

**BERKS COUNTY WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD  
(WDB)**

**7:30 a.m.**

**December 14, 2018**

**PA CareerLink® Berks County, 1920 Kutztown Road, Suite F, Reading, PA 19604  
Meeting Summary**

**Members Present**

Ms. Debra Antol  
Ms. Auria Bradley  
Mr. John DeVere  
Ms. Kristi Gage-Linderman  
Mr. Robert Harrop  
Ms. Peggy Kershner  
Ms. Joanne Judge  
Mr. Lewis McCoy (via conference call)  
Mr. Thomas McKeon  
Mr. Brian McMahan (via conference call)  
Mr. James Nichols  
Mr. Mark Pinkasavage (via conference call)  
Mr. Michael Rowley  
Mr. Russell Showers  
Mr. Pablo Tejada  
Ms. Karyn Troxell  
Mr. Barry Unger  
Ms. Tammy White  
Dr. Anne Zayaitz (via conference call)

**Members Absent**

Mr. Thomas Brizek  
Ms. Marianne Egolf  
Mr. Michael Fischetti  
Mr. Modesto Fiume  
Ms. Carole Homolash  
Mr. John Morahan  
Mr. Randolph Peers  
Mr. Mark Schlott

**Staff and Guests Present**

Mr. Daniel Fogarty	Berks County Workforce Development Board Staff
Mr. John Moser	Berks County Workforce Development Board Staff
Ms. Megan Noll	Berks County Workforce Development Board Staff
Mr. Rory Stevenson	Berks County Workforce Development Board Staff
Ms. Patricia Spencer	Berks County Workforce Development Board Staff
Ms. Patricia Adamczyk	PA CareerLink® Berks County Administrator

The meeting was called to order by Ms. Judge at 7:30 a.m. A quorum was present.

Ms. Judge asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the September 21, 2018 meeting. The motion was made by Mr. DeVere and seconded by Ms. Antol. All members voted their approval.

Ms. Judge introduced the Executive Committee report. No proposals were received by November 19<sup>th</sup> in response to the Request for Proposals for a CareerLink Operator Procurement.

A second pre-proposal bidder's conference was scheduled for the afternoon of December 14. The goal remains to have a contract in place effective July 1, 2019. With Ms. Adamczyk's planned retirement in June 2019, the Operator will need to employ a CareerLink Administrator.

The WDB's PY2016 WIOA Training Targets were achieved at 38%, well in excess of the state's expected goal of 30%. Mr. Moser reported that the initial PY2017 result of 33% also exceeded the state's 30% expectation. It is expected that results for the current year (PY2018) will be even higher given the additional WIOA Title I funding available for training this year.

New officers will begin their two-year terms beginning January 1, 2019—Ms. Gage-Linderman to succeed Ms. Judge as chairperson and Mr. Showers to succeed Ms. Gage-Linderman as vice-chairperson.

Ms. Judge asked Ms. Noll to comment on the Finance Committee Reports included in the Board's packages. Ms. Noll, referring to the *PY18 Budget vs. Actual*, said that Adult and Dislocated Worker expenditures are on target but more obligations will be needed to meet the 80% minimum requirement for the full program year. She added that the Board is in a stronger position this year and cost levels are being maintained within budgeted amounts.

Mr. Fogarty commented on the 11/21/18 Status Update of Berks WDB PY 2018 Discretionary/Competitive Grants. Mr. Fogarty said that Mr. Stevenson became the "core person" for grant writing and information for many local partners interested in submitting PASmart proposals.

Eight discretionary grants totaling \$1,086,781 are being administered by the WDB in PY 2018 with a total amount of \$736,398 expended as of October 31, 2018. They are Strategic Innovation Grant—CRISP II, Strategic Innovation Grant—Youth Partnership (Part II), SLIP Grant, Preapprenticeship/Apprenticeship Grant, Apprenticeship USA Expansion Grant, Additional Rapid Response Request, Business Education Partnership, and Teacher in the Workplace.

The Finance Committee had also reviewed WDB funding opportunities for Proposed Strategic Priorities for PY2018 – PY2020 (Q1). Due to favorable funding and cost variances to date, the Board is now in a strong budgetary position to strategically deploy additional Adult, Dislocated Worker and Rapid Response funding and to consider how best to expend or obligate available funds to meet the WIOA mandated Title I program minimum 80% obligation by June 30, 2019.

