

**Lackawanna County
Workforce Development Board
Quarterly Meeting March 9, 2023 8:30 A.M.
Conducted at the
Greater Scranton Chamber of Commerce, 222 Mulberry Street, Scranton, PA 18503
And Via Zoom**

Meeting Minutes

Members Attending (verified by voice roll call)

Melinda Arcuri	Amy Luyster
Keith Baker	R. Brian Maloney
Maureen Brennan	Michael McDermott
Karla Carlucci	Anna Rinaldi
Bill Cockerill	Jaime Ryan
Gary Drapek	Brenda Sacco
Pat Fricchione	Drew Simpson
Sandy Fasula	George Sweda
Katie Leonard	Jim Wansacz

Members Not Attending

Billy Bott	Eric Esoda
William Boyle	Kelly Ojo
Louis Costanzo	John Pesavento
Thomas Donohue	Russell Rinaldi

Staff

**Virginia Turano
Cathy Gerard
Sharon Catanzaro
Janell Johnson
Roger Sillner
Gina Parise Schilling**

Staff to the WDB

Others

Ron Vogel – PA DOL&I - RR

**Larry Melf
Faith Lex
John Loughney
Neola Lynott
Karen Masters
David Genaro**

Services Contractor – EDSI (Adult, DW, EARN)

Services Contractor – EQUUS Workforce Solutions (Youth)

Item #1 – In the absence of WDB Chair, Tom Donohue, and late arrival of WDB Vice-Chair, George Sweda, Mr. Bill Cockerill convened the session at approximately 8:35 A.M., welcoming the following new members: Louis Costanzo, L. R. Costanzo Inc.; Patrick Fricchione, Simplex Homes; J. Brian Maloney, CalMal Vending; Russell Rinaldi, Cafe´ Rinaldi; and Jaime Ryan, PNC Bank. A roll call was then taken and a quorum was achieved.

Item #2 – To ensure compliance with the Sunshine Law, Mr. Cockerill opened the floor for public comments. There were none forthcoming.

Item #3 – Mr. Cockerill referenced minutes from the following previous meetings that had been distributed prior to the meeting and called for questions:

- I. WDB Quarterly Meeting – December 1, 2022
- II. WDB Executive Committee Meeting – February 14, 2023

With no questions or comments on the minutes, a motion to approve the meeting minutes as presented was made by Drew Simpson and seconded by Maureen Brennan. On the motion, there were no questions or abstentions. All members concurred.

Item #4 - The following Action/Motion Items, as taken by the Executive Committee since the last full-Board Quarterly meeting on December 1, 2022, were presented for ratification:

Via Zoom Session on February 14, 2023:

- Approval of quarterly budget reconciliation for PY 2021 Quarter 6 (10-1-2022 – 12-31-2022) and PY 2022 Quarter 2 (10-1-2022 – 12-31-2022).
- Approval to solicit and award a trash handler contract for the PA CareerLink® Lackawanna County with signature authorization by Virginia Turano, WDB Executive Director, and Cathy Gerard, PA CareerLink® Lackawanna County, Site Administrator.
- Approval of a 2-year extension (as allowable under current Agreement) to the current PA CareerLink® Consortium of Operators comprised of representatives from Educational Data Systems Inc. (EDSI), Equus Workforce Solutions, and Marywood University – Title II Adult Basic Education provider.
- Approval to submit initial draft WIOA Local and Regional mid-Plan modifications by due date of February 24, 2023.
- Approval to Release a Request for Proposals for Adult, Dislocated, and Youth services due to the expiration of current contracts on June 30, 2023.
- Approval to utilize WDB High-Performing contingency funds for the purchase of a conference table and chairs and credenza for the WDB office suite.

Mr. Cockerill called for questions and, with none received, a motion to approve the Ratification Items was made by Amy Luyster and seconded by Mike McDermott. On the call there were no objections or abstentions. The motion carried.

Item #5 – On Mr. Cockerill’s call, Ms. Turano directed the membership to their meeting packets which contained the 2022 Statement of Financial Interest (SoFI) forms and stressed the requirement that these forms be completed and returned to the WDB administrative office by, at the latest, May 1st, 2023. She also referenced a new Conflict of Interest Statement (as developed by the Commonwealth of PA) that is required of all members.

