



**KENTUCKIANAWORKS BOARD MEETING
GREATER LOUISVILLE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD
Thursday, August 24, 2023 – 8:30 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.
at GLI, PNC Tower, 23rd Floor**

Members Present: Jonathan Westbrook, Eric Friggle, Christine Tarquinio (a proxy for Sarah Davasher-Wisdom), Harold Reynolds, Jeff O’Brien, Kim Blanding, Jennifer Lampton, Ann Thompson, Monica Collins, David Bizianes, Patricia Williams, Ty Handy, Ty Richardson, Rocki Rockingham

Staff: Michael Gritton, Alicia Pardo, Patrick Garvey, Aleece Smith, Sarah Ehresman, Regina Phillips, Lada Gasparac, Evelyn Woock, Jaime Disney, Dana Moorer, Christopher Locke

Contractors/Guests: Rosell Hamilton, Rodney Cross, Yvonne Jones, Lisa Thompson, Ashley Janicki, Pat Mulloy

Welcome and Greetings – Acting Chair Jonathan Westbrook

Acting Chair Jonathan Westbrook welcomed everyone to the Board Meeting and thanked them for attending. He appreciated the members coming to GLI’s new location in the PNC Tower on West Main Street.

Welcome to GLI’s New Office – Christine Tarquinio

Jonathan Westbrook introduced Christine, and she talked about the new space. Greater Louisville Inc. (GLI) moved to the new location about 3 weeks prior, and so the technology is still a work in progress. They are going to have a grand opening on Tuesday, September 26th and all of you are invited.

Welcome New Board Member Ann Thompson - Jonathan Westbrook, Ann Thompson

Jonathan gave another warm welcome to Ann Thompson, the newest Board member. Ann Thompson is originally from Louisville and resides in Nashville, Tennessee. She is the Workforce Development Manager for Ford Motor Company/Blue Oval SK’s work in Glendale, Kentucky, and in Tennessee, as well as doing additional work for Ford in Ohio, Michigan, and Canada.

Vote Needed: Review and Approve Minutes from May and June 2023 – Jonathan Westbrook

There was a quorum present, and a motion to accept the May and June meeting minutes was made by Jeff O’Brien and seconded by Christine Tarquinio. The motion passed without opposition.

Vote Needed: Review and Approve Consent Agenda from June 2023 – Jonathan Westbrook

A summary of the consent agenda was provided to the Board as well as the key highlights from the meeting in June. With a quorum present, Chairman Westbrook asked if there were any questions or comments, and when there were none, a motion was made to approve the consent agenda by Harold Reynolds and seconded by Ann Thompson with Jennifer Lampton abstaining. The motion was passed unanimously.



Vote Needed: Review and Approve Amended Budget for FY24 – Michael Gritton

Michael explained that the budget presented today is slightly different than the one we presented in June. This new budget reflects the \$1.85 million addition KentuckianaWorks received from Mayor Craig Greenberg and the Metro Council to expand our Young Adult services through our partnership with Goodwill of Kentucky which we call The Spot. This budget also reflects new funding we were awarded by the state Workforce and Labor Cabinet (Governor’s discretionary WIOA dollars) to continue a training program to help individuals become linemen for various companies like LG&E.

Michael also alerted the Board that we have discovered that we have more than \$1 million in unspent funds that we can use on the SummerWorks program in the coming years. He expressed concern that we could have underspent such a large amount of funding and assured the Board that the staff would be looking into how this mistake was made so that we could prevent it from happening in the future. He also noted that this kind of problem – figuring out that we have more funding than we thought – is a much better problem to have than the one the Bluegrass Workforce Board in the Lexington area recently discovered. They had significantly overspent their WIOA allocation dollars and consequently had to make painful layoffs to Board staff and Career Center staff and services. We have not ever made that kind of mistake, but will certainly look further into how we made the one leading to these underspent dollars.

With no further discussion, a motion to approve the amended budget was made by Mike Hesketh and seconded by Patricia Williams. The motion was passed without opposition.