Mr. Fogarty discussed the proposed approaches outlined in the Strategic Priorities document which are: (1) Contracting for an additional WDB staff resource to vigorously evaluate and promote Registered Apprenticeship and Pre-Apprenticeships; (2) \$50,000 in financial support if needed for a Berks County Economic Development Strategic Planning Process in partnership with local economic development partners and (3) Contract(s) to expand Community-Based Pre-apprenticeships for adults with barriers to employment interested in the Board's Priority B industries—Construction or Health Care.

Ms. Noll referred to the Revised PY2018 Budget stating that some numbers have changed including training costs budgeted in the WIOA Adult Service Contract, rent increases for the Board and CareerLink starting in June 2018, and an amount budgeted for an IT vendor to maintain the CareerLink public computers. Ms. Judge asked for a motion to approve the revised budget as presented. Ms. White moved to adopt the budget and Mr. Showers seconded the motion. All approved.

Mr. Moser requested volunteers to help review the Business Services contract proposals from February 14-18, 2019. He added that both the EARN and Youth contracts would also be coming due for renewal.

The One-Stop Oversight Committee report was introduced by Ms. Adamczyk. Ms. Adamczyk reported that the semi-annual Job Fair held on October 22, 2018 at the Crowne Plaza was successful, garnering an attendance of 90 employers and 687 job seekers for a job seeker to employer ratio of approximately 8:1. As a result of input from participating employers regarding some difficulty in attending the events on Mondays, efforts will be made to hold the Job Fairs mid-week dependent upon facility availability and cost. The next Job Fair will be held on Wednesday, May 15, 2019 at the Crowne Plaza. Several marketing tools have been utilized, including Facebook, Snapchat, radio ads and newspaper ads, and they will continue to be utilized for future job fairs.

Both the Reading Area Community College and Literacy Council TABE and CASAS education programs respectively are working well in providing adult and young adult learners with GED preparation in collaboration.

Ms. Adamczyk reviewed the By the Numbers chart for the period July – September 2018:

- Foot Traffic Total 8,615
  - Orientation 472
- UC Claimants
  - Phone: 1,587
  - RESEA (Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment): 259
- New Training Accounts: 12 WIOA - \$5,081 Average
- 3 New Work-Based Training Contracts: \$4,974
- 238 Individual Businesses Served
  - 70 Manufacturing Sector
  - 49 Health Care Sector
- 20 Employer Recruitments (533 job seekers)

Mr. McKeon, Chair of the Berks County Committee on Increasing Opportunities for Individuals with Disabilities, commented on the minutes from the Committee's December meeting. He said the Committee welcomes more private sector membership. Committee priorities were discussed including an update on the Talent Academy, a training program designed and provided by Syncreon in Carlisle in partnership with their local Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) in an effort to recruit and hire candidates who require entry level soft and hard skills training leading to employment. Mr. McKeon reported that their local Goodwill will deliver the training

and tuition will be paid to Goodwill. On-the-Job-Training wages or training stipend wages will be paid by one of the supporting agencies via Kelly Services.

HB1641 became the Employment First Act when it was signed into law by the Governor on June 19, 2018. The Act has broad coverage providing publicly-funded education, training, employment and related services, and long-term services and support for working-age Pennsylvanians with a disability.

A workshop proposal has been submitted for the next PA Workforce Development Association Employment, Training and Education Conference scheduled for May 8-10, 2019 in Hershey. If selected, the workshop will be a "*How To*" guide for other Boards in the establishment of a committee focused on individuals with disabilities.

Mr. DeVere reviewed topics from the Training and Industry Partnership Committee report.

The Berks WDB has applied for \$30,453 in L&I funds to offset 1/3 of the cost (estimated @ \$100K/year) to staff a dedicated full-time individual to perform outreach activities to ensure pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship linkages align with Berks County's strategic workforce needs.

23 Berks middle schools are participating this year in the Berks-Schuylkill region's "*What's So Cool about Manufacturing*" annual student video contest. The annual awards ceremony will be held at the DoubleTree in Reading on March 5, 2019. Attendance is expected to exceed 1,000.

More than 150 attendees participated in the second annual Berks regional Manufacturing Summit held on October 10, 2018 in RACC's Miller Center for the Arts and Schmidt Training and Technology Center campus venues. Post event feedback indicated the event was a success.

