIOA Expenditures by Grant Number. There are no additions to the budget at this time. Motion was made by Ms. Rhonda Thomas to approve the budget as presented, seconded by Mr. Wendell Emerson. Motion carried.

Ms. Marsha Wells, WIOA Program Director gave an update of the WIOA Youth Program. Since July 1<sup>st</sup> they have served 92 Youth, 74-Adults and 112 through the National Dislocated Worker Grant (NDWG). They are gearing up for their summer program. She has cautioned the Career Managers about placing youth into Paid Work Experience (PWE) that is more aligned with their interests and aptitudes so that it will hopefully lead to a career or full-time job. The wage for PWE increased to \$12.00 an hour and there is a possibility that our funds could decrease.

They have completed their 3<sup>rd</sup> NDWG Monitoring and they have all went well. The last time there was an issue with the case notes not being in within a ten day time frame. Their placements and performance actually supersedes having a late case note. This grant started in October of 2020. They have enrolled a total of 263, 120 have went to work and they have spent \$854,723.75 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.

They are also in the middle of a Programmatic Monitoring that started last week. This could last for a couple of weeks. All of the monitoring is done on KEE Suites. They don't look at hard copies of anything. If there are things that need to be corrected, they will let them know.

Ms. Marsha Wells requested the Cumberland WDB allow the use of funds for Summer School for 6 credit hours, in the amount of \$187 per credit hour for in-person classes for a total of \$1,122 or \$207 per credit hour for on-line classes for a total of \$1,242. This would be for Adults, Dislocated Workers and Youth. Ms. Wells thought there would be around 40 participants. Motion was made by Mr. Scott Pierce to approve the use of funds for Summer School participants at 6 credit hours in the amount of \$187 per credit hour for in-person classes or \$207 per credit hour for on-line classes, seconded by Mr. Kevin Shearer. Mr. Brown asked if there was any discussion on this motion. Mr. Brown asked why the on-line classes were more expensive than the in-person classes. Ms. Alesa Johnson with Somerset Community College (SCC) informed the Board that with on-line classes they have a third party that they pay to help support the system/platform so this is factored into the amount. Mr. Brown asked if there were any other questions about this motion, if not. Motion carried.

Ms. Karen Miller, One-Stop Operator presented letters to the Board requesting their support and acceptance to proceed with the application process for the Mt. Vernon Career Center and the Corbin Career Center upon completion of the ADA review. They are at a standstill because they are looking for someone to do the ADA reviews of the centers before they can do the re-certifications. She has been working very closely with Ms. Kingsley regarding this matter. The CWDB is required to approve a 4 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-Dixie Hamblin-HR Manager at Flowers Bakery, Local Workforce Board Member from another area-Connie Schnell, Career Development Office, Regional Program Manager/East, 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 Mr. Scott Pierce to support and proceed with the application process for the Mt. Vernon Career Center and Corbin Career Center after the ADA Compliance Reviews are completed and to approve the Review Team as presented, seconded by Ms. Alesa Johnson. Motion carried.

Ms. Miller updated the Board on the workforce numbers in all of the offices. They have been tracking in-person and virtual as well. In the month of March the twelve Career Centers served 1,317 people. The numbers have increased some. They are going to start utilizing Microsoft Teams. The goal has always been to bring customers into the centers, however with individuals doing more virtually, and barriers such as lack of transportation, childcare, etc. the in-person visits are reducing. One solution is to utilize Microsoft Teams with the customers who are able to download the free software on their computer or phone. This will allow them to work one-on-one with a Career Manager or staff member. Ms. Miller is going to be doing more outside of the office to promote the Career Centers.

Ms. Myra Wilson, Workforce Director was asking for approval of the Direct Service Provider (DSP) for PY'22 and the One-Stop Operator (OSO) for PY'22. There was a Review Committee which consisted of; Mr. Brad Hall, Mr. Scott Pierce, Mr. Brett Traver, Mr. Kevin Shearer, Ms. Rhonda Thomas and Mr. Jeff Vanhook. The Review Committee met on March 18<sup>th</sup>. The Lake Cumberland Area Development District (LCADD) was the only applicant for the Direct Service Provider and the One-Stop Operator. Based upon the Review Committee's recommendation, they are seeking to approve the LCADD as the DSP and OSO. This is a one year period from July 1st, 2022 to June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2023. Based upon performance, the Board may renew the contract yearly for an additional three years. They will begin working on the budget around mid-May and the Review Committee will meet regarding this matter. They will have the budget ready for the June meeting. Motion was made by Scott Pierce to approve the LCADD as the DSP, seconded by Nick Shearer. Motion carried. Motion was made by Wendell Emerson to approve the LCADD as the OSO, seconded by Brett Traver. Motion carried.

