



**The Workforce Connection Board and Chief Elected Officials
Meeting Minutes**
**The Workforce Connection Board,
Workforce Board for Boone, Winnebago, and Stephenson Counties**

Meeting: June 1, 2021
Time: 8:00 am
Location: Zoom Virtual Meeting

Board Members Present (22): Ben Bernsten; Karen Brown; Todd Cagnoni; Len Carter; Kathy Crandall; Pamela Fettes; Sue Fischer; Einar Forsman; Dr. Daniel Grohens; Bob Guirl; Greg Harle Vanessa Hughes; Paul Logli; Amy Ott; Jordan Priest; Frank Rotello; Dr. Howard Spearman; Mark Stefanic; Glendia Strandin for Dr. Morgan Gallagher; Ed Wood; Jeff Zeal

Board Members Absent (11): Mark Adams; Scott Bloomquist; Michelle Cassaro; Frank Delarosa; Al Golden; Jessica Greenberg; Jerry Guinane; James Pirages; Kraig Reichwald; Craig Steege; Todd Wells; Mark Williams;

CEO Members Present: Todd Cagnoni for Thomas McNamara; Joseph Chiarelli; William Hadley; Karl Johnson;

CEO Members Absent: none

Board Staff Present: Dr. Lisa Bly-Jones; Chris Connors; Cathy Cornelius; Mike Johnson; Dan White;

Partner Staff Present: Paul Andrews; Sue Carmichael; Courtney Geiger; Jessica Story; Tonya Thayer

Guests Present: None

1. **TWC Board Call to Order:** Board Chair Frank Rotello presided and called the TWC Board to order at 8:04 am.
CEO Call to Order: Chairman Hadley called the CEO meeting to order at 8:04am.
2. **TWC Board Roll Call:** A roll call was taken and a quorum was present.
CEO Roll Call: A roll call was taken and a quorum present.
3. **Approval of Consent Agenda – Action Item:**
 - TWC Board Meeting Minutes – 03/02/2021
 - CEO Meeting Minutes – 03/02/2021
 - Procurement Policy Update

**TWC Board
Motion: Brown Second: Ott Approved**

**CEO Board
Motion: Boone Second: City of Rockford Approved**

4. **Boone/Winnebago Elevate Youth Services Contract Extension**

The Workforce Connection Board and Chief Elected Officials approve the extension of Goodwill Industries of Northern Illinois to provide WIOA youth services in Boone and Winnebago counties for PY2021.

Abstentions: Ben Bernsten, President, Goodwill Industries of Northern Illinois and Dr. Howard Spearman, President, Rock Valley College

**TWC Board
Motion: Harle Second: Forsman Approved**

**CEO Board
Motion: Boone Second: Winnebago Approved**

Stephenson County Elevate Youth Services Contract Award

The Youth Council is recommending the TWC Board and CEOs approve the Regional Office of Education #8 to provide WIOA Youth Services in Stephenson County beginning July 2, 2021. The award is for \$100,000.

Ed Wood who participated on the RFP Review Team with Raegan Caras gave some background on the review process.

Abstentions: None

**TWC Board
Motion: Youth Council Second: Ott Approved**

**CEO Board
Motion: Boone Second: Winnebago Approved**

One Stop Operator & Career Services Contract Award

TWC received three (3) proposals for the RFP and were reviewed by the review team of Frank Rotello, Karen Brown and Pamela Fettes with fiscal technical assistance provided by Dan White. Chris Connors facilitated the discussion of the review team and they unanimously agreed to recommend Goodwill Industries of Northern Illinois as the One Stop Operator and Title 1-B service provider for adult and dislocated workers beginning July 1, 2021. Goodwill's proposal provided for a sub-award to Rock Valley College to provide career services.

The Workforce Connection Board and Chief Elected Officials approve the recommendation of the RFP Review Team of Goodwill of Northern Illinois with a sub-award to Rock Valley College to serve as the One Stop Operator and service provider for Adult and Dislocated Workers.

