

COMBINED MEETING
OhioMeansJobs Stark County Office
822 – 30th Street NW, Canton 44709
February 21, 2023 @ 12:00 p.m.

STARK TUSCARAWAS WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD - COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

MEMBERS:

Janet Weir Creighton, Commissioner, Stark Cty.-Present
Chris Abbuhl, Commissioner, Tusc. Cty.-Present
Scott Robinson, STWDB Chair – Present

STWDB STAFF:

JoAnn Breedlove-Present
Rebecca Harris-Present

FISCAL AGENT:

Chuck Byrd-Present
Dan Sipe-Not Present

GUEST/OTHER:

Mayor Tom Bernabei-Present
Amy Petrus-Present

WORKFORCE INITIATIVE ASSOCIATION - COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

MEMBERS:

Janet Weir Creighton, Commissioner, Stark Cty.-Present
Chris Abbuhl, Commissioner, Tusc. Cty.-Present
Tom Bernabei, Mayor, City of Canton -Present

WORKFORCE INITIATIVE ASSOCIATION STAFF:

Chuck Byrd - Present
Dan Sipe – Not Present

GUEST/OTHER:

JoAnn Breedlove-Present
Rebecca Harris-Present
Amy Petrus-Present

BUSINESS MINUTES

STWDB AND WIA COGs Chair, Commissioner Weir Creighton formally called the meeting to order at 12:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL: Taken. Quorum present for both STWDB and WIA COGs

APPROVAL OF November 3, 2022, MEETING MINUTES

MOTION: MAYOR BERNABEI MOVED FOR THE APPROVAL OF THE NOVEMBER 3, 2022; MEETING MINUTES AS PRESENTED. SCOTT ROBINSON SECONDED. COMMISSIONER ABBUHL ABSTAINED. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Election of Officers for STWDB COG & WIA COG.....JoAnn Breedlove, STWDB Executive Director

Breedlove noted every 2 years the STWDB COG elects a Chairperson (Chief Elected Official) and a Vice Chairperson.

MOTION: COMMISSIONER ABBUHL MADE THE MOTION FOR COMMISSIONER CREIGHTON TO CONTINUE SERVING AS THE CHAIRPERSON (CHIEF ELECTED OFFICIAL) AND COMMISSIONER ABBUHL TO SERVE AS THE VICE CHAIRPERSON OF THE STWDB COG FOR THE PERIOD JANUARY 1, 2023 - DECEMBER 31, 2024. COMMISSIONER CREIGHTON SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Byrd noted the WIA COG elects a Chairperson and a Vice Chairperson from among the Trustees to serve at least a one year term.

MOTION: MAYOR BERNABEI MADE THE MOTION FOR COMMISSIONER CREIGHTON TO CONTINUE SERVING AS THE CHAIRPERSON AND COMMISSIONER ABBUHL TO SERVE AS THE VICE CHAIRPERSON OF THE WIA COG FOR THE PERIOD JANUARY 1, 2023 - DECEMBER 31, 2024. COMMISSIONER CREIGHTON SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Compensation Project...C. Byrd, WIA Executive Director: J.Breedlove, STWDB Executive Director

Byrd displayed on the screen "Workforce Initiative Association & Stark Tuscarawas Workforce Development Board-Compensation Project" document: in addition, a printed copy was available for all at the meeting.

Byrd provided an overview of the OhioMeansJobs customer traffic. Prior to the pandemic, there was weekly traffic at the OhioMeansJobs centers in Stark County-65 people and Tuscarawas- 25 people, and currently seeing Stark County-25 people and Tuscarawas County- 5 people.

Byrd noted we are still delivering the same services, but people are less inclined to come to the OhioMeansJobs centers in Stark and Tuscarawas counties. Which is why we want to put more focus on virtual services in addition to in-person services. We are also exploring access points where we can serve customers out in the community-for example: libraries, community centers.

Byrd referenced the "Workforce Initiative Association & Stark Tuscarawas Workforce Development Board-Compensation Project" and summarized the report from Your Partner in HR (Amy Petrus).

