

**KENTUCKIANAWORKS BOARD MEETING
GREATER LOUISVILLE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD
Thursday, September 22, 2022 – 8:30 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.
Hybrid Meeting In person (at Greater Louisville Inc., 614 West
Main Street, Louisville) and via Zoom**

Members Present: Tony Georges, Jennifer Lampton, Sadiqa Reynolds, Cornelius Cotton, Ty Handy, Eric Friggle, John Archer, Andy Bianco, Kimberly Blanding, Patricia Williams, Ty Richardson, Rick Purdy, Chris Schremser, Mike Hesketh, Jonathan Westbrook, Rocki Rockingham, Marty Pollio

Welcome and Greetings - *Chairman Tony Georges*

Chairman Georges welcomed everyone to the Board Meeting and thanked them for attending. He asked Michael to facilitate the meeting because Chairman Georges was out of town and joining via Zoom to make the meeting go smoothly.

Update and Discussion: A Deep Dive Into our Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Budget – *Michael Gritton*

Michael started with a brief history of workforce funding at the federal level over time. He talked about the Wagner-Peyser Act of 1933 and the Social Security Act of 1935. Between these two Acts, physical locations were created where staff could help individuals file their paperwork to qualify for unemployment, and where staff could help job seekers look for employment. In the 1960s, Congress passed the Manpower Development and Training Act, and in the 1970s passed the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA). These were the predecessors of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) in the 1990s, now WIOA, which created the present-day Workforce Boards like KentuckianaWorks that oversee the running of One Stop Career Centers that are meant to include many federal-funded partners. During the Bevin Administration in 2015, then-Secretary of the Workforce Cabinet Hal Heiner faced a major budget shortfall in Wagner-Peyser funds and made the decision to dramatically reduce the number of Career Centers that would be staffed by the state. This left the residents of our 7-county region with only two locations for individuals to seek in-person services – the NIA Center at 29th and Broadway, and the state’s “Unemployment Office” at 6th and Cedar in downtown.

After a while, the Chief Local Elected Officials began asking if KentuckianaWorks could help to establish in-person workforce services in their counties. The County Judges of Bullitt, Henry and Shelby Counties found space in their counties to house Career Center staff to continue in-person services. In the Shelby and Bullitt locations, the primary cost is paying for the people who staff the Career Centers, as the rents and other costs are either \$1 or otherwise modest. The Equus contract funds 5 ½ people to staff the Career Centers in Shelby, Henry and Bullitt Counties, as well as to be available for regular office hours at county libraries in Oldham, Spencer and Trimble Counties. Before the pandemic, Equus was routinely meeting its job placement goals for each program year, helping 750-1,000 people a year get jobs. Presently, Equus and service providers across the country have struggled to meet their job placement goals. Last year Equus’s goal was 700 job placements, but their FY22 performance produced only 353 job placements. This outcome was not troublesome in the short term, but is being observed as the economy continues to change.

Just recently the state has proposed a new regulation (not required or even suggested by federal law) that would require local Boards to spend at least 40% of their WIOA funds on job training services to customers. If this regulation goes into effect it will require major changes to

current operations, and will conflict with guidance the KentuckianaWorks' Board and the Chief Local Elected Officials Board have given in previous years about how to spend these funds. In FY12, KentuckianaWorks spent approximately 30% of WIOA funds on job training services that would count under the state's proposed new regulation (\$1.6 million of \$5.1 million). As the American Reinvestment Act (ARRA) or the Obama Stimulus funds went away, in FY14, the spending on job training declined to approximately 25% (\$1.4 million of \$5.9 million). Currently only 7% of WIOA funds are spent on services that would qualify under the new regulation. WIOA funding has declined at exactly the same time the need to provide core employment services has increased. Michael stated that because of this proposed new regulation and the fundamental changes post pandemic, this was the time and opportunity for the Board to discuss new strategies and prioritizations. He opened the floor for discussions and questions.

Chairman Georges stated that this was necessary context to why there is a concern about the proposed 40% requirement. Sadiqa Reynolds asked where these regulations are coming from. Michael stated that they were coming from the Workforce Cabinet at the state level but he doesn't have an individual name. She went on to reinforce Michael's strong concern about losing staff, but also challenged the Board to evaluate the need of helping individuals with resumes and the need for job training due to employer desperation. She suggested negotiations with the Cabinet members who agree with the increase in the workforce training requirement. Michael completely agreed. He reminded the Board that KentuckianaWorks has asked the city for \$10 million in American Rescue Plan funds strictly for job training scholarships. KentuckianaWorks is fully willing, able and ready to provide job training scholarships when the funding is available, but the funds are not there given WIOA funding cuts and our current level of in-person services. Sadiqa suggested that the negotiations to get to the proposed 40% reduced could include a challenge to the surrounding counties to provide funding in order to continue to provide services in those areas. Mike Hesketh added that when the ARP funds were established, Jefferson County and Louisville received almost \$400 million, while Shelby County received \$14 million over 2 years. Due to the significantly lower amount, Mike expressed the difficulty in being able to allocate those funds. John Archer asked if KentuckianaWorks had sufficient adult training programs to meet the proposed 40%. Cindy Read explained that because this has not been our recent priority, it has not been the main focus. It is doable but it would take a lot of restructuring. John Archer asked how the Board could help, and who would KentuckianaWorks influence statewide to get this draft regulation changed? Michael said that there is a scheduled meeting with Secretary Link later in October for further discussion. Jonathan Westbrook asked if the budget can reflect the fair market value on funding for rent for the career centers in the 3 counties as leverage being provided in those counties. He agreed with Sadiqa to reevaluate the 3 buckets of funding to keep up with the changing economy. Chairman Georges stated that now the question is what is the silver lining even if the 40% never makes it into the regulation. We have the opportunity and responsibility to spend the funds for the greatest impact, which may not be brick & mortar in person services, in a world that has record low unemployment and such a dependence on technology. We are going to need to have future sessions to talk about options to make adjustments. Rick Purdy asked when this will come into action. Michael assured the Board he will keep the group updated as he gets more information.

Vote Needed: Review and Approve Minutes from June and August 2022 Meetings - Tony Georges

There was a quorum, and a motion to accept the June and August Meeting minutes was made by Ty Richardson and seconded by Sadiqa Reynolds. The motion passed unanimously.

Vote Needed: Review and Approve the Consent Agendas from the Program Oversight Committee for August and September 2022 – Cindy Read

Cindy stated that she will be reviewing the consent agendas for the September meeting, and the Board will be voting on the consent agendas from August and September. There was a quorum in September, and the Program Oversight Committee recommended board approval for the renewal of the YouthBuild Louisville contract to operate SummerWorks for an amount not to exceed \$625,000 beginning October 1, 2022 and ending September 30, 2023. The Metro Council approved \$1 million in funding for the coming year, and KentuckianaWorks has raised about a half a million in grants and private donors.

A motion to approve the consent items for August and September was made by Jonathan Westbrook and seconded by Patricia Williams. The motion passed unanimously.

Vote Needed: Staff Recommendation Regarding Two New Partnerships Between AmeriCorps and SummerWorks – Michael Gritton and Chris Locke

Michael stated that he and Chris have discovered two opportunities to do something different with the SummerWorks program. Two trusted professionals in our market – Cathe Dykstra of Family Scholar House and Todd Schmiedeler, formerly of Trilogy Health Services – worked together last year to win two new AmeriCorps grants. The first AmeriCorps grant will be funding training of 30 high school students to enlist as AmeriCorps members who will spend 450 hours during the school year and next summer learning to fly drones, earning a national drone-flying credential, and working with other nonprofits to take pictures of roofs to report possible energy loss or other damage that can be addressed to improve the energy-efficiency of those homes. Mr. Schmiedeler’s grant has funding to pay the participants \$10 an hour, and we’re proposing to use SummerWorks funding to supplement this pay by \$5 an hour to bring it to \$15 an hour. Michael was asking the Board for their feedback on this potential partnership. In addition, Mayor Fischer fully embraces this as a new approach worth trying, since it provides the young people with more hours, both during the school year and during the summer, than SummerWorks on its own can provide.

The second AmeriCorps grant will be sponsoring 100 Louisville young people to earn their CNA and other related certifications and will be providing 675 hours of service. The grant will also be sponsoring 30 culinary students to be earning national credentials like ServSafe and to provide 900 service hours in the dining facilities of those same nursing homes and assisted living facilities at \$12 an hour. There is a \$3 an hour gap between what the AmeriCorps grant will allow Family Scholar House to pay the participants and the \$15 an hour they’d like to offer them. Michael is recommending the Board approve SummerWorks to make up this pay gap, the benefits would be similar to those outlined for the drone students. Advantages include better pay, more hours of training and real-world work experience, and the ability to recruit participants from Academy high schools.

Michael opened the floor to the Board for feedback and questions. Ty Handy suggested that because the participants are high school students, exploring avenues to use these credentials for college would be a great addition. Sadiqa Reynolds suggested asking the state about using the Civil Monetary Penalty funds for these students, and if these funds used could count toward the 40% of WIOA funds for the proposed regulation discussed earlier. Michael stated that the WIOA youth funds cannot be used for in-school use, but there are some exceptions. He stated that with the vote he could add to follow up on the funding sources suggested. Ty Richardson asked if there was a trade off for these funding suggestions or is this an addition. Michael explained that using the funds for these two new partnerships will leave a smaller amount to pay for students to work at traditional nonprofits that take 1 to 2 students in the summer. The

recommendation was to prioritize the nonprofits that host a larger number of students. Sadiqa made a motion to accept the recommendation to support 30 students learning to fly drones in the new partnership with Todd Schmiedeler, and Ty Richardson seconded the motion. Andy Bianco asked if KentuckianaWorks will cap the dollar amount. Michael stated that the dollar amount will not exceed \$40,500. The motion was passed without opposition. A motion to approve the recommendation regarding the new partnership with the second AmeriCorps grant with the prerequisite of verifying whether Civil Monetary Penalty Funds might be able to be used to fund this effort was made by Sadiqa Reynolds and seconded by Rick Purdy. The motion was passed without opposition.

Executive Director’s Report – Michael Gritton

Michael thanked Sadiqa Reynolds for setting up the meeting with Councilman Anthony Piagentini to discuss the American Rescue Plan. He assured Michael that the Metro Council will have an update within the following week or so.

Chairman Georges then adjourned the meeting. The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, November 17, 2022.

Staff:

Latricia Swope
Michael Gritton
Christopher Locke
Angella Wilson
Cindy Read
Evelyn Woock
Patrick Garvey
Aleece Smith
Lori Hiser
Sarah Ehrshman
Katie Elliott
Lada Gasparac
Mike Karman
Bailey Preston
Regina Phillips
Jaime Disney
Brian Luerman
Stacy Roderick

Contractors/Guests

Sara Dodeci
Bria Henson
Lynn Rippy
Tonika East
Lisa Thompson