

STARK TUSCARAWAS WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD MEETING

March 3, 2021

Virtual Meeting – Zoom Format

PRESENT	ABSENT	GUESTS	STWDB STAFF
T. Beauch	J. Burley	L. Kopfstein	J. Meek Eells
T. Black	P. Jones	S. Rippeth	D. Sipe
S. Carson	B. Larman	D. Wheeler	R. Harris
D. Cole	M. Locke		
T. Davis	M. Manheim		ONE-STOP OPR/FISCAL AGENT
H. Eadon	R. Moss		K. Beckman
D. Forkas	R. Waltz		S. Berardo
N. Hackenbracht			J. Breedlove
A. Kerns			C. Byrd
S. Marzano			M. Falter
S. Meeks			M. Gwin
S. Robinson			A. Miller
J. Sekely			
D. Smith			

BUSINESS MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER

D. Smith, Chair called the meeting to order at 12:02 p.m.

- We have two retiring board members- Dave Wheeler, Director of External Affairs at American Electric Power and Tim Beauch, Human Resources Director at Aultman Health Foundation.
- Dave Wheeler joined the workforce board in July 2007, serving 13 and a half years. Dave served in executive leadership as the Vice Chair from July 2009 through September 2013, and became the Board Chair in October 2013. As Chair, Dave also served on the STWDB Council of Governments as a voting board member, beginning in 2014. He was Chair for three terms, and was elected Board Secretary in October 2019, holding this office until his retirement on February 1, 2021.
- Wheeler has been a strong partner and supporter of the Business Resource Network through the OhioMeansJobs Centers. AEP was able to connect with many businesses engaged with the BRN to discuss energy efficiencies and other AEP assistance. Wheeler was instrumental in the implementation of the provisions of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act of 2014 and has been a true leader in supporting talent and workforce development in Stark and Tuscarawas Counties.
- Wheeler noted, "he feels very confident with the leadership of the board."
- Tim Beauch joined the workforce board in November 2009, serving over eleven years. Tim served as the Nominating Committee Chair beginning September 2012, holding this post for the past 8 and a half years. Beauch also took an executive leadership role with the board as the Secretary, from October 2013 through September 2019, and since October 2019, currently serves as the Board's Vice

Chair. Beach has been involved with the Strengthening Stark efforts and the OhioMeansJobs Center to connect talent to employment opportunities at Aultman Hospital. Beach's leadership during the implementation of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act of 2014 and toward talent development in our region has been significant.

- Beach noted, "it was a pleasure to participate on the board."
- The Board recognizes Wheeler's and Beach's contributions to our communities through their participation on this Board, as well as their community-mindedness in the roles they held at AEP and Aultman Health Foundation. We thank you both for your years of service and wish you much happiness in your retirements.
- We also have a new board member we would like to welcome, Sue Marzano, Energy Advisor / Program Coordinator Sr. from AEP, Ohio
- Marzano is an Energy Advisor at AEP Ohio where she currently works with her team of energy efficiency professionals to develop sales and marketing strategies to promote energy efficient products and services. This includes marketing and outreach campaigns, business development, and direct outreach to Ohio customers with a goal to increase the customer's experience while assisting with a community's economic development. It was at AEP Ohio that she received her REA certification from the Association of Energy Engineers, and a Key Contributor Award and recently graduated from the 2020 Class of Leadership Ohio where she is currently serving as Ambassador for the Class of 2021.
- Before joining AEP Ohio, Marzano was a Commercial Field Specialist at CLEAResult assisting commercial and industrial customers in seven Ohio counties to make smarter energy decisions for utility incentives for measures such as compressed air, process efficiency, HVAC and VFDs, refrigeration, and networked lighting.
- Marzano received her MBA from Indiana Wesleyan University. She spent two decades serving and assisting local education and community development boards in Stark and Summit County to raise funds to implement their missions, and also taught business courses at Stark State College in North Canton, OH. She earned her BA in Business Management at Malone University.
- Marzano studied interior design and facility planning at the Art Institute of Pittsburgh and was an accomplished interior designer and facility planner spending two decades designing commercial office space and private homes for which she received critical acclaim and award.
- Marzano continues to be a contributing community supporter where she is a member of Canton Rotary and the Building Industry Association. She currently lives in Canton, OH, but also enjoys visiting her two children in Washington, DC, and Macon, GA.