Step 1: Redesigning Customer Services - Modernize services and service deliveries

On Slide 2 / Page 2 of the document, The **Guiding Principles for Service Redesign** are:

1. Customer Focused
2. Multiple ways to access services
3. Consistent service experience across area & delivery options
4. Replace "service silos" with a team approach
5. Make everything adaptable & scalable to changing customer needs & traffic.

Byrd referenced the **Redesign Project Timeline** on the screen.

Summer 2021-Staff returned from remote work; customer traffic decreased significantly.

Fall 2021-Staff surveys-what's working, what's not from a customer service department.

Winter 2021-Jennifer Meek Eells retirement announced; focus on transition.

Spring 2022-Executive leadership changes-JoAnn Breedlove/Chuck Byrd

Summer 2022-Backfilled management vacancies; Started conceptualizing re-design.

Fall 2022-Conducted pilot to explore new customer service team approach.

Winter 2022 New team approach validated by pilot team.

Mayor asked, "What is happening to people who came in pre-pandemic & now?" Byrd noted, "Some of it is the labor market-people not seeking work, but also people not wanting to come into the physical centers." Commissioner Abbuhl said he has concerns for Tuscarawas County in the virtual services because some people in Tuscarawas County do not have access to broadband service. He realizes it is a problem, and it is being worked on. Byrd noted, this is why we have the access point concept which is for the people who do not have broadband access. He said we can go and have satellite offices closer to customers, make it more convenient and have offices that have the internet access the customers need. Mayor asked, are these people calling and saying they still need services? Breedlove said, people are, through chat, email etc. plus the labor market has shrunk and shifted. People have access to additional, nontraditional ways to earn.

Byrd referenced the timeline on the screen saying: in the 1st quarter of 2023-plan to work out the details of new customer service approach-including staffing structure and compensation to support that structure. The 2nd quarter of 2023-a transition of the rest of the staff and start hiring to fill staffing gaps /vacancies. In July 2023, the new team approach will be fully operational for the new program year. Creighton asked how big has the reduction been for the staff? Byrd replied at the peak of June 2021, we had 48 staff (combined) and now we have 33 staff (combined). These were intentional adjustments because we were not seeing the customer traffic. We are at a point now where we have some areas where we need to start filling. Mayor asked, how many do you hope to refill? Byrd noted, he is anticipating another 5 people. As we start doing more things virtually then we may need to add additional staff. We want to make sure customer numbers are driving it.

Step 2: Re-Organize Staffing - To support the redesign of services

Byrd stated, the overall goal is July 2023 to get to the reorganization of the staffing referenced on screen. The old structure was a specialist approach and staff were hired to do one job. As customers came in to the OMJ centers and needed that service, they would be assigned to an individual within a department (Job Search, Re-employment, Training, & Youth). Customers were assigned to primary services needed, and customers did not get moved efficiently between departments for other services they could take advantage of. The new structure is more of a generalist approach where customers are assessed as they come in to determine what are the services they need and based on that they are assigned to a customer service team that's made up of staff that can do all of the services that the customer needs. This is a more customer friendly approach, and this approach minimizes the "silos". We are able to better serve the customer with potentially one staff person, or as few staff people as possible.

With the new structure, we had to reorganize the staffing positions. Byrd referenced the chart on the screen entitled **Employment Services Professional**. On the left side of the chart, it shows customer service levels (standard services, mid-level services, & advanced services). The right side of the chart shows staff skill levels (all-staff foundational levels, transactional customer service skills, relationship management skills, & supervisor skills). We want all staff to start under the *Employment Services Professional* position at the Foundational Skills level, but employees will have opportunities to upskill based on the chart. **CCMEP** is our youth program which stands for Comprehensive Case Management and Employment Program. **OST** is Occupational Skill Training-where we pay the tuition for skilled in demand training -for example: nursing or CDL for truck driving. **RESEA** is Reemployment Services & Eligibility Assessment which is a program with unemployed individuals where they are identified as not likely to return to their previous employment. Staff meet with them to create an employment plan to connect them with other services. **OJT** is On the Job Training which goes on both sides of the diagram. On the left side of the chart are services for individual customers (job seekers) and on the right side are the services for our employer customers. The goal is to match the two up. The **BRN** is the Business Resource Network. **IWT** is Incumbent Worker Training that reimburses the employer for upskilling their existing workers. **BSU** is the Business Services Unit which works with employers by getting job orders, posting on the system, and recruiting for them to find potential candidate matches. The top of the chart shows supervision skills which are broken down into Coordinator (Program) and Team Leader (Administrative) functions.