**Abstentions: Ben Bernsten, President, Goodwill Industries of Northern Illinois
Dr. Howard Spearman, President, Rock Valley College**

**TWC Board
Motion: Fettes Second: Brown Approved**

CEO Board
Motion: **Winnebago** **Second:** **Boone** **Approved**

5. **Finance**

• **PY2021 Budget Preliminary Budget**

Each year, a preliminary budget is developed which includes the new WIOA formula allocations, estimated carry over funds and any additional grant funds. Our three (3) county area received a decrease in Program Year 2021 (PY21) WIOA formula funds of \$902,242. Increased projected carry over in the Adult and Dislocated Worker funding streams kept the total funds available for those funding streams nearly level. The Youth funding stream will be operating on a 14% overall reduction for PY21. In addition, \$100,000 of administrative funds are reprogrammed as program funds to help offset the reductions. A summary and full budget report of the PY21 Budget Funding Sources and Planned Expenditures compared to the Current Budget was provided.

Motion to approve the PY21 Preliminary Budget as presented which includes the PY2021 Formula Allocations, the estimated carryover formula funds and other grants, and funding levels for 3 subawards.

TWC Board
Motion: **Finance Committee** **Second:** **Brown** **Approved**

CEO Board
Motion: **Boone** **Second:** **City of Rockford** **Approved**

• **April 2021 Finance Report Summary**

Amy Ott, Chair of the Finance Committee reviewed the April 2021 Finance Report Summary. The Minimum Training Expenditure level for Adult & Dislocated Workers is at 59%, above the minimum training expenditure requirement of 50%. Youth Work-based learning costs are at 23% and are also above the minimum requirement of 20%.

Combined Adult and Dislocated Worker Training Obligations were at 77%, up from 70% last month due to an increase in Adult OJT contracts. Youth Training Costs are at 97%.

Subrecipient spending for both Youth subawards is doing well, and there are no concerns. The One-Stop Operator and Career Services Subaward is being reported at 65% because the complete April report was not received in time to be included in this report. The committee will be monitoring this spending.

Both the Adult and Dislocated Worker funding streams are below the 80% required spending level for actual and obligated costs. Adult at 76% and Dislocated Worker at 78%. Youth is at 87% which is above the spending requirement. Amy explained that the 80% requirement for spending includes all carry-in funds from the previous program year and 80% of the current program year funds.

Participant service levels were at Adult 91%; Dislocated Worker 76% and Youth 104%.

6. **Culture Shift for Workforce Development**

Dr. Lisa Bly-Jones presented on the changes being addressed by workforce development as the culture shifts. EMSI used the term Sansdemic to refer to our current climate where there is too much work and too few people. Due to this Sansdemic, the quality of life is affected for everyone. There will be a lack of services, delivery of goods slowed or stopped, lack of healthcare workers, available staff is sleep deprived producing an increased error rate, lack of high-tech security roles leading to increased hacking and prices increase etc. A people-centered approach is needed to address the workforce shortage. A trauma-informed approach is needed, workers who were laid off or forced to stop working due to the pandemic experienced a form of traumas. Other considerations should include childcare. Businesses are now focused on workforce retention. Another factor of the culture shift of workforce development is the idea of the “good job”. Job quality is now a topic for workforce development. The effort is not just to get people a job but a “good job”. What defines a good job? A job that meets the basic needs and then higher needs as employees progress through their pathway.

Workforce Development is also looking at credential quality to ensure that there are job opportunities for non-degree credentials and that employers value those credentials. There must be benefit to those seeking non-degree credentials, understanding that employees have gained competencies. There are discussions about collecting data on credential program completion and outcomes from training providers. That data would then be used to promote those credentialing courses to employers.

The Workforce Connection Board will deepen employer engagement and listen to employers and learn about their industry. Leveraging regional resources will be important to meet employer needs. WIOA is only one funding aspect of workforce development and additional federal funding is expected. Relationships will need to be in place to execute on initiatives when the funding is received. Inclusive Economic Recovery is a comprehensive approach to retraining and reemployment for all displaced workers, supporting local businesses to avert layoffs and encourage upskilling, provide high quality job ready education, and public data and accountability regarding who is being included in recovery.

The group further discussed credentialing and the benefit to employers.