APPROVAL JANUARY 6, 2021, MEETING MINUTES – D. SMITH, Chair – (Attachment)

MOTION: MEEKS MOVED FOR THE APPROVAL OF THE JANUARY 6, 2021, MEETING MINUTES PER ATTACHMENT PREVIOUSLY EMAILED TO MEMBERS. BEAUCH SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

DIRECTOR'S UPDATE – J. Meek Eells

- Update on East Ohio Workforce Regional Plan:
The implementation of WIOA change divides us in regions. Our regional partners are Mahoning, Columbiana, and Trumbull counties. We last filed in 2016, and we are due to submit a new plan. We have been meeting for several months with other Workforce Development Directors (Bert Cene and Bim Turner) along with Breedlove and Sipe. We will submit a draft plan for public comment, and you will see during this time. All comments can be submitted to Meek Eells.

- Unemployment Situation:

Continue to see new filings for unemployment. Unemployment rates around 5% in Stark and Tuscarawas counties. There is a lot of fraud and other filing issues in Ohio and nationwide. Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) has been so supportive and helps with communication in the calls we get. We are doing the best we can do to direct the customer to the right state resources along with reaching out to businesses.

Director Kim Henderson announced her resignation, and she will be moving out of state. An Interim Director will be in place for the short term as they will be doing a nationwide search.
- TuscCountyMeansJobs.com

Last month we kicked off -TuscCountyMeansJobs.com which is a jobs platform. We have connected with Tuscarawas county educational partners. Hrishue Mahalala, consultant and Meek Eells will present to the Tuscarawas Commissioners' meeting in March.

The presentation will better acquaint community with this tool and resource.
- Development of Workforce Committee

Participated in the development of the Workforce Committee through Eadon's organization. We discussed through Strengthening Stark initiative and Tuscarawas county the need for workforce as businesses struggle to find talent.

Eadon noted there is a great cross section of Manufacturing, IT professionals, service providers, business owners on this committee along with many influential leaders like Meek Eells and Robinson. He is excited to use this new platform to help guide in trend analysis from a workforce development and attraction standpoint for our region.
- Partnering with Tuscarawas County Educational Service Center (ESC)

About six weeks ago, partnered with the Tuscarawas County ESC. The ESC submitted an application for funding around a workforce grant to help with credentialing of the high school population. Guernsey and Belmont County OhioMeansJobs centers were also represented. We are crossing our fingers the ESC will receive the funding, but Lori Robson of the ESC noted even if we don't receive the funding, they will continue to strengthen our partnership together with OMJ Centers. The plan will be to look at high school Seniors and how we can connect with them on opportunities to keep them in the area.
- Area 6 On-the-Job-Training (OJT) Policy Changes

The Policy changes to On-the-Job Training Policy stems from our expanded outreach with the Business Resource Network with the additions of staff for Falter of Logan Little and Helene Papczun. They are connecting with businesses and employers in both counties. To promote more OJTs, Beckman, Falter, Little and Papczun feel we need to promote a higher wage threshold for employer engagement where we are delivering resources.

As you will see in Attachment B, it shows a current assessment of wages and jobs in demand. The median wage for our metro area is \$16.47 per hour which is \$34,260 per year. By looking at the in-demand jobs which most are \$15 per hour or over then looking at the median household wages especially those tied to households in poverty. The poverty wages are not even close to the median wages of \$34, 000.

Meek Eells recommended to the board that we make a change to the policy. Meek Eells shared her screen to show the current policy and how she sees the changes being made and if approved would go in effect 3/4/21. Meek Eells recommended to the board: The minimum OJT wage to be \$15 per hour to write a contract for a particular position of an individual who is WIOA eligible as the most recent threshold was \$10 per hour and was established in 2016.