The Employment Services Professional position is a multi-functional position which is a new concept. This multi-level position group gives us the ability to bring someone in with no experience and start them at the bottom and train them and build skills over time to continue to move up the hierarchy.

Step 3: Restructure Compensation - To support the reorganization of staffing (Referenced screen and handout). Byrd reviewed, Why is this Needed?, Objectives of Compensation Study, and Challenges with Existing Structure.

Introduction of Amy Petrus, Your Partner in HR, Compensation Study Consultant
Byrd introduced Amy Petrus. Petrus referenced her report in the packet and also on the screen. She reviewed her background and project work steps. She reviewed and explained all charts presented on the screen. Mayor asked, are these proposed numbers, and she said, "Yes".

Commissioner Creighton asked, is Longevity separate? Byrd replied, the employee would have a base payrate and then a longevity payrate. He also noted that overtime is minimal and not a significant issue here.

Commissioner Creighton asked, are your employees "Social Workers or required to be degreed in any specialized field? Byrd replied, "No".

Commissioner Creighton asked, what is the average years of service here? Byrd replied, it has changed over the last year. Over the past year, we had 5 individuals (long-term employees) retire so this changed things significantly. Petrus noted 18 of the 33 employees are over 5 years.

Commissioner Creighton said, "So we have never done longevity in the past?" Byrd replied, "No"

Byrd said this is a challenge with wage increases (raises) historically given across the board. This proposal equitably compensates base level expectations and recognizes longevity but keeps it in line, so it doesn't get out of proportion over time for long-term employees.

Commissioner Creighton asked, "does the longevity pay apply to upper management?" Byrd said, "Yes, that is what we are proposing".

Petrus noted in the report displayed, we would like to eventually implement a **performance-based bonus** to recognize the high performers. Typically, performance pay is not as common in public entities but at the same time wanting to have some mechanism when doing performance reviews instead of giving the same amount for everyone. This would give some reasonable incentive for high performers to continue their contributions. This is something to be considered for the future and worked out with the board.

Commissioner Creighton asked, "Would a performance increase be across the board?" Byrd said, this has not been developed yet and we would work with Petrus on this to present to the COG boards. He said, an amount could be placed in the budget so its available should the board decide to adopt. He is anticipating this to be possibly structured as a one-time lump sum payment to the employee.

Petrus referred to the displayed "Proposed Structure". She said we want to target the **annual midpoint (100%)** for the *main range* for setting pay, not the **annual maximum** (118%), because we want to be prudent with our use of public funds. We are still paying at a competitive rate.

Comprehensive Compensation Structure

Byrd referenced the screen titled "Comprehensive Compensation Structure". This is a summary of the compensation. The **Base** which is keeping things even across the board for everyone doing similar work. **Longevity** is recognizing longevity but keeping a cap on it. **Performance** is to explore in the future to see if this is something to add and recognize those high performers in the organization.

Step 4: Re-evaluate Positions - To place staff within new compensation structure

Byrd noted this section is where we re-evaluate positions. This shows all current staff in STWDB & WIA with years of service, positions, current annual wages (reflects 4% increase granted in January 2023). The majority of the positions represent the Employment Services Professional position. The "Compa Ratio" as shown on the chart represents where the employee is at in relation to the market midpoint.

The **pay grade** column represents what Petrus' research has established as the market and recommends as the minimum and midpoint. The midpoint of the salary study is the maximum of what we are proposing for our ranges.

The **proposed annual equivalent** column is to decide where everyone should be placed within the structure. Byrd worked with upper management and based on what people are doing now and where we should place them to maintain internal equity so people are paid similarly for similar work. This equates to the base pay and the new "**compa ratio**" indicates relative placement within the structure.

The **base \$ increase** column is what the dollar increase would be, and the **base percentage increase** would be from where each employee is now to where they would be.

The last column is the **hourly longevity**. This would be the individuals who would receive the longevity pay if we adopt longevity.

