

Cumberlands Workforce Development Board
Meeting Minutes
December 13, 2022

The Cumberlands Workforce Development Board (CWDB) met in-person or via zoom on December 13, 2022 at the Lake Cumberland Area Development office in Russell Springs. Chairman Mr. Sam Brown called the meeting to order.

Ms. Beverly Grimes called the roll. There were twenty-three (23) of the twenty-eight (28) member's present in-person or via zoom, thus constituting a quorum of the Board. Eighteen (18) members in-person or via zoom were Business and Workforce representatives which meets the 51% of members present must be a combination of Business and Workforce representatives.

Ms. Myra Wilson, Workforce Director introduced some visitors to the meeting. County Judge Elect Randy Marcum from Russell County, Whitley County Judge Executive Pat White, Jr. is the new Chief Local Elected Official (CLEO) for the Cumberlands Workforce Development Area beginning January 1st and State Representative Josh Branscum commended the Board of the job they did regarding the workforce. He was appointed Vice-Chairman of the House Economic Development and Workforce Development Committee. He encouraged everyone to reach out to their representative if there is a need. We also have in attendance, Ms. Debbie Dennison, Deputy Executive Director of the Kentucky Workforce Innovation Board (KWIB) and Mr. Alisher Burikhanov, Executive Director of the KWIB.

Mr. Sam Brown made an appointment to the following committee; Mr. Jeff VanHook-One-Stop Committee. Motion made by Mr. Scott Pierce to ratify the appointment to the One-Stop Committee as presented, seconded by Mr. Larry King. Motion carried.

All members were e-mailed copies of the minutes from the October 18th meeting. Questions/corrections were asked for; there being none, motion made by Mr. Larry King to approve the minutes as presented, seconded by Mr. Wendell Emerson. Motion carried.

Ms. Vickie Wells gave an update for the Budget and Finance Committee. The Budget for WIOA Programs for PY'22 is \$2,707,470.09. The expenditures from 7/1/22 to 11/18/22 was \$1,092,659.85, which was 40.36% of the budget expended. The Board also received a copy of the WIOA Expenditures by Grant Number. Motion made by Mr. Wendell Emerson to approve the budget as presented, seconded by Ms. Amanda Roy. Motion carried.

Ms. Myra Wilson presented the Cumberlands WIOA Enrollment Policy. This policy gives the Career Managers the right to postpone the completion of WIOA eligibility and service enrollment in the instance of potential WIOA participants not completing all required assessments or obtaining required eligibility documents ten (10) days prior to the start of interested training. Policy will complement the CWDB ten (10) day Data Entry Policy. Motion made by Mr. Scott Pierce to approve the Cumberlands WIOA Enrollment Policy as presented, seconded by Ms. Alesa Johnson. Motion carried.

Ms. Wilson introduced Ms. Debbie Dennison. She is the Deputy Executive Director of the KWIB. She convenes meetings to further the work of the state strategic plan, researches and organizes action plans to further the board initiatives. She has been with the Education and Labor Cabinet (ELC) for two years. She holds a Bachelor of Arts degree with a major in sociology and minor in psychology. She is a life-long learner, and has past management, marketing and sales experience. Her personal experiences connect her with the work of the state workforce board. When not supporting the Cabinet or board's needs, she can be found in Lexington cooking, playing tennis or golf, singing in her church choir, or spending time with her husband, cat (Cashmere) and friends. She has family in Russell County, the Braids.

Ms. Wilson introduced Mr. Alisher Burikhanov. He is the Executive Director of the KWIB with experiences in the public, private and non-profit sectors. He recently served in the Education and Labor Cabinet's Office of Employer & Apprenticeship Services where he connected businesses to Kentucky's Workforce System and led statewide initiatives. Prior to his work in state government, he worked for an international corporation focused on recruiting talent, a Kentucky-based and veteran-owned small business, and non-profit connecting refugee clients to employment opportunities.

Mr. Burikhanov thanked staff for inviting them to the CWDB meeting. They wanted to visit all ten (10)-workforce areas in the State. They want to build connections from the local areas to the State. The first job he had was in Garrett County. He has been in the United States for twenty (20) years. The KWIB wants to stick to the goals that will help Kentucky as a whole. There are four (4) goals that they want to focus on, which are part of the Strategic Plan designed in 2018 and approved by our current Governor. The goals are Employer Engagement, Aligning and integrating elementary and secondary education, postsecondary education and adult education, increasing Kentucky's workforce participation rate and focusing available resources on the most effective initiatives.