Based on the assessment of Beckman and Falter, the Board can definitely support \$15 per hour. This will not change the cap of \$8000 per OJT previously set by the board which means the Board will not reimburse an employer more than \$8000 per placement. The OJT program reimburses an employer 50% of the individual's wages for a set period of time that is developed to train the individual on the job. Meek Eells would like to remove from this policy-the state does allow some threshold for the reimbursement piece. We should keep at 50% for the commitment and engagement piece from employer.

The last recommendation of this policy is for positions where employees have been on the job through a temporary or staffing agency placement prior to hiring by the employer will not be eligible for OJT. The reason being is the employee already knows the position at that time. If a position changed / different, we could sit down with the employer.

Opened up for questions:

Eadon questioned since the cap remains at \$8000 then the number of supported hours would be cut by about 34%. This would be about 1600 hours down to 1000 hours, is that consistent with what we feel manufacturers and service providers would need for an OJT?

Meek Eells said "Yes, as we do not typically write a contract for the maximum hours allowed." Beckman said, "To reiterate what Meek Eells said the majority of the contracts are not up to the six months. Beckman gave an example: We had one last year for an Engineer which did max at \$8000, but the wage was around \$23/24 per hour. For the lower wage OJTs in the past, the employer doesn't usually get anywhere near the \$8000. The change will benefit the employer, they will get a greater reimbursement for 50% of \$15 versus 50% of \$10. It is an incentive to the employer and the candidate for a livable wage as well.

MOTION: EADON MOVED TO ACCEPT AREA 6 ON-THE-JOB TRAINING(OJT) POLICY CHANGES. MEEKS SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED.

TREASURER'S REPORT JANUARY 31, 2021 – C. Byrd – (Attachment)

- Everything is in good shape
- All spending in line
- Dislocated Worker spending is down. We like it to be around 100%, but it is not an area of concern.
- Able to move 100% to expenditures between Adult and Dislocated Worker
- Continue to monitor till end of fiscal year at the end of June 2021

- Will probably move Adult money to Dislocated Worker money
- Will have plenty of expenditures between now and then between Dislocated Worker and Adult
- Other grants shaping up as anticipated
- In terms of WIA programs:
 - Subgrant agreement with the board to do Adult Dislocated Worker training, pay for staffing costs and facility related operations is right where it should be at 50% as a January report.
- TANF grants for the current year
 - Started in October 2021
 - Expenditures starting to build up but are in good shape

MOTION MEEKS MOVED TO ACCEPT THE JANUARY 31, 2021 TREASURER’S REPORT AS PRESENTED. CARSON SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

ONE-STOP OPERATOR/CCMEP UPDATE – J. Breedlove

ONE STOP OPERATOR

Breedlove reported -we continue to maintain our existing operating schedule in both counties after we review the Covid-19 activity in our local communities. For the month February and continuing into March, we are maintaining our current schedule that includes onsite availability of resource center services on Tuesday’s and Thursday’s in Stark County and Tuesday’s in Tuscarawas County. The centers do require customers to make appointments in advance for resource room services (computer use) during the hours of 10:00am – 3:00pm. Customers can visit the centers for copy/fax services without a scheduled appointment on those days. Staff continue virtual service delivery and continuing to maximize our digital outreach with creative/innovative activities.

Breedlove reported-We now have an official start date to begin the **RESEA** program delivery (Reemployment Services & Eligibility Assessment) which was March 1, 2021. The state needed to make some system updates that prevented the program start date until now. Staff and supervisory staff have been training/learning more about the RESEA program and have had the opportunity to “practice” within the Ohio Workforce Case Management System (OWCMS) before going “live”. This is the system where they will be case managing individuals selected to participate in the program. This is the program that provides more intensive reemployment assistance to individuals who are receiving Unemployment Insurance (UI) benefits and are determined to be likely to exhaust their benefits before becoming reemployed. The local workforce system has assumed delivery of this program from ODJFS.