Ms. B.J. Wilkerson, Strategic Initiative for Transformational Employment (SITE) Representative from Eastern Kentucky Concentrated Employment Program, Inc. (EKCEP), gave a presentation to the Board. SITE is part of the Kentucky Opioid Response Effort (KORE). They have grant money that they can use to assist people that have barriers to employment. They help people with housing, dentures, clothing, transportation to get to work, etc. They partner with the Kentucky Career Center, Kentucky Chamber, EKCEP, Kentuckiana Health Collaborative, Cabinet for Health and Family Services and Office of Drug Control Policy. One of the things that makes their program stand out is that they have funds to spend on individuals. When they take on a client they become their case worker. They work with that client every step of the way, as far as possibly getting them housing through employment. She could have a client for a week or up to three years. She is in contact with all of her clients on a weekly basis to ensure that everything is going ok with them. It's very rewarding to see their clients get back into the workforce. While they may be working with one member of a family, it effects the whole family. She currently has 101 active clients as of last week but is closer to 120 at the present time. There are so many clients in her area, so they were able to hire another person to help cover part of the Cumberland Region. Her contact information is 270-805-1002 or [bjwilkerson@ekcep.org](mailto:bjwilkerson@ekcep.org).

Mr. Aaron Poynter, Director of Re-Entry Programming gave a presentation on Kentucky Area Resources (KARES). It's a web-based application that gets all the resources that are specific to a county into a database. This offers individuals a way to get in contact with them and back into the workforce. This has been launched in Russell County. This is directly braided into what Ms. Kingsley was talking about at the beginning of the meeting. This program has been very effective and successful in Russell County. They have also launched this in Adair County in partnership with the Adair County Fiscal Court with unanimous approval. They have started getting referrals from Adair County. Pulaski and McCreary counties are in the planning phase. Pulaski County was approved with unanimous approval and it's currently being built. This is something that is really needed and it's helping the outreach service of these individuals. This is a way to get people through the door. They have always focused on the no wrong door approach, not only for our services but services that our partners have to offer. Mr. Brown asked if the upcoming elections could effect this in anyway. Mr. Poynter informed the Board that they were doing year to year agreements since it was an election year. They can't bind one core into going into an agreement to have these applications built for 2, 3 or 4 years. Some of the counties that they are working with are already are in the re-up phase so they are budgeting for this because we can show them the effectiveness of this program.

Ms. Alesa Johnson, Vice-President Workforce Solutions-Somerset Community College (SCC) spoke to the Board about the 2022 Logistics Festival. Last year she attended an event in London called, Evolve KY. They brought in all kinds of electric cars. It was a fun time for everyone to learn more about electric cars. This is how the idea came about to host the 2022 Logistics Festival. There are thousands of jobs nationwide and in our area there are hundreds of jobs available for people such as; Heavy Equipment Operation, driving a Box Truck, driving an 18-Wheeler, etc. Sometimes they struggle getting people to come to a regular Job Fair. At the 2022 Logistics Festival they asked employers to bring their newest/shiniest vehicle or piece of equipment and they will have them set-up in the

parking lot at SCC. They will have a table where people can go by, check out the equipment, and talk to the employer about the opportunities and careers that are available in the Logistics Industry in that sector. They are trying to make this a community event; such as activities for the kids, food and music. The radio station will be there live for 2 hours and they are going to try and do a Facebook live segment. If you have a business that has logistics needs, please let Ms. Johnson know. You can contact her at [alesa.johnson@kctcs.edu](mailto:alesa.johnson@kctcs.edu).

Mr. Brown asked Ms. Johnson if she wanted to make any comments about the Hospitality sector. She had some good ideas about what we could and could not do at the last meeting. Somerset-Pulaski Economic Development Authority (SPEDA) is doing a free Hospitality Workshop. She has met with some of the workforce staff and they have talked about some of the options we have. We can work with the local governments as a sponsor, something like SPEDA is doing that benefits all the people in that county. They could offer a Lunch and Learn type model that last 1-2 hours or a 4 hour session that covers more topics. They discussed some of the specific topics that could be offered. We can also work one-on-one with employers. She is currently working with a company and once a month they are doing a set topic, it's for 1 hour at lunch time. There are some degree opportunities for people that they can offer as well, but given the population that we are serving she is not sure that they would take advantage of this because they move around. The 1 to 4 hours sessions would probably be more effective.