Byrd pointed out on the spreadsheet on the screen that some individual employees highlighted in pink will not receive any increases because based on the market data they are already at 100% or more of the midpoint, or there may be other factors such as a new hire. Byrd noted all the changes, and that the largest group, the "Employment Services Professionals", is where we are losing staff due to competition. The competition is Job & Family Services, State Agencies, and other local nonprofits. Petrus noted, the Employment Service Professional is the employee who handles the direct service to the customers.

Mayor asked Byrd to go across each column in the spreadsheet to understand the layout.

Petrus clarified that the market midpoint represents our proposed maximum to be fiscally prudent. There are few employees over the midpoint. Byrd noted historically the upper end of our wage ranges have been irrelevant since rarely has anyone been in that upper range. Most of the employees have always been below the midpoint.

Robinson asked, should we be discussing some of this information in the Executive session since we are talking about people and salaries. Mayor said, yes when we are talking about particular people then Executive session comes into play. Byrd said, we have not gone into Executive session in the past when discussing all staff collectively. The intent was once we were done reviewing the general information then the STWDB & WIA COG board members can confer on the employees' compensation, including the Executive Directors', in Executive session.

Mayor asked, do we have a rule in place for the dollar amount someone gets hired in at? Byrd said it is a range and based on that, it may be adjusted considering someone's experience. For example, someone with no experience would start at the minimum.

Commissioner Creighton asked, would this increase be retroactive to the beginning of 2023? Byrd said, we propose the increase would go in effect March 6, 2023 at the beginning of a new pay period.

STWDB & WIA Executive Resolutions Review

Byrd said we could start going through all the Executive Resolutions to review what the proposals are. All resolutions were sent out in advance and are included in the printed packets. He noted through all the Executive Resolutions, the wording is the same for STWDB and WIA except for the ER1 as it lists job titles and pay ranges specific to each entity. Byrd highlighted all Executive Resolutions as shown on the screen for all to view:

ER1: Base Compensation Restructure

This Executive Resolution applies to what Petrus proposed as the structure: establishing 10 pay grades and the annual minimum and maximum compensation. The maximum is 100% of the midpoint. The adoption of this pay structure would be effective 3/6/23.

ER2: Staff Placement within New Base Compensation Structure

This Executive Resolution places staff into the new base compensation structure. This would be effective 3/6/23.

ER3: 2024 and 2025 Proposed Pay Increases

Byrd said we typically look at pay increases annually, but from a retention standpoint, we are proposing approval of multiple year increases. We are proposing that we set in place a 3% increase effective 1/1/2024 and another 3% effective 1/1/2025. Putting this in place now will help with the attraction and retention of staff.

ER4: Longevity Pay

This Executive Resolution shows how much an employee would receive to recognize longevity.

Mayor asked how do all these resolutions affect the funding for our overall budget? Byrd said we have funding within the budget because our staffing levels are lower based on attrition and lower customer traffic. We have approximately \$600,000 in the budget for the changes, and we would only need about \$100,000 for the base pay adjustments plus longevity. The hiring of the additional 5 people would be in the \$350,000 dollar range which brings us to \$450,000, and we are currently down \$600,000 from our staffing budgets from prior year. Byrd feels we are in good financial shape to cover the additional costs.

Byrd said, as a reminder, we get our WIOA funding in 2-year cycles which gives us 2 years to plan and have some flexibility in adapting budgets to stay within our allocations. TANF funding has remained the same and WIOA funding has been going down, but the difference has been made up since the state has additional WIOA funds. We will get a new WIOA allocation in July 2023, but we have 2 years to spend, and we always carry over money from the previous allocation to the new year. The general rule of thumb is to try and spend half of it the first year and half of it the second year, but we have the flexibility to make adjustments.

Following the preceding general informational discussion, **Commissioner Creighton made a motion to go into the Executive Session with the STWDB & WIA COG board members to consider the compensation of public employees. Robinson seconded. Roll Call: Commissioner Creighton-Yes, Commissioner Abbuhl-Yes, Scott Robinson-Yes, Mayor Bernabei-Yes**

Byrd asked if the STWDB & WIA COG Board would like Petrus to be part of the Executive session, and Commissioner Creighton said not at this time.

The STWDB & WIA COG Boards went into executive session at 1:12 p.m.

After Executive Session

Robinson made a motion to go back into a regular session of the STWDB & WIA COG meeting. Mayor seconded. All in favor with no discussion.