The Berks WDB has entered into a new partnership with the Lancaster WDB for a PAsmart Next General Construction Industry Partnership Grant application to be submitted December 14, 2018 with the Lancaster WDB as the lead applicant and fiscal agent.

The Berks Connections/Pretrial Services (BCPS) Rebuilding Reentrants and Reading (R3) project, offering an opportunity for individuals with a criminal history to acquire competencies in construction work through a partnership with Habitat for Humanity Berks County and the Reading/Muhlenberg Career and Technology Center, continues to show significant success. As a result BCPS is applying for registered pre-apprenticeship status and is submitting a PAsmart pre-apprenticeship grant application with support from the WDB.

Mr. Pinkasavage also informed the committee that the IBEW Local 743 planned to submit a PAsmart Registered Apprenticeship grant application with the assistance of the Berks WDB as fiscal agent.

The Youth Committee Report was introduced by Ms. White. She shared that three successful United Way Venture Grant recipients will share a total of \$100K to provide much-needed supplies and services in CY 2019. The recipients are Reading School District for Red Knight Bridge to Success Program (RKBSP), Family Promise of Berks County, Inc. for the expansion of U-Turn (serving unaccompanied, homeless and at-risk teens and transitional aged youth since 2011), and Mary's Shelter for Youth Empowerment Supportive Services (YESS). She added that Family Promise and Mary's Shelter work together to coordinate days and hours of operations.

Mr. Moser reviewed changes to TANF youth eligibility that will take effect beginning January 2019. The PA Department of Human Services will no longer require family income history. Six months of youth income history must be collected and will be the sole required financial assessment. Age eligibility = 5<sup>th</sup> grade (age 12 years) through 24 years of age. Youth barriers are recommended but will not be mandatory for eligibility. However, policies for barriers related to priority of services that are adopted should be WIOA aligned (e.g. age-out of foster care, ESL, adjudicated youth, etc.). Ms. White moved to continue the Board's policy of enrolling youth earning less than 235% of the poverty level. The motion was seconded by Mr. DeVere and all approved.

As a follow up to the action taken by the Board on September 21, 2018 meeting, Mr. Moser commented that the amendment to the Goodwill Industries 2018 SWEAP contract was approved by the Commissioners on December 13, 2018. The action was needed because of an over-enrollment of youth for the 2018 summer program causing the company to go over budget by \$14,289.00. He said a corrective action plan and a new process is in place. No concerns were expressed by Board members.

Mr. Fogarty referred to the section in the report on the innovative Reading Muhlenberg Career and Technology Center/Berks Career and Technology Center (RMCTC/BCTC) Summer Internship Program and how the program has evolved and is expanding to provide work-based experiences to a growing number of CTC students. Most impressively, this entire program is funded by employer wages and private donations, requiring no public funds. This year, \$120,000 in private donations are being sought to fund a summer stipend (\$1,200 each) for up to 100 CTC juniors who are expected to complete their internship.

The COO report was introduced by Mr. Fogarty who thanked the Board, Committees and staff for the tremendous work done on plans and priorities the past year. He also said that with Ms. Adamczyk's leadership, Berks County has one of the best CareerLinks in the State. He also thanked Ms. Adamczyk, Ms. Noll and Mr. Moser for obtaining Wi-Fi access in the building as part of the new services contract effective September 30.

Other topics included in the COO report were Berks County Local Labor Market Updates; Positive Local Trends in Median Household Income/City of Reading Poverty Rate; New Legislation Dilutes PA Graduation Requirements; and Building Seasonal Unemployment Compensation (UC) Claimant CareerLink Foot Traffic.

Mr. Fogarty noted that a serious shortfall in academic skills, especially mathematics, exists among many Pennsylvania's high school graduates. This negatively impacts the ability of

these graduates to succeed in high-end training programs such as mechatronics. Mr. McKeon commented that maintaining quality schools is a critical issue. Legislators cannot allow standards to drop.

There was no Market Intelligence Discussion.

There was no public comment.

Ms. Judge adjourned the meeting at 8:45 A.M.

The next quarterly meeting of the Board will be held at 7:30 a.m. on Friday, March 15, 2019 in Room 100 of the PA CareerLink® Berks County, 1920 Kutztown Road, Suite G, Reading, PA 19604.