Breedlove reported- We have successfully negotiated a **one-year extension** of our existing Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for the OhioMeansJobs centers and our partnership. The state provided the local workforce areas with an opportunity to extend their existing MOUs (with no changes/the existing budget) **OR** to renegotiate a new one-year MOU. We presented the options to our partners and all agreed on extending the existing MOU which begins **July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2022**. Breedlove would like to thank Miller for her assistance in this effort; we moved early and quickly to present this to our partners and hope to have all partner signatures back by March 19th which we will return quickly to ODJFS for signature.

We are also continuing with our plans for virtual career fairs. You will hear more information from Gwin & Miller about these upcoming events. This virtual event platform has been made available to the local workforce areas through JobsOhio and ODJFS and we have been working closely with a technical assistance

provider assisting with administrative event details. Strengthening Stark staff are also collaborating/working closely with us on the Stark County event.

COMPREHENSIVE CASE MANAGEMENT & EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM (CCMEP)

Meek Eells and Breedlove had the opportunity to present at the recent state-facilitated CCMEP Implementation Manager's Meeting that is a bi-monthly event and we presented at the 2/11/21 webinar. These webinars are an opportunity for CCMEP lead agencies and staff, providers, and other service providing staff to receive program updates as well as learn best practices from colleagues around the state. CCMEP managers/practitioners typically attend these meetings and our presentation topic was titled "Engaging Out of School Youth". Meek Eells and Breedlove had the opportunity to share information about our service delivery in Stark and Tuscarawas Counties and how the board who receives WIOA Youth funding and WIA, as the CCMEP Lead Agency that receives TANF funding for this program, jointly collaborate and procure vendors that provide the required service elements. Meek Eells and Breedlove were able to share the message that we can provide more as well as more robust services to the youth/young adults in our counties because of these jointly procured efforts that pull these funding streams together to make more impact.

Our presentation "focus" was one of "Choice"- "Choose Your Path". Whether the referral is a work eligible young adult referred to the OMJ center from our JFS partners, they have a choice in providers to assist them in establishing/reaching their employment and training goals.

If the young adult chooses or is interested in occupational skills training and needs some financial assistance, the OMJ center can help.

And by contracting with youth vendors in our community that have a varied geographical reach and can serve a wide and diverse variety of needs, participants can, once again, "Choose Their Path".

We also shared helpful outreach mechanisms and mediums that have been utilized.

OPERATIONS REPORTS

Public Relations – M. Gwin – (Attachment)

Gwin directed everyone to refer to their packet as you will see quite few articles on the issue of unemployment fraud. Just to highlight a few –

Ohio Department of Job & Family Services (ODJFS) has established a toll-free hotline in response to the large numbers of victims of unemployment identity theft trying to file a fraud claim. ODJFS has also updated its website to make it easier for individuals to file the identity theft claim online. The state has suggested that the quickest way to file a fraud claim is online. It also created a way for employers to notify the agency if they believe their employees' personal information was compromised and used to file fraudulent claims.

Ohio posted the largest number of new claims for unemployment benefits the first week of February since the start of the pandemic, with at least a chunk of it tied to suspected fraud. ODJFS is seeing an alarming increase of initial claims in the traditional unemployment insurance program that is suspected to be the result of fraudulent activity.

The Repository featured an excellent article with suggestions from The Better Business Bureau serving the Canton Region and Greater West Virginia with these suggestions to follow to protect yourself:

1. Report suspicious notifications if you receive a letter, email or another notification about an unemployment claim that you never made.
2. Check your credit report.
3. Consider freezing your credit.
4. Set up transaction alerts with your bank or credit union.

Tuscarawas County police departments continue to receive complaints about unemployment fraud. Some local people reported receiving tax forms saying that benefits were paid to people who are deceased or long-retired.

As of today, state and local unemployment figures for January have not been released, however the US rate for January was at 6.3%, down from 6.7% in December.

Stark County OHZone Virtual Career Fair

Job seekers will have the opportunity to connect virtually with area employers from the comfort of their home, smartphone or computer at the Stark County OHZone Virtual Career Fair on March 18th, from 10am-2pm.