Mr. Scott Pierce, Member of the KWIB and CWDB gave a presentation on the Seed Academy Agri-Tech Training Center. He recognized all of the elected officials. There is going to be a \$6,000,000 school built in Russell County called the Seed Academy Agri-Tech Training Center. It is going to provide agriculture training for high school students and adults at another level. This is a concentrated effort between the KWIB, CWDB, LCADD, state and local government. Mr. Kirby Stephens with Kinetic Strategic Design (KSD) presented a video produced for the Russell County Industrial Authority regarding the Seed Academy Agri-Tech Training Center, this is just a portion of the video that was produced. State Representative Josh Branscum informed the board that there was a line item in the State Budget to fund this project. The Russell County Industrial Authority (RIA) has funded a portion of the project but the State saw the importance and need for this project so it was included in the budget. Russell County Judge Executive Gary Robertson, Russell County Attorney Kevin Shearer, the Russell County Industrial Board, Dr. Carey Castle with KCTCS and Russell County Superintendent Michael Ford were all involved.

The Seed Academy Lake Cumberland Regional Agri-Tech Center will be located in the Lake Cumberland Regional Industrial Complex, which is located in the existing Russell County Industrial

Park. They have teamed up with the school and industry partners to ensure that the facility is not only ecstatically pleasing but also allows for increased functionality and flexibility. The facility will be approximately 32,000 sq. ft. of classrooms, laboratories, administration space, and greenhouse area. The course work is going to focus on Livestock Management, Greenhouse Management, specifically Hydroponics, Animal and Plant Science and Associated Business Course Work. A component of the facility has an outdoor covered livestock area. There will be six (6) bays for cattle, sheep, goats and other livestock. There will be enough room for a truck and trailer to pull through. The covered livestock area connects to the school's auditorium area, so if the school wants to use that space for an event, training or teaching they can bring the livestock into the arena.

The Seed Academy is forward thinking, agriculture and technology coming together. We have to feed a growing population all over the world. Kentucky has been on the forefront of this. We are innovated and willing to change and adapt. Russell County High School has a very robust Agricultural program. We are fortunate to have with open-minded farmers and industry/business leaders and the Russell County School System (RCSS) will be a willing partner. Russell County is unique in that collaborative spirit, everyone wants to come together for the better good.

The partnership between the RCSS and the Russell Industrial Authority (RIA) has been a long time coming. Mr. Bennie Garland should get a lot of credit for thinking of this idea. It is a strategic idea for an Industrial Authority to be involved. Mr. Garland, RIA and RCSS saw the opportunity to be unique and forward thinking. The RIA's contribution of the land for the project, monetarily and the Russell County School System for believing in the project. The IDA is building and overseeing the construction of the facility and the Russell County Board of Education will be in control of program and curriculum. The aim of this is not just for RCSS to use the facility, but also be a Regional Hub, while also bringing in our community colleges and universities that will hopefully offer certifications and four (4) year degrees for Agriculture related coursework.

Agriculture is the fast and largest job employment sector in the country. Agri-Tech is noticing those needs. It will be more productive on less ground, protecting that ground and environment. There will be more automation and science in developing genetics, so all of this technology will require new employees. The job prospects should be endless.

Ms. Becky Wilson, Director of Career Services for Goodwill of Kentucky-Southeast Region presented a video to the Board, entitled Inmate Welding Program. Somerset Mayor Alan Keck said it best at their graduation; this is what it is all about, helping these individuals move back into society and we are changing lives. When we do not care who gets credit and are all working together, the sky is the limit.

Participants in the program complete welding training while incarcerated, receiving a certificate after completion. Once training is complete, participants are interviewed by partnering employers, who extend job offers to those deemed qualified. Hired inmates leave jail every day to go to work, earning money that they can access once they are released. Inmates

leave jail with a full-time job, thousands of dollars in their pockets and a network of support services at their disposal.

This program began last fall as a collaboration between lots of entities. It gave the inmates the opportunity to increase their skills by coming to Somerset Community College (SCC) and taking their WLD-140 and 141 classes, which is MIG Welding. They chose this class because there is a high demand in the employment field. For them to be able to learn these skills, receive a credential; be ready to enter the workforce and be successful is a great opportunity.

