

**West Central Workforce Development Area  
Governing Board Meeting**  
Mercer County Courthouse  
Mercer, PA

**October 10, 2023**

**Minutes**

The regular meeting of the West Central Workforce Development Area Governing Board began at 1:35 p.m. on Tuesday, October 10, 2023.

**Members in attendance** were Commissioner Scott Boyd, Commissioner Brian Burick, Commissioner Matt McConnell, and Commissioner Dan Vogler

**Others present** were Ray Bogaty, Tammy Barbati, Gregg Dogan, Eric Karmecy and Rebecca Moder

Drafted minutes of the July 11, 2023 meeting were reviewed. **A motion to approve the minutes of the July 11, 2023, meeting was made by Commissioner Scott Boyd, seconded by Commissioner Dan Vogler and passed unanimously.**

**Public Comment Period** – None in attendance

**ADMINISTRATIVE DIVISION REPORT**

◆ **Finance Report** – Mr. Dogan referred to the green section of the meeting packet. This handout reflects the accrued expenditures of West Central Job Partnership from July 1, 2023, through September 30, 2023. These amounts are reflective of the first quarter of Program Year 2023.

Page one of the report lists the grants that West Central currently administers. The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act grants are listed first, followed by other special grants including Statewide Activity Funds, Rapid Response and Trade Act Assistance (TAA), Digital Literacy, Workforce Opportunities for Rural Communities (WORC), Business Education Partnership (BEP), and some Department of Human Services (DHS formerly DPW) grants. Grants with carryover amounts into the new fiscal year show the amount carried over, not the full amount that had been received. An example of this is the Workforce Opportunities for Rural Communities (WORC #1) funding, which was a five-year grant, showing the carryover grant amount of \$536,132 and not the original \$2.5 million received.

Mr. Dogan noted WCJP historically fully expends the funding it receives, with the exception of the EARN funding, which is determined by formula and can only be utilized on eligible individuals referred by the two County Assistance Offices. Commissioner Brian Burick noted that nearly all the Funding Sources are Federal and asked about the two current funds which are not: Sustainability and the First Energy funds. Mr. Dogan shared that the Sustainability fund is an unrestricted carryover from past Industry Partnerships. Mr. Karmecy shared that the monies were collected as matching funds contributed by employers who participated in Incumbent Worker Training. The First Energy funding is a private grant to WCJP to be able to conduct some marketing and outreach on behalf of our PA CareerLink® centers that we do not normally have a

budget to utilize. Mr. Karmecy noted that staff are currently working on a plan for these investments.

Page two of the handout shows WIOA Adult, Youth, and Dislocated Worker as well as Rapid Response grants, carryover, and breakdown of Individual Training Accounts (ITAs), On-the-Job Training contracts (OJTs), and other expenditures through September 30, 2023. The chart included shows direct client services budgeted and what has been expenses/contracted through the end of September. Mr. Dogan pointed out the demand for services in WIOA Adult continues to be higher than in WIOA Dislocated Worker. Of a budgeted \$300,000 for ITAs and \$330,000 for OJTs, \$232,522 and \$296,435 in WIOA Adult had already been obligated through the first quarter of this Program Year. Comparatively, of a budgeted \$150,000 for ITAs and \$150,000 for OJTs, only \$12,285 in OJTs WIOA Dislocated had already been obligated in the same period. Additionally, of the \$100,000 received for Rapid Response for McKesson in the last program year, only \$8,464 in PY 22 and \$7,005 in PY 23 have been utilized. With the actual demand from the McKesson closure being less than the anticipated need, the state has approved the funding to be used to serve any Dislocated Workers.

Page three of the report is an itemized breakdown of the expenditures of the PA CareerLink® of Lawrence County and the PA CareerLink® of Mercer County. The report shows the first quarter of the Program Year, with the largest expense, outside of center staff, in both counties being facility rent. Commissioner Brian Burick inquired if the change of relocating the site in Lawrence County affected the cost. Mr. Dogan reported that relocating to the new location had lowered the cost of rent.

The final page of the Finance Report is a list of commonly-used Acronyms.

**A motion to approve the Finance Report as presented was made by Commissioner Matt McConnell, seconded by Commissioner Scott Boyd and passed unanimously.**

## **PROGRAMMATIC DIVISION REPORT**

◆ ***WIOA Performance Results for PY 2022 - FINAL*** – Ms. Barbati referred to the handout included in the meeting packet and advised the Board that the report is a Final Report breakdown of enrollments by funding stream from July 1, 2022, through June 30, 2023. The report is produced by the PA Center for Workforce Information and Analysis and shows all the Workforce Development Areas in the state. West Central's performance is highlighted in yellow and we met or exceeded the negotiated performance levels for all the goals for WIOA Adult, Youth, and Dislocated Worker. Ms. Barbati explained that Measure Skills Gains include progress toward a credential, for example, a section of the GED test.

◆ ***Participant Enrollments, Training and Exits*** - The following pages details the training services July 1, 2023 through August 31, 2023. A four-year comparison chart included in the packet shows the relationship of WIOA programs throughout the last four program years, including pre-pandemic numbers.

## **OPERATIONS & SPECIAL PROJECTS DIVISION REPORT**

◆ ***Special Grants and Projects*** – Mr. Karmecy shared that WCJP had applied for and received a WORC Round 5 grant in the amount of \$950,000 and the announcement is included in the meeting materials. We were one of 32 across the country to receive funding. The application was in collaboration with the Mahoning Valley Manufacturing Coalition with one goal being to stand up a similar organization of Lawrence & Mercer County Manufacturers, based upon the work of the ten currently participating organizations including, Ellwood, Berner, G.W. Becker, and others. Materials like the Abstract included in the grant application are included in the meeting packet.

The WORC Round 1 Grant period of performance ended on September 30, 2023. An infographic of the performance is included in the meeting materials. We exceeded the original goal of 365 individuals and we served more than 400 individuals. WCJP is in the process of closing out the Federal Grant.

◆ ***One-Stop Operations*** – Mr. Karmecy reviewed the foot traffic report for the first quarter of Program Year 2023. This report includes only individuals who are physically walking into the PA CareerLink® centers. Over 4,000 visits to the centers in Lawrence and Mercer Counties have taken place July – September with 140 verified Job Placements recorded.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

Commissioner Brian Burick mentioned meeting with the Lawrence County School-to-Work and noted that their Executive Director shared details on the collaborative efforts with WCJP to retain youth after graduation. Mr. Karmecy noted that the PA Smart Grant Application submitted by WCJP included resources to support further collaboration with both the Lawrence County School to Work and Penn-Northwest's Homegrown initiative. Ms. Moder shared that in collaboration with School-to-Work the Lawrence County Business & Industry Career Fair, funded through WCJP's Business Education Partnership grant, will be taking place this Thursday, October 12<sup>th</sup> with around 800 10<sup>th</sup> grade students from all the county's school districts to be in attendance. She invited the Commissioners to stop in during the day to see the opportunities that local employers are sharing with the future workforce.

WCJP is also currently administering a Youth Reentry grant and working with partners in Lawrence and Mercer Counties to serve justice-involved 18-24-year-olds. While, due to the security and logistic limitations of our local institutions, we are predominately reaching these individuals outside of incarceration, staff are looking for opportunities and would welcome feedback on working with individuals during incarceration.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

None

**Next Meeting** – The next meeting will tentatively take place on January 9, 2023 at the Lawrence County Courthouse.

**Adjournment** – A motion to adjourn the regular meeting was made at 2:11 p.m. by Commissioner Scott Boyd, seconded by Commissioner Dan Vogler and passed unanimously.