



**Executive Committee and Chief Elected Officials
Meeting Minutes**

**The Workforce Connection Board,
Workforce Board for Boone, Winnebago, and Stephenson Counties**

Meeting: November 5, 2019

Time: 8:00 am

Location: RMAP Design Center, 315 N. Main St., Rockford, IL,

CEO Members Present (1): William Hadley; Thomas McNamara;

CEO Members Absent (2): Frank Haney; Karl Johnson;

Executive Committee Members Present (6): Ben Bernsten; Karen Brown; Michelle Cassaro; Gary Evans; Bob Guirl; Amy Ott;

Exec. Comm, Members Absent (4): Scott Bloomquist; Pamela Fettes; Frank Rotello; Craig Steege;

Staff Present: Dr. Lisa Bly; Chris Connors; Cathy Cornelius; Mike Johnson; Robert Jones; Amanda Sink; Dan White;

Board Members & Partner Staff Present: Courtney Geiger; Mary Ann Kolls; Cira Bennet; Ernie Fuhr

1. **Executive Committee Call to Order:** Board Vice-Chair Shelly Cassaro presided and called the Executive Committee to order at 8:03 am.

CEO Call to Order: Mayor McNamara called the CEO meeting to order at 8:03 am.

2. **Executive Committee Roll Call:** A roll call was taken and a quorum was present.

CEO Roll Call: A roll call was taken and a quorum was not present.

3. **Approval of August 6, 2019 Meeting Minutes – Action Item:**

- **TWC Executive Committee**

Motion: Evans Second: Bernsten Approved

4. **Financial Report September 2019**

Amy Ott, Chair of the Finance Committee reviewed Finance Report Summary with the committee. She noted that Minimum Training Expenditure Requirement for Adult & Dislocated Worker and Youth Work-based learning are both meeting or exceeding the goal and spending requirement. Subrecipient spending is trending toward or meeting reasonable spending limits. Some adjustments will be made but expect to end the year meeting the spending requirements and utilizing the majority of the dollars available to us.

5. **TWC – 501c3/Government Funds:**

Dr. Lisa Bly started the discussion by reminding the committee & CEOs that The Workforce Connection is a 501c3 organization and essentially a non-profit that receives government funding. The mission of the organization is overseeing the workforce system and because the main funding source is WIOA, is seen as a government entity. She asked for feedback, guidance, direction, and thoughts related to the structure of The Workforce Connection. Because the majority of the funding is from WIOA and has seen a decrease in the allocation in recent years; as well as restricts what initiatives can be done around workforce, should TWC look at different models to grow the organization? Dr. Bly has been researching different models of workforce boards throughout the state of Illinois as well as across the country. She shared a number of models for consideration by the committee.

Other resources that can be sourced are foundation grants that would allow TWC to do projects outside of WIOA. State and Federal grants would still carry restrictions but can be sought for specific projects. Non-restrictive funding would also allow TWC to do marketing and communication outreach. It would help to sustain projects such as Talent Pipeline Management and other pilot projects once grants for those pilots end. TWC has resources for finding available grants across a multitude of organizations such as federal, state and foundations. TWC, through the local and regional planning process will be proactive and have relationships with partner agencies established to be ready to apply for funding when it becomes available. It was suggested to review funding opportunities through a committee whose focus is programs and the Executive/CEO Committee. Also need to make a list of projects that the board would like to undertake to enable it to cross-walk funding opportunities.

The committee/CEOs were asked if that is the direction they want to go to grow the organization. TWC has been set up to receive other funding for years but has only dabbled. This direction will require support from Board members of leadership, time and effort to get established before staff time can be used to continue this structure.

6. Regional Workforce Planning for 2020-2024:

Shelly Cassaro started the conversation by sharing the discussion had by the Finance Committee on demand on training funds and the increases in training costs for in-demand occupations.

Dr. Lisa Bly directed the committee to the data packet related to the regional plan and how this data will be used to direct the regional plan. This foundational data includes population by age, education attainment of population 25 & over, education attainment of population 18-24, median income by county – households with children, median income by county and race, population below poverty level. The committee discussed and clarified some of the data that stood out to them.

Dr. Bly shared a draft of the Vision Statement that is required to be submitted with the regional plan. The committee did some wordsmithing on the statement and the committee will return any suggestions by November 19th.

She then reviewed the components to be included in the regional/local plan that align with the State's vision and principles. The committee then discussed the regional strategic vision and the goals that should be included in the plan. The committee noted to focus on clarifying what jobs are in demand, how to help youth & populations with barriers overcome and gain more skills, reduce the misconception of cost of higher education to produce a better quality of life for the people who live and work in the region.

The type of partnerships with employers that the committee envisions are feedback from employers on skills needed, cultivation of talent and what role do they play. One strategy would be to reach out to those who are actively participating and build off of those successes instead of continually reaching out to those employers who do not participate. Another strategy suggested was to actively connect with the RPS Academy model and other school district initiatives to ensure students are career aware and career prepared and look at the credentials students receive to compare to employers needs and what job and wage opportunities are available to them.

Workforce development partners will unite around regional cluster strategies. The specific tactics that will be used are to increase collaboration, communication and shared resources between workforce, education, and economic development efforts to move the region's strategies forward. The Board Executive Committee and Chief Elected Officials will lead this strategy. The career clusters for our area include manufacturing, transportation, distribution and logistics (TDL), Leisure, hospitality and gaming, and healthcare. Leisure, hospitality and gaming is an emerging cluster in the region with inception of new hotels and a new casino.

Regional/Local planning conversations will be a part of every committee and board meeting until the public posting on February 14, 2020.

7. **Board Chair Report:**

Chair not present at meeting.

8. **Executive Director Report:**

A written report was handed out. Dr. Lisa Bly highlighted the activities that have taken place for local workforce development, State of Illinois workforce development, and National workforce development

9. **Member Comments:** None

10. **Announcements:** None

11. **Public Comment:** None

12. **Adjournment:** A motion to adjourn was made at 9:17 am.

Executive Committee Motion: Brown

Second: Guirl

Approved

Respectfully submitted,
Cathy Cornelius

Date: November 18, 2019

ITEMS INCLUDED IN THE MEETING PACKET

Agenda 11-05-2019

Executive Committee / CEO Meeting Minutes 08-06-2019

Financial Report September 2019