Goodwill helps them create their resumes and prepare them for interviews. Hendrickson Trailers is the employer that hires the inmates after they have completed the training.

Several previous inmates talked about the affect this program has had on their lives after they completed their sentence. They now have hope as they re-enter society. They are being productive members of society; those individuals are not as likely to re-offend.

Ms. Becky Wilson stated that it took these entities working together to make this happen. It took a lot of effort on the part of the Pulaski County Detention Center, Lake Cumberland Area Development District (LCADD) Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act (WIOA) Staff, CWDB Staff, Goodwill, SCC and Somerset-Pulaski Economic Development Authority (SPEDA).

Mr. Michael Carter, Regional Program Manager-Career Development Office (CDO) gave an update on unemployment changes that are coming January 1, 2023. The actual total benefits available are being reduced and there is going to be an increase in the work search requirements to get unemployment benefits. The weekly benefit amount is not changing. It is calculated on the base wages of an individual. The minimum weekly benefit is \$39.00 and the maximum weekly benefit is \$626. In our area, we are averaging about \$364 for weekly benefits. What is changing is the total amount of weeks that an individual can draw Unemployment Insurance (UI) benefits. It is going from twenty-six (26) to a sliding scale based on the state unemployment rate, below 4.5% the individual would get twelve (12) weeks of UI benefits and above 10%, they would get 24 weeks of UI benefits. Every six (6) months, the rates will be evaluated based on the unemployment rate. Individuals enrolled and making satisfactory progress in approved job training or certification programs are eligible for up to five (5) additional weeks of benefits.

Currently the Work Search Requirements are: the individual has to be job connected, meaning they were a temporary lay-off of twelve (12) weeks or less or you have to be in an approved training. Currently it is one (1) job search per week. In January, that increases to five (5) job searches per week. When an individual requests their payment, they will have to list the five (5) places that they have filled out job applications for to be eligible for that payment. Three (3) of the five (5) must be verifiable job applications or interviews. Two (2) of the five (5) can be; job shadowing, attending job fairs, job skills seminars or any other program provided by the Kentucky Career Center (KCC) or one of the KCC partners, but must be verifiable. Failure to provide five (5) activities will result in a loss of benefits for the week claimed. The claimant would be required to keep their work search information for a full year after the claim expires because

they will be subject to a random audit by the Office of Unemployment Insurance (OUI). A claim lasts for a full calendar year.

Suitable work requirements are; employment offered to a worker who has received at least six (6) weeks of benefits, pays at least 120% of weekly benefit amount, located with thirty (30) miles of worker's residence or can be completed remotely and the worker is able and qualified to perform, regardless of related experience/training. Individuals who refuse suitable work without cause are ineligible for unemployment benefits. Employers may report work refusal on the Unemployment Insurance Fraud Reporting webpage: <https://secure.kentucky.gov/FormServices/UI/Fraud>.

The new law has put in place a Work Share Program. This provides employers with an alternative to layoffs. The Office of Unemployment Insurance Sustainability Act of 2022 developed this. This allows employers to supplement wages lost because of reduced work hours. The employer may reduce normal weekly hours in an affected unit by at least 10%, but not more than 40%. Affected group has to be two (2) or more employees designated by the employer and the subgroup has to be at least 10% of employees in the affected group. In the Work Share Program, the employer would apply directly to the OUI. That is only companies that are affected by lack of orders, materials, etc. If the employer is seasonal; such as road construction, state park, etc. they are not eligible for this program.

Ms. B.J. Wilkerson, Strategic Initiative for Transformational Employment (SITE) Representative from Eastern Kentucky Concentrated Employment Program, Inc. (EKCEP), gave an update on the SITE Program as it pertains to the Cumberland Region. Ms. Wilkerson has been with the SITE program for one (1) year, in her present position. They have served five hundred and twenty-eight (528) clients; eleven (11) in Adair County, eleven (11) in Casey County, four (4) in Clinton County, one (1) in Cumberland County, four (4) in Green County, two (2) in Laurel County, two (2) in McCreary County, three hundred and thirty-nine (339) in Pulaski County, one (1) in Rockcastle, one hundred and ten (110) in Russell County, fifteen (15) in Taylor County, twenty-three (23) in Wayne County and six (5) in Whitley County. Ms. Wilkerson has someone in Whitley County that helps her with this program. There is also a new recovery center in Whitley County that she started working with in November.

Ms. Marsha Wells, WIOA Program Director gave an update on the WIOA Program.

- As of July 1st, they have enrolled one hundred and twenty (120) new adults. They are focusing on adults since they have spent out on their youth. They still have three hundred and fifty-seven (357) youth that are in follow-up.
- She congratulated the five (5) welders that just completed training. Ms. Michelle Whitis completed the WIOA eligible process for these participants so we could pay for these out of adult funds.
- The State is finalizing the PY 2020 monitoring. They have finished reviewing all of the documents that were sent to them. We will have to respond to this.

- Some WIOA Staff sat in on a Webinar with Mr. Michael Carter just to get some of the general information about the changes for UI. The reason they did this was because there are resource rooms and WIOA Staff is sometimes in there, but they are not permitted to do UI. It gives them an idea of what the people are doing.
- Between staff, they have participated in four (4) local and regional partner meetings. To complete the stakeholder assessments for the Carl Perkins Grant. They held those at SCC and the Lake Cumberland Regional College & Workforce Center (LCRCWC).

Ms. Lisa Gosser, WIOA Business Service Coordinator gave the WIOA Business Services Update.

- They have continued to train on the Recruiter-LinkedIn that is the potential replacement for Focus Career/Career Edge.
- They have hosted their weekly Business Service Team meetings.
- They have attended Chamber Meetings, Board Meetings, Tourism Board Meetings, Inter-Agency Meetings, ribbon cuttings, SPEDA Industrial Meetings, SHRM Meetings, Work Ethic Seal Meetings, along with local and regional partners meetings regarding the Carl Perkins Grant, SCC and the LCRCWC hosted these meetings.
- They have assisted with Career Fairs.
- The Adair County Juvenile Detention Center reached out to them about doing a Hiring Event. They were having trouble with their marketing. Ms. Gosser reached out to Mr. Kirby Stephens with KSD he developed an ad for our Facebook page. That ad alone generated lots of calls and applicants. The Hiring Event was a huge success and very encouraging; they hired ten (10) that day. In the past, the Hiring Events had not been very encouraging, due to the lack of participation.
- An update from the last meeting. At the Adair County High School there were employers scheduled to do interviews with seniors that will be graduating in December. Ms. Gosser reached out to the employers regarding this and there were twelve (12) employers involved. This was a huge success. There were several seniors that was hired though this event. She has been invited back to participate in mock interviews for the under classman to prepare them for the future.
- They have provided Labor Market Information (LMI), and delivered 2023 Planners and Labor Law Posters.
- There have been meetings with Mr. Stephens and his team regarding marketing and there are projects that they will be working on in the near future. Ms. Gosser will keep the board updated.
- The Incumbent Worker Training (IWT) contracts with South Central Electric and United Cumberlands Bank are both going very well. They are currently working on an IWT with Lake Cumberland Regional Hospital in partnership with the SCC Workforce Solutions/TRANS. This is not up and going yet, but looks very promising. From this connection, they have had conversations with Lake Cumberland Regional Hospital who has over two hundred (200) openings, Taylor County Regional Hospital, who has over forty (40) openings and Russell County Hospital about the increasing gap in healthcare

needs. The jobs range from entry level to upper level healthcare workers. They really want to work with them to help close this gap.

- Ms. Wells asked as a Board should we have the Career Managers when they start meeting with the High School Seniors to make them more aware of the job opportunities in the Healthcare field. Any connection made, would be good.
- Mr. Brown is a Physical Therapist. Over the past several years, they have had five (5) different students that have gone through the Youth Paid Work Experience Program. The first one went to Western Kentucky University and Mr. Brown has hired him. He is a Doctor of Physical Therapy. The other four (4) are attending various colleges around the country.
- Ms. Gosser and Mr. Mick Slone, Russell County School, Career Support Specialist for the Wilderness Education Project have collaborated and brainstormed together and he has an apprenticeship with the Russell County Hospital.
- Ms. Gosser had a collaboration meeting with Rural Water. They work with Ms. Heather Stevenson she is a great connection for them in Rural Water. They are working on an apprenticeship for the City of Jamestown.
- They are finishing up with an On-the-Job Training (OJT) for the City of Greensburg.

Mr. Scott Pierce commented on how the WIOA Funds have decreased over the past several years. They are asking everyone to do more, but with a lot less money.