Item #6 – On Mr. Cockerill’s call, Ms. Turano explained that the WDB administrative staff, following a directive from the PA Department of Labor and Industry, had prepared and submitted a draft modification of the Board’s Local Multi-Year Operational Plan as well as the NE PA Regional Plan. Both documents were submitted by the due date of February 24, 2023. She explained that the draft documents contained numerous edits and it was the Commonwealth’s decision to conduct an initial review prior to allowing the local Boards to post plans for public comment. As soon as the initial review is conducted by the Commonwealth and corrections, if any, are received and implemented, the Plans will be released for a 30-day comment period during which time Board members are welcome to provide comments. Ms. Turano did have copies of the edited documents for review on request at the meeting. The members meeting packet contained a detailed Modification timeline.

Ms. Turano praised Ms. Janell Johnson, WDB staff Administrative Assistance, for her dedication and assistance in the preparation of the plan documents.

Item #7 – On Mr. Cockerill’s call, Ms. Turano began a preliminary discussion regarding Act 158, the Commonwealth’s revised High School Graduation Requirement. She informed the Board that local workforce areas are awaiting a directive from the State as to their possible involvement in approving an industry-recognized credential that could supplant passage of the Keystone Exams. She stated that any information, as received would be passed along to members.

Item #8 - Mr. Cockerill called on Ms. Turano to provide the Executive Director’s report.

i. PY 2022 Year-to-Date Funding/Operational Update

Ms. Turano presented the following chart, providing a picture of the current Program Year (PY) funding cycle (7/1/2022 – 6/30/2023) levels, including all carry-over funds from the previous cycle:

*Includes a transfer of \$388,350 from Dislocated Worker to Adult

Funding Stream	Carry-Over from PY 2021 (on 7-1-2022)	PY 2022 Funding Awards	Total Available Funding	Expenditures Through 1-31-2023	% Expended
Adult	\$187,112	\$921,065*	\$1,108,177	\$488,297	44%
Dislocated Worker (DW)	\$315,148	\$613,877*	\$929,025	\$439,843	47%
Youth	\$125,990	\$554,169	\$680,159	\$311,768	46%
Statewide Activities Funds		\$70,000	\$70,000	\$0	\$0
PY 2020 TANF*	\$46,880	\$0	\$46,880	\$46,880	100%
PY 2021 TANF*	\$324,720		\$324,720	\$267,353	82%
PY 2022 TANF		\$237,650	\$237,650	\$0	\$0
Rapid Response	\$38,587		\$38,587	\$38,587	100%
Business Education Partnership (BEP) Grant (competitive)**	\$150,000	\$0	\$150,000	\$67,837	45%
Veterans Employment (competitive)***	\$192,332	\$0	\$192,332	\$109,704	57%
Digital Literacy (competitive)****	\$45,000	\$0	\$45,000	\$27,578	61%
Clean Energy (competitive)*****		\$500,000	\$500,000	\$37,235	7%
EARN	\$0	\$827,028	\$827,028	\$290,850	35%

\$5,149,558

*Extended through 6-30-2023

**Grant Award from 2-1-2022 through 12-31-2023

***Grant award from 4-1-2022 through 3-31-2023\$201,848

****Grant award from 5-1-2022 through 7-31-2023

*****Grant award from 7-1-2022 through 6-30-2025

Ms. Turano discussed each of the funding streams and percentage attainments, to-date. She discussed a transfer (as allowable by law) of \$388,350 from the Dislocated Worker funding stream to the Adult funding stream, stating that this will address the need for additional funds to be targeted to Adult-eligible customers which is the current trend in job seekers. She also provided a programmatic report on each of the following special competitive grant projects: Transitional Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Business Education Partnership (BEP) 4.0, Veterans Employment Grant, Clean Energy Grant, Digital Literacy Grant.

On the call for questions, there were none.

ii. PY 2022 Quarter 2 Performance Report

Ms. Turano provided a chart of PY 2022 Quarter 2 (October 1, 2022 – December 31, 2022) Performance Indicators, stating that all performance requirements had been met. She stated that Lackawanna County was the only workforce area to meet all performance criteria for Quarter 1, PY 2022.

iii. Extension of Veteran's Grant Through June 30, 2023

Ms. Turano reported that she had requested and received approval from the Commonwealth for an extension of the current Veteran's Grant from March 31, 2023, through June 30, 2023, stating that approximately \$39,000 was still available that could provide training and employment services to local Veterans. She informed that all program goals, as originally planned, had been exceeded with the exception of number of job placements; however, this should be exceeded prior to the conclusion of the grant. She commended the two Veteran's Grant Coordinators (both Veteran's themselves) on the success of this project to-date.

Ms. Turano also commented that she had applied for a 2nd round of Veteran's Grant funding but was not approved because the Lackawanna County WDB is a current provider of services.

iv. Submission of Business Education Partnership (BEP) Proposal

Ms. Turano reported that the Commonwealth had issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) for another round of Business Education Partnership (BEP) grants, due March 16, 2023. She informed that she would be applying for the cap of \$150,000 to support career awareness and employment-related activities geared to intermediate and high school-aged students.

v. Current Individual Training Account (ITA) Report

Ms. Cathy Gerard, WDB Contracts Administrator, provided a detailed charting of enrollments, completions, credentialing, employment in a related training field, employment in a non-related field, and the average wage rate of job placements for all Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) issued from July 1, 2022 to-date by educational/training institution and, further, course of study. A discussion ensued regarding the process for course selection for the local Training Provider List as well as how occupations are chosen for inclusion on the High Priority Occupations List. Ms. Gerard explained the process and it was requested by Mr. Jim Wansacz that the HPO petition process be sent to all Board members to allow for consideration of inclusion. Mr. Wansacz also questioned the process for Incumbent Worker Training. Ms. Turano documented the request and will comply through dissemination of the procedures/policies.

vi. PA CareerLink® Report

Ms. Turano called on Ms. Gerard, serving in the capacity of PA CareerLink® Lackawanna County Site Administrator, who discussed the following:

- A Business Services Team (BST) update that included a charting of yearly comparisons of Total Job Orders and New Employer usage of CWDS.
- A *March Into Manufacturing Job Fair* to be conducted at the PA CareerLink® Lackawanna County on March 28, 2023 from 10:00 A.M. – 2:00 P. M.
- Announcement of an upcoming *First Response Training* for PA CareerLink® staff and any interested Board members to be conducted by Geisinger Community Medical Center on March 29, 2023. She noted that registration was required due to limited attendance.
- Updated information on the Statewide Activities Grant (\$70,200 award for PA CareerLink upgrades) that included: the purchase of an outdoor, digital sign for the front of the physical site to promote on-site activities, job fairs, employer recruitment events, etc.; the purchase of 12 new workstations in the Career Resource Center to replace worn and jagged units; the purchase of 4 new lobby chairs to replace fraying and discolored items; a keyless, electronic entry-way system for the staff-used doorways to increase security; an upgraded internal phone system; and the following items to increase on-site accessibility to individuals with disabilities: an updated TTY phone device; an amplified Braille-capable and analog phone line; a portable communication device for deaf or hard-of-hearing individuals; and a computer webcam for the ADA-accessible work station. All items are being procured with installation to be completed by June 30, 2023. Ms. Gerard also reported that the PA CareerLink® Lackawanna County Partners had voted to fund the procurement and installation of electronic front doors (has occurred) to assist individuals with disabilities and that the Commonwealth of PA was installing new carpet through the One-Stop Center.

Ms. Turano did inform the Board that there is a possibility that the current contract permitting a Unemployment Compensation (*UC Connect*) representative, who is available on-site at the PA CareerLink® Lackawanna County two days per week, may expire at the conclusion of March, 2023. Keith Baker, Assistant Regional Director with the PA Department of Labor and Industry, remarked that the Commonwealth is strongly considering an extension of this initiative. He will keep the local areas posted as to future announcements.

vii. County Profile

Ms. Turano referenced the Commonwealth-produced Lackawanna County January, 2023, *County Profile* which was included in the meeting packet for informational purposes.

Item #9 – Mr. Cockerill called for other business. There was none.

Item #10 – Mr. Cockerill noted that the next meeting is scheduled for June 8, 2023, at 8:30 A.M. at the Greater Scranton Chamber of Commerce, 222 Mulberry Street, Scranton, PA or via ZOOM.

Item # 11 – With no further business to discuss, the meeting adjourned at 9-45 A.M.