7. **Workforce Highlights from Chief Elected Officials**

City of Rockford – Todd Cagnoni shared that the city has entered into a supplemental marketing agreement with the Rockford Area Convention and Visitors Bureau to advance the Region. Their goals include improving the reputation of the region, retention of residents and businesses, increasing tourism and increasing overall pride. The contract is \$300,000. The city has the opportunity to work again with the National Resource Network on Equitable Recovery Pilot grant to address many of the issues pointed out in Dr. Bly-Jones’ presentation.

Winnebago County – Chairman Chiarelli shared that the county has been working to identify the economic changes that are coming because of the pandemic and identifying the sectors that are changing. A study identifying the 3 major employers in Winnebago County and how the pandemic affects their business related to workforce and 10-15 years out. He is hopeful that the youth of our region will have the ability to obtain the certificates they need and that we will meet their basic needs.

Boone County – Chairman Johnson shared about the ongoing issue with Chrysler and their reduction in workforce. The concern is not only the Chrysler workers that will be affected but the effect on other businesses that are suppliers to Chrysler. The county is working hard with Stellantis on their future plans and hopefully positioning Boone County and the region for the future.

The RVC ATC construction is coming along and the county is working on providing a sheltered bus stop for students.

Stephenson County – Chairman Hadley shared that Stephenson County still has a lot of jobs are going unfilled. Companies are getting creative with hiring incentives. He continues to work with Tom Cunningham, Probation Director to try to fill the open jobs. The Greater Freeport Partnership is working with the county on job fairs and other attraction events. The county is looking at attracting renewable energy companies such as wind turbines and solar panels.

8. **Executive Director Report (Hand out)**

A written report was provided. Dr. Lisa Bly-Jones wanted to note that the WIOA Partners MOU was submitted to the state as required ahead of the June 30, 2021 deadline. A request for two (2) technical changes was received. Those changes were made and submitted.

9. **Board Chair’s Perspective**

Frank Rotello asked the group to think about the WIOA allocations versus the needs of our region. The needs of individuals to be trained and the needs of the businesses to procure the talent they need and the fact that those funds were reduced this year. This means we must look outside of WIOA for the funds needed for our region. The Kellogg Grant application is a great example of this. The Workforce Connection convened 5 agencies in the region to collaborate on this grant. The agencies are RIPC, Transform Rockford, Rockford Public Schools, City of Rockford and Winnebago County. The application has moved on to the next phase of the grant approval process and would bring \$20 million over 10 years to the region. This effort is part of the making the vision of the strategic plan a reality. Through the transparency in reporting and other strengths, The Workforce Connection is positioned to manage additional funds and lead initiatives and has the structure in place. The region has a lot of strengths and the ability for stakeholders to work collaboratively to address the issues facing the region.

10. **Announcements**

Frank Rotello announced that Paul Logli is retiring after many years of serving The Workforce Connection Board and the whole community throughout the years. Paul thanked the board and staff and said he is looking forward to retirement. Frank also announced that Jerry Guinane has retired and wished him well in his retirement. Lisa added that both gentlemen were featured in the Board newsletter.

Pam Fettes added that in relation to Stellantis, Illinois is not well positioned to compete for businesses against other states. She encouraged business leaders to write a letter to the state to revise their economic incentive to businesses.

11. **Member Comments:**

None

12. **Public Comment:**

None

13. **Adjournment**

TWC Board Motion to adjourn at 9:13am

Motion: **Ott** **Second:** **Logli** **Approved**

CEO Board Motion to adjourn at 9:13am

Motion: **Boone** **Second:** **City of Rockford** **Approved**

Respectfully submitted,
Cathy Cornelius

Date: August 27, 2021

ITEMS INCLUDED IN THE MEETING PACKET

TWC Board Meeting Minutes 03-02-2021 (Action Item)

CEO Meeting Minutes 03-02-2021 (Action Item)

Procurement Policy Modification (Action Form)

Procurement Policy Redline Version

Procurement Policy Clean Version

Renewal of Current WIOA Youth Services Provider for PY2021 for Boone & Winnebago Counties (Action Form)

Approval of WIOA Youth Service Provider for Stephenson County (Action Form)

Approval of One Stop Operator and Title 1B service provider for adult and dislocated workers (Action Form)

PY2021 Preliminary Budget (Action Form)

PY2021 Preliminary Budget Report with Comparison

April 2021 Financial Report