Vote Needed: Suggested New Mission and Values Statements for the Board – Aleece Smith, Lada Gasparac

Aleece reminded the Board about the discussion they had at the May meeting about making Racial Equity a top priority for KentuckianaWorks. The staff at KentuckianaWorks has been working together to articulate what they want to do with that priority. The memo that was given to the Board offers suggested changes to our Mission and Values and showcases the organizational and programmatic efforts around racial equity and how KentuckianaWorks frames the impact on the community specifically through workforce development. Aleece noted that the Vision Statement has not changed and will continue to stay the same. The language around the Mission Statement would also stay the same, but would add the words, “in a good job.” The proposed Values statement represents a set of changes that we think better define the way the Board and the staff have described our values.

Ty Handy spoke about his experience in the workplace regarding state limitations on the language JCTC can use in describing their efforts around racial equity and asked if the staff has any concerns about the proposed language being in alignment with the state. Michael pointed out that because KentuckianaWorks does not receive general fund dollars from the state the way the state community and technical college system does, he doesn’t think the state has as much interest or control over our work as they might over others that they directly fund. Eric Friggle asked about the definition of what is a good job. Aleece noted that the federal Department of Labor has put out a set of principles that define a “good job,” and she offered to share that with the Board as a follow-up to today’s discussion. She also mentioned some of the key principles in that definition. Jeff O’Brien and Ty Richardson stated that the word good may be too vague. Jeff stated that what Aleece has described as a good job from the Department of Labor’s perspective is a much richer definition than just the term ‘good job.’ Finding a way to capture some of those principles in the statement may be a better choice than just saying ‘good job.:



Ty Richardson stated that KentuckianaWorks can't be everything to everybody, but he appreciated the intentions in terms of the diversity of the needs of those that we serve. However, there is also an ecosystem around this work where each distinct organization serves some purpose. Ty agreed that the commentary in terms of a good job seems very vague and some articulation of the specific outcomes that we're after would be helpful for clarification. Christine Tarquinio mentioned that there may be too many words in the mission and values statement, and no one will remember them, much less be able to repeat them, if we don't consider shortening them.

Ty Handy suggested as an alternative statement, "Through the dignity of work in employment, an experience that meets an individual's current needs and gives them hope for a brighter future." Jonathan Westbrook stated that he appreciated all the feedback, and suggested delaying a final vote on the proposed language since there seems to be more work to do on this topic. He asked Aleece and Lada to provide some options for how to proceed based on today's feedback and asked the Board to watch for further drafts via email from the staff and to provide comments to those by email so that we can bring a final version for the Board's consideration and approval at the next meeting.

Thank You and Acknowledgements to a Departing Colleague – Michael Gritton, Lada Gasparac, Rosell Hamilton

Michael gave a summary of how Goodwill became a partner with KentuckianaWorks on our Young Adult work in the summer of 2020 – not an easy time to take over running a challenging program. Michael and Lada expressed their appreciation for the work that Rosell Hamilton, Director of Young Adult Service from Goodwill, has done at The Spot since she became the leader of that effort late in 2020. She has decided to pursue other opportunities, and KentuckianaWorks is honored and thankful for the time and hard work she has placed in the program and the impact her leadership has had on the lives of young adults in Louisville. Rose expressed deep appreciation for the acknowledgment of her work and looked forward to her path crossing that of KentuckianaWorks again in her future endeavors.



Vote Needed: New Policy on Career Pathways Work under The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) – Michael Gritton

Michael gave some background information on the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and explained how the funding flows in three “chunks” – Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth. He also explained that when WIOA passed in 2014, Congress added Section 107(d)(5) known as the Career Pathways Development. This states the local board “shall” lead efforts in the local area, not “may.”

The purpose of the proposed new policy is to clarify and memorialize how the Board, under WIOA, wants to implement its charge to lead career pathways efforts in our region. In particular, adopting this policy will allow us to spend WIOA funds to work with employers and high schools as they work together to build out career pathways. The policy also makes clear that we believe we can do this work without requiring us to enroll as a WIOA “participant” any particular student who might benefit from these efforts.

Michael mentioned that currently, we have a large number of companies who are partnering with high schools in their area – both through the JCPs Academies of Louisville work, and in many of our regional counties too. However, KentuckianaWorks does not have an organized effort to work with those companies to make their career pathways more visible and seamless, or to make it easy for those employers to hire young people during the school year and in the summer and to keep those relationships for employment after graduation. KentuckianaWorks plans on using WIOA funding, not on individual customers, but to build out the career pathway development efforts with employers. Michael stated that with the Board’s approval, KentuckianaWorks will take this language and put it into the next version of the local plan and regional plan that goes to the state for approval by the Department of Labor.

A motion to approve the New Policy on Career Pathways Work under WIOA was made by Ty Handy and seconded by Harold Reynolds. The motion was passed unanimously.

Discussion: Strategic Plan Follow-up: Deep Dive into Young Adult Programs and Capacity - Michael Gritton

Michael asked the Board to think back on the Strategic Planning Session they had in April and to discuss the direction they want to go as a Board. One option we discussed in April was to take a more focused approach by identifying one or two specific challenges we want to go deeper into and determine the best way for KentuckianaWorks to make a difference in addressing those challenges. Michael presented data on the number of Disconnected Youth in our region, the financial costs we and they pay in NOT connecting them to work and productive life, and what will happen if the Board does not get involved. The Presentation was made available to the Board at the end of the meeting.

In particular, Michael suggested that the Young Adult space is one where the Board could make a huge difference – both by helping the staff to find new revenue streams to support the work, and by guiding the work as we expand it to serve more young people. Louisville Metro Government has made a huge new commitment to this work with the \$1.85 million increase in this year’s budget. Michael suggested that it’s time that we ask our friends in the state legislature to invest in this work too, since we know we can help more of these young adults become employed, tax-paying citizens if we have the resources to fund the work. He made clear that he would need help from the Board to establish and build these relationships since we’ve never received funding before from the state legislature.



Jonathan Westbrook made sure that the Board understood where the direction of this topic was leading. He reminded the Board of their visit to the Spot, and how they saw firsthand what the work is about and the proof of the concept being used. He reaffirmed that to scale up the program, they need help from the Board and their ideas for execution. He opened the floor for discussion.

Mike Hesketh commented that it would be helpful if we could reach out to those who have relationships with the state legislature and are aware of the landscape to guide the Board around this topic. Ty Handy talked about how the legislators from Louisville have not been particularly effective in the past in advocating for this kind of investment in Louisville, because they're sometimes happier just to play the "blame game" rather than taking action. He stated that somehow the Board has to turn that tide because Louisville is the state's economic engine, but the legislature hasn't always been enthusiastic about investing in that engine. Jeff O'Brien added that to turn the tide, instead of it coming from the Workforce Board, it may need to come from city leadership. He spoke about the Economic Strategic Planning Session with the Mayor that he attended the day before, where it was noted that we have 20,000 disconnected youth across the metro region. That number got the attention of the whole group yesterday, and city leadership could certainly help amplify our request for this kind of investment.

Michael introduced Pat Mulloy. He is the new Deputy Mayor of Economic Development and the host of the Economic Strategic Planning Meetings that Jeff O'Brien had mentioned. Pat outlined the strategic planning work that Louisville Metro is doing to create a new economic development strategy. He believes strongly that Louisville has many authentic strengths that position us well to be a leading economic engine in this part of the country in the next decade. He noted that over 80 people are participating in the four discussion sessions that have been organized. The goal is to have a new plan by the end of the year, so we are moving with speed to create an actionable plan that can guide our work in the coming years. It's important to note that workforce development is high on the list of challenges we have to address, so the work of this Board will continue to be important as we work together to address those challenges.

Wrap-up and Next Steps – Acting Chair Jonathan Westbrook

Chair Jonathan Westbrook stated that Michael was invited by the state legislature to present in Frankfort, Kentucky at the Joint Economic Development and Workforce Investment Interim Joint Committee on September 28th representing the KentuckianaWorks Board. He proposed canceling the September Board meeting on that same date and asked the Board to support Michael by appearing with him instead at the Frankfort hearing if they could.

Ann Thompson asked if there was an opportunity to set up a follow-up meeting to talk more about these topics. Michael will send out some dates and times for the follow-up discussion. With no further discussion, Acting Chairman Jonathan Westbrook then adjourned the meeting. The next meeting was scheduled for Thursday, November 16, 2023, at 8:30 a.m.