Ms. Karen Miller, One-Stop Operator updated the Board on the workforce numbers in all of the offices for the months of October-November. We have twelve (12) Career Centers in our area. For the month of November, they served thirty-three hundred (3,300). The numbers were down for the month of November due to the holidays and sickness. In Somerset, the numbers served under "Other" for November, there were seven hundred thirty-seven (737) of those were employer contacts that the CDO office made. The Somerset Office covers the thirteen (13) county area and takes care of all of the UI issues. They also had six hundred and twenty-eight (628) that attended the Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) classes. These are individuals that are drawing UI but that are trying to get back into the workforce. They help with resume writing, interview skills, giving them information on job openings, etc.

With the new changes in UI there should be more people going back into the workforce. In August, several partners hosted an Employment Readiness Class and there were only two (2) people showed up. They are going to try this again after the first of the year and they are hoping for better results.

Mr. Aaron Poynter, Director of Re-Entry Programming gave an update on the Re-Entry Division.

- They have taken the Russell County Model of Putting Kentuckians First and has started expanding it into the Family Court/Juvenile aspects of the judicial process. It looks a little

different but the outcome is the same. They have to provide services to the youth as soon as possible.

- He has partnered with the Court Designated Worker (CDW) Office's in Adair and Casey counties. They have been doing presentations to the at risk youth that are already involved in the judicial system.
- In November they have expanded, "Putting Kentuckians First", in Adair County.
- The Pre-Release Classes have started back in Russell and Pulaski Counties.
- This is the 4th Welding Cohort that we have assisted with, it was co-ed. There were five (5) graduates-five (5) positive employment outcomes.
- The success of these programs are due to collaborations with all of our partners.
- Mr. Poynter was able to attend the 2nd Session of the Appalachian Leadership Institute; its focus was building our business and targeting our youth in our communities.
- There was a picture shown of a woman and man that were graduates from the last welding cohort. The last few years they had spoiled their children's Christmas by being incarcerated. They are paying it forward for this year's kids.

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.
 - Mr. Bill Sandell has provided a full workforce analysis for Adair, Pulaski and Wayne counties. We appreciated all the work that he does for our area.
 - The MOU with Teleworks has ended. They are trying to get some more Statewide Reserve Funding. There was one hundred and twenty-one (121) individuals employed through Teleworks.
 - Ms. Wilson, Ms. Gosser and Ms. Miller had a meeting with Mr. Stephens with KSD. Deputy Secretary Brinly had ask them to look at DOL "Outreach and Marketing for the Public Workforce Development". They are developing an action plan to promote our services.
- 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.
 - Attended meetings regarding the Carl Perkins Grant.
 - The first meeting regarding the Workforce Healthcare Consortium is scheduled for January 23rd. We are going to try to create a Healthcare Pipeline to help fill some of our healthcare needs.
 - We will continue to highlight the work that is being done in the high schools.
- Goal #3- Increase regional workforce participation by creating opportunities, incenting workforce participation, and removing barriers to employment.
 - Ms. Wilson and Mr. Poynter met with Judge Pat White Jr. and he is interested in getting the re-entry program started in his area.

- On October 20th all of the Workforce Directors met with Secretary Link and his staff to review policies. They had the opportunity to review the policies prior to the meeting and make recommendations. At their November meeting, they agreed on the policies that would be presented to the KWIB for review and feedback.
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- 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 Opioid Abatement Grant Funding for Re-Entry Division was submitted on December 2nd.
 - They have submitted a Concept Paper for grant funding with the region for Virtual Reality goggles, for use in training.

Ms. Myra Wilson gave the Director's Update.

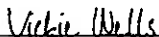
- Ms. Hilary Witt who is the Workforce and Adult Services Consultant for the Kentucky Department for Libraries and Archives is working with Ms. Gosser on a statewide job fair to possibly be held in libraries in April 2023.
- Ms. Wilson nominated Ms. Karen Miller to represent the Cumberland on the workgroup for the MOU/IFA process.
- Stacy's Hope Recovery Center is open in Adair/Russell for women only.

Ms. Myra Wilson needed to attend the Kentucky Workforce Summit that is going to be held in Lexington, KY and our next board meeting is scheduled for the same time. Motion made by Mr. Scott Pierce to reschedule the CWDB Meeting to February 28th, seconded by Juwana Sampson. Motion carried.

Motion made by Mr. Scott Pierce to adjourn.

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Sam Brown, Chairman

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Vickie Wells, Secretary/Treasurer