Commissioner Creighton said we are back in regular session at 1:44 p.m. and we are ready to take some action.

Byrd projected the Executive Resolutions on the screen starting with ER 1 for the WIA COG.

ER1 - WIA Base Compensation Restructure

Commissioner Creighton made a motion to adopt ER1 WIA Base Compensation Restructure as presented. Commissioner Abbuhl seconded. Roll Call: Commissioner Creighton-Yes, Commissioner Abbuhl-Yes, Mayor Bernabei-Abstain

ER2 - WIA Staff Placement within New Base Compensation Structure

Commissioner Creighton made a motion to adopt ER2 WIA Staff Placement within the New Base Compensation Structure with the additional specification that the WIA Executive Director salary would be set at \$100,000. Commissioner Abbuhl seconded. Roll Call: Commissioner Creighton-Yes, Commissioner Abbuhl-Yes, Mayor Bernabei-Abstain

ER3 - WIA 2024 and 2025 Proposed Pay Increases

Commissioner Creighton made a motion to adopt ER3 WIA 2024 and 2025 Proposed Pay Increases. Commissioner Abbuhl seconded. Roll Call: Commissioner Creighton-No, Commissioner Abbuhl-No, Mayor Bernabei-No

ER4 - WIA Longevity Pay

Mayor Bernabei said before we make a motion, is the annual amount capped for hourly employees? Byrd replied, as proposed there is not a capped amount, but he sees the value in a capped amount. Mayor Bernabei asked, do you want to cap at 80 hours each pay? Byrd said, it is rare to have someone work overtime, so practically he does not see an issue.

Commissioner Creighton asked, does this amount count towards PERS? Byrd replied, yes.

Commissioner Abbuhl asked, does this go into their hourly wage? Byrd replied, yes. Salaried individuals would have their amount spread out over 26 pays.

Commissioner Abbuhl asked, could you give hourly employees a flat amount? Byrd said we could do a one-time a year (lump sum) but with PERS it has to be a percentage in order to count towards their earnable salary.

Mayor Bernabei recognized the desire of the board to complete all the Executive Resolutions at today's meeting, but suggested we postpone this resolution to the next meeting and revisit the recommendation after thinking through the options.

After further discussion, Commissioner Creighton asked is there a motion to approve the longevity pay as presented.

Mayor Bernabei made a motion to postpone ER4 WIA Longevity Pay until the next meeting and asked Byrd for a more detailed analysis and recommendation to the WIA COG Board. Commissioner Abbuhl seconded. Roll Call: Commissioner Creighton-Yes, Commissioner Abbuhl-Yes, Mayor Bernabei-Yes

Byrd projected the Executive Resolutions on the screen starting with ER 1 for the STWDB COG.

ER1 - STWDB Base Compensation Restructure

Robinson made a motion to adopt the ER1 STWDB Base Compensation Restructure as presented. Commissioner Abbuhl seconded. Roll Call: Commissioner Creighton-Yes, Commissioner Abbuhl-Yes, Robinson-Yes

ER2 - STWDB Staff Placement within New Base Compensation Structure

Commissioner Abbuhl made a motion to adopt ER2 STWDB Staff Placement within the New Base Compensation Structure with the additional specification that the STWDB Executive Director salary would be set at \$100,000. Robinson seconded. Roll Call: Commissioner Creighton-Yes, Commissioner Abbuhl-Yes, Robinson-Yes

ER3 - STWDB 2024 and 2025 Proposed Pay Increases

Commissioner Abbuhl made a motion to adopt ER3 STWDB 2024 and 2025 Proposed Pay Increases. Robinson seconded. Roll Call: Commissioner Creighton-No, Commissioner Abbuhl-No, Robinson-No

ER4 - STWDB Longevity Pay

Robinson made a motion to postpone the ER4 STWDB Longevity Pay until the next meeting and asked Breedlove for a more detailed analysis and recommendation to the STWDB COG Board. Commissioner Abbuhl seconded. Roll Call: Commissioner Creighton-Yes, Commissioner Abbuhl-Yes, Robinson-Yes

Adjournment: 2:00

MOTION: COMMISSIONER ABBUHL MOVED TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AND ROBINSON SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED.