

EASTERN WASHINGTON PARTNERSHIP WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

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Joint Meeting of the Eastern Washington Partnership WDC and Regional Board

1. Call to Order and Introductions:

The joint meeting of the Eastern Washington Partnership Workforce Development Council and the Regional Board was called to order by Larry Frick at 12:37 PM on Thursday, May 27, 2021. The meeting was held virtually via ZOOM.

In attendance were the following:

Regional Board Members: Scott Hutsell, Michael Largent, Todd Kimball, and Brian Shinn.

WDC Members: Larry Frick, Gabe Coates, Jeff Koffel, Jennie Weber, Jerry Anhorn, Jim Drake, John Little, Leslie Druffel, Angela Merritt, and Tony Maiorana.

Guests: Ajsa Suljic, Anne Buchan, Bryan Raines, Kelly Charlton, and Liz Guerra.

EWP Staff: Rod Van Alyne, Director and Tracy Ferrell, Administrative Services Manager.

2. Approval of Agenda

Leslie Druffel made a motion to approve the agenda as presented. Jeff Koffel seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

3. Approval of Minutes

Scott Hutsell made a motion to approve the minutes from the February 25, 2021 meeting as presented. Jeff Koffel seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

4. Regional Board Report: Chairman Scott Hutsell reported that several Regional Board members attended an orientation on April 7, 2021 with Rod Van Alyne. The time was well spent and included good discussions. Mr. Hutsell then presented a request to add new members to the WDC as follows:

- Addition of Mary Crawford, Executive Director of Operations at Providence St. Mary Medical Center, representing the Healthcare Occupations sector of the WDC. ***Michael Largent made a motion to approve the request. Todd Kimball seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.***
- Derek Teal, General Manager for Pomeroy Grain Growers, representing the Transportation and Warehousing Occupations Sector of the WDC. ***Todd Kimball made the motion to approve the request. Michael Largent seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.***

5. Chairman's Report: Larry Frick reported that Bill Clemens was unable to attend today's meeting, which would have been his final meeting as a member and Chair of the WDC. Scott Habenicht, Vice Chairperson, was also unable to attend, so Larry would be acting as Chairperson for today's meeting.

Although Bill was not at today's meeting, Larry recognized his long-term service to the Board as a representative from Pacific Corporation. He has served as the Chairman of the WDC through the transition of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) to the Workforce Investment and Opportunity Act (WIOA). In addition, he has been active in shaping policies, strategic planning, and a true advocate of the expansion of training and employment opportunities to meet the needs of both job seekers and employers in the nine-county region of the EWP. It would be impossible to provide an estimate of the number of individuals that have been able to obtain a good living in healthcare, manufacturing, transportation, agriculture, energy and many other industries because of the

devotion and hard work provided by Bill, along with the WDC. Bill was graciously thanked for his dedication and wished a very happy retirement.

6. Administrative Committee Report: The service providers, or anyone with a conflict of interest, in attendance were asked to step out of the meeting at this time. Larry Frick reported that the Administrative Committee had met on March 26, 2021, to review and discuss the process for submitting a Request for Proposals (RFP) for the One Stop Operator. It was determined that the RFP should be released as presented. There was also a review of questions that would be presented to the service providers for the Adult and Dislocated Worker programs.

The Administrative Committee met again on May 14, 2021, to review the responses from the RFP for the One Stop Operator. It was noted that only one response had been received although there had been two additional requests for more information. The response that was returned was from a consortium of several service providers in the nine-county region: Employment Security Department (ESD) Rural Resources Community Action (RRCA), Blue Mountain