OhioMeansJobs Stark County and Strengthening Stark are partnering to connect prospective employees with the workforce needs of local companies and industries in a virtual format using the state branded virtual career fair, OHZone. Job seekers can chat with employers who are actively hiring and learn about job openings with competitive wages and benefits. This event is invitation only to employers who are offering livable wages, competitive wages and benefits.

The fully virtual event will feature 18 local employers representing manufacturing, health care, production, and services industries. Each employer will have a virtual booth featuring their current openings at varying levels of experience.

Gwin is working closely with Strengthening Stark on outreach and recruitment efforts for this event:

- Radio commercials are airing on 8 area radio stations
- There is a strong push on all of our social media platforms to promote this event
- We are also reaching out to individuals receiving UI benefits through email and for the first time we are contracting with a texting service to send text messages to these individuals regarding the job fair.
- Advertisements are now featured on all SARTA busses.
- We have also reached out to all of our community partners asking their assistance in helping us to promote this event

One of our new efforts to promote this event are our Employer Spotlights. Resource Room staffers Shannon McClay and Cory Vogelgesang have interviewed 10 of the 18 employers who agreed to do a short interview highlighting their company and their current job openings. Gwin urged everyone to please go to our YouTube page where all of these spotlights can be viewed. A spotlight will be posted each day through March 16th on our Facebook page. Gwin wanted to commend Miller, Clay and Vogelgesang for producing these videos. They are very professional and a new and innovative way to promote this virtual event.

While we are busy promoting this event, we are also gearing up to promote the Tuscarawas County Virtual Career Fair on May 6th from noon-3pm. We are pleased to partner with Scott Robinson and the Tuscarawas County Chamber of Commerce who have partnered with us very many years on our Tuscarawas County Job Fairs. More information will be forthcoming on this event.

Gwin reported: "And as they say in the entertainment world "that's a wrap"." "And by this I mean that's a wrap for me as I will officially be retiring as Public Relations Specialist after 37 years on April 29th." "So this is my last virtual board meeting." "I guess when you are old enough to receive the vaccine you are old enough to retire."

Gwin thanked all of the local elected officials and board members that she had the pleasure and opportunity to worked for and with through the years. Gwin said you have all done so much to develop this board into a very engaging board that truly supports our mission. She has seen so many administrative and board leadership changes since the Private Industry Council was formed back in 1983. She can recall preparing the news release shortly before she was married announcing the formation of the PIC, as we referred to it. She began working in 1979 for the Canton Stark Wayne CETA Consortium which later became the Job Training Partnership, then the Workforce Initiative Association, The Employment Source and of course OhioMeansJobs Stark and Tuscarawas Counties – same funding source but different names.

Smith congratulated Gwin on her retirement and said the board appreciated her talent and skills. You will be missed!

One Stop Resource Center Report February 2021– A. Miller (Attachment)

- Next month, Miller will be adding a section for the RESEA category
- Miller shared screen to show four awards received from United Way
 - 2020 VITA Tax clinic of the year for Stark County
 - Processing 663 tax returns, 402 appointments and conducting a drive-thru event
 - Community Support Partner in Stark and Tuscarawas partner
 - VITA 2020 site processing the most returns for 1st place
 - Accommodation for the United States Census Bureau
 - Beckman's department very involved in getting these scheduled
- Employer Spotlight
 - Showed example of one of the employer spotlights- "Aultman Health Foundation"
 - Visit our YouTube channel at OhioMeansJobs Stark and Tuscarawas Counties
 - Thank you to Beckman and Kopfstein for connecting employers
 - More videos to come from Miller's staff

One Stop Business Services Report February 2021– K. Beckman – (Attachment)

- Stark County Virtual Job Fair
 - Thank you to Miller for her support
 - Thank you to Kopfstein for contacting employers
 - Excited to present employer spotlight videos
 - This Job Fair limited to invite only to specific industries and focus on in-demand jobs
 - Employers were part of manufacturing, production, healthcare and in-demand industries
 - Employers must be paying \$15 per hour or higher as livable wages or \$12 per hour with a career path to \$15 per hour
 - Notes we always have many employers who want to participate but since it was a state sponsored event we wanted this job fair to stand out and that is why the