Ms. Lisa Gosser, WIOA Business Liaison gave the WIOA Business Services Update. They have posted jobs in Focus Career and on the Kentucky Career Center Facebook Page. They have attended several Ribbon Cuttings and Open Houses. The Job Fair in London was very successful. They had 60 job seekers and 30 employers that were set-up. They have participated in 4 High School Job Fairs and SCC Career Fair Day, which was very successful. Some of the Business Service Team members provided Mock Interviews for High School Seniors in a couple of counties in our area. They have been doing prescreening and interview scheduling for two (2) different companies, one (1) in Campbellsville and one (1) in Somerset. There is a Hiring Event scheduled for today at the Somerset Career Center. They have attended Tourism and Chamber Board Meetings. They have collaborated with SCC in planning the Logistics Fair. They have a new Incumbent Worker Contract and two (2) they are working on, along with a new On-the-Job Training (OJT) Contract. They have been doing activities in Salesforce. They have been able to provide Labor Law Posters to twelve (12) employers. Labor Market Information was provided to Economic Development in Adair County, two (2) employers in Pulaski County, SPEDA, and Superior Battery in Russell County. They provided tax information to a company in Clinton County. They have assisted several job seekers that have come into the Career Centers.

Mr. Brad Hall, Workforce Development Board Member gave an update on the Southeastern Employment and Training Association (SETA) Conference that he attended in March. They are really pushing technology at SETA. He attended a session that was led by Ms. Margarita Devlin, Assistant Deputy Secretary for Operations and Management at the U.S. Department of Labor, Veterans' Employment and Training Service (VETS). Her report on Veterans Program was very interesting. He got to meet Ms. Donietta Hawkey,

United States Department of Labor (US DOL), Veterans' Employment and Training Service (VETS), US DOL Kentucky State Director. This was a good connection for him since she is from London, KY. The Veterans Program allows transitioning veterans in the last six (6) months of their service, to get help transitioning out, such as; workforce services, apprenticeships, go to work, etc. Mr. Hall asked if we get a lot of Veterans in our area. Ms. Wilson said that we don't have a lot of Veterans that we see right now. Ms. Hawkley had spoken with Ms. Wilson at the Kentucky Chamber Meeting and ask if the Cumberlands would consider being a Pilot for some of the new programming that they have learned about, she said absolutely. They are suppose to contact her in early spring. The SkillBridge Program is what Florida uses for their Veterans. Some other areas he found interesting were; Career Edge, On-Line Workforce College and WIOA Re-authorization.

Ms. Gosser informed the Board that several years ago we did a Pilot program coordinating with Fort Knox, for Veterans. She coordinated a trip for some veterans that were going to get out of the service within the next six (6) months. They toured three (3) companies in our area. None of them located in our area, but we did give them that opportunity. The Board provided funding for a Veteran in Fort Knox to help recruit veterans to our area, but it was just not successful.

Ms. Wilson informed the Board that there is funding available that is going to target Fort Campbell. They have a Kiosk set-up. This is not through the Western Kentucky Workforce Board, its independent. They are going to try to funnel people to different workforce areas. Mr. Scott Pierce commented that every military base has a group that facilitates Veterans exiting service. They start targeting them with a minimum of six months out. Where Kentucky needs to get in the forefront of this is, with the large battery plant's that are going to be built in Elizabethtown and Bowling Green. There are going to be so many companies built within a hundred (100) radius of these plants that it will help us attract Veterans. These will not be \$10.00 an hour jobs. Some of the companies that are wanting to move in will be suppliers.

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.
  - 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. The graduation will be next month.
  - They have a follow-up meeting scheduled for May 4<sup>th</sup> to discuss the Recovery Certificate Program for those in the Lake Cumberland Region that want to get certificates. They will be working with Ms. Johnson on this. Hopefully they will get several that want to do Welding Certificates. Mr. Poynter is Chairing this cause.

- They have partnered with SCC and Pulaski County Detention Center (PCDC) for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Welding Cohort. Graduation is schedule for May 5<sup>th</sup>.
  - They have a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Teleworks that has resulted in nineteen (19) placements as of April 19<sup>th</sup>.
  - They are continuing to partner with Chambers and Rotary Clubs by doing presentations to educate them on the services that are offered through KARES and SITE, because there are so many people affected by addiction.
  - They provided a Letter of Support for the Office of Employment Apprenticeship Services. They are applying for the "Apprenticeship Building America Grant". If the grant application is successful they will supply a person that we will share with South Central Workforce Board to work on expansion of apprenticeships in our local area.
- 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.
    - There are many High School Job Fairs occurring in our area and we will continue to support these.
    - We are continuing to spotlight our local high schools and area technology centers. She will compile these for a report she has to send to the KWIB at the end of the year.
    - The Contract for Career Edge is being renewed monthly. The Request for Proposal (RFP) for these services has been issued. We are waiting on notification from the State regarding award of the contract.
    - Mr. Poynter is working with the Department of Juvenile Justice to get an MOU that allows him to work one-on-one with the youth to get them better opportunities.
    - The WIOA team is working with the local high schools to determine youth eligible for the OSY PWE Program.
    - The budget was approved for the Russell County Regional Agribusiness Training Facility that will support; Adair, Casey, Clinton, Pulaski, Russell and Wayne counties. Mr. Pierce wanted to give a shout out to Former Mayor Nick Shearer in Jamestown, Mayor Eddie Thomas in Russell Springs, the City Councils and Russell County Fiscal Court for working with Ms. Wilson and the LCADD to facilitate this. It was truly a collaborative effort between city and county governments and regional entities. The building will be owned by the Russell County Industrial Authority.
- Goal #3- Increase regional workforce participation by creating opportunities, incensing workforce participation, and removing barriers to employment.



- Mr. Poynter has placed signage above the Kiosk locations in the Russell County Detention Center.
  - We have expanded our KARES platform to Adair County. Pulaski County will be fully functional in May.
  - Ms. Wilson and Mr. Poynter are honored to be on a Workforce Panel at Goodwill's 2<sup>nd</sup> Chance Conference in Louisville, KY.
  - We have received the Unemployment Insurance (UI) list from Frankfort. They have a call on Friday to discuss the next steps.
  - There is a Fair Chance Hiring Webinar on Monday, April 25<sup>th</sup> from 12:00 to 1:00 Eastern Time. Governor Andy Beshear will be the speaker.
- 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.
    - They have put a Statewide Reserve Request in for funding for welding equipment at the Adair County Tech School.
    - A group of people are going to start planning a Workforce Summit that will be held in the fall of 2022.
    - They are watching Senate Bill 163, which would allow some inmates and felons to access state aid for college. The bill was delivered to the Governor on April 14<sup>th</sup>.

Ms. Myra Wilson gave the Director's Update.

- They have 63% of the Fall Class of Commonwealth Coders placed in jobs. Ms. Jana Shell is working with Ms. Betty Hays, Operations Manager for Teleworks USA to try and help the remaining graduates find employment.
- From opening on April 15<sup>th</sup>, 2021 through April 15<sup>th</sup>, 2022, there have been 7,393 appointments, in-person, for UI services. She thanked Ms. Jessica Gleason and the staff at the Somerset Career Center. They are going to continue to send monthly updates to Ms. Anna Larson, Executive Director of the Career Development Office (CDO). We always ask at each meeting if we are going to get a CDO staff at the Campbellsville Career Center. Mr. Michael S. Carter, Regional Program Manager with CDO said that they were trying to get approval for funding and get the hourly pay rate increased for temporary people. They are looking at putting a temp in that office.
- Secretary Link visited the Somerset Career Center on Friday, March 4<sup>th</sup>. He brought Commissioner Price, Mr. Marty Hammons and Ms. Larson. Ms. Wells, Ms. Miller, Mr. Carter, Ms. Gleason, Mr. Poynter, Ms. Shell and Ms. Wilson met with the visitors from Frankfort. They toured the facility and Ms. Miller showed them all the areas we have opportunities in. They were given a packet of information that included the numbers for the Career Center. Secretary Link was very interested in some of the Apps that are available for people in Re-Entry. Mr. Poynter shared those and how they are tracking the data. Mr. Hammons has sent several follow-up questions.

- There needs to be language added to our By-Laws regarding attendance of our meetings either virtually or in-person. Ms. Wilson spoke with Ms. Debbie Dennison from the KWIB and she said this should be added. Ms. Kingsley is also going to discuss this at the Workforce Director's meeting on Friday.

Other Business:

Motion was made by Mr. Brad Hall to add the language to our By-Laws that states, a Workforce Development Board Member may attend the meeting either virtually or in-person and be included in the obtaining of a quorum, seconded by Ms. Rhonda Thomas. Motion carried.

Motion was made by Mr. Scott Pierce to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Robert Akin. 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