- employer spotlights were a great opportunity. The spotlight was a personal look of what it is like working at this company, and a job seeker will appreciate it.
 - Aultman Health Foundation had over 400 positions available and a such a variety
 - 18 employers participated in the job fair
 - The Tuscarawas County Job Fair will be the next event.
- Continue to promote all positions on ohiojobs.com state website and also focus on our social media
- Two of our most recent success stories are from Buckeye Grind and HP.
 - We were able to promote openings on social media.
 - Job seekers were able to send resumes.
 - Business Services unit were able to provide employee referrals to employer
 - Buckeye Grind had a General Production position at \$14 per hour
 - HP had a Trim Saw Operator position at \$15.50 per hour
 - Seeing better wages in manufacturing in both counties
 - Able to fill positions using Social Media with Employer Spotlight series

BRN – M. Falter February 2021 – (Attachment)

- The Business Resource Network numbers are at the end of attachment F as I will not be reviewing but can answer any questions.
- Falter’s staff is actively engaging and meeting with companies virtually.
- Drug-Free Workplace
 - Is in the 2nd cycle of seminars/courses
 - Started this morning with a kickoff of 12-14 companies registered to attend an executive briefing
 - Working Partners-we have a contract with them for first cycle, and they have done a good job!
 - The second part is the Technical Assistance Clinic
 - It will be for two days on April 7th & 8th
 - Funded by the Department of Labor so no charge for companies to attend
 - Will establish a second chance system which mandates authorities around Drug-Free Workplace policies and programs. It will look at the Medial Marijuana law which varies from state to state.
 - If you have SHRM or HRCI certification, you can obtain continuing education units (ceu) for attending classes
- Challenges & Opportunities with companies in last six months
 - Talent Acquisition is the #1 on a day-to-day basis
 - More interest in OJT policy as Falter is working with several contracts with companies
 - Export Assistance / Supply Chain Disruption
 - Still issues as it ramped up during COVID
 - Companies trying to partner locally with other companies (More B2B)
 - High interest of companies to do government contracting
 - Working on Target Follow up lists with companies that we haven’t talked to in a year
 - Talking with the Stark Economic Development Board and Tuscarawas Economic Development Board (Eadon)
 - Comparing with both boards to establish the list
 - Trying to establish where we strategically want to put our efforts
 - Next round table with partners is coming up on Monday

- Tech Cred Program to Date (Overview)
 - Monica Blasdel of the Lt. Governor's office will give the overview
 - Find out when the next application date will be released.

WIOA Program Report February 2021 – S. Berardo (Attachment)

- Last year- July 1, 2019 to June 30, 2020 had 160 people enrolled
- To date we had 134 enrolled
- We have had inquiries at this time for short term training like Truck Driving and Phlebotomy
- Will have four more approved for next report
 - One of these is a LPN at Alliance Career Center of the Robert T. White Nursing School (picked up 3rd part of the program)
 - Also picking up (1)- STNA and (2)-Truck Driving
- Currently, we have 70 in job search that have finished training
- We have had 15 placements this year with wages averaging at \$21.88.
 - Seeing wages rise
 - STNA placement at \$15 / hour which is normally around \$9-\$10 per hour

Comprehensive Youth Program

- Still processing CCMEP and engage opportunities to allow them to set goals in training and employment
- Total of 16 enrolled in skilled training for the year

MOTION: BEAUCH MOVED TO ACCEPT THE FEBRUARY 2021 OPERATIONS REPORTS PER ATTACHMENTS PREVIOUSLY EMAILED TO MEMBERS. COLE SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Meek Eells thanked everyone for their support! Good luck to all retiring-Beauch, Wheeler and Gwin!

Smith thanked Meek Eells for her leadership. Welcome to Marzano! Wishing Beauch, Wheeler and Gwin good luck in their retirement.

Adjourned: 1:06 p.m.

NEXT MEETING: **May 5, 2021 – Zoom Meeting at 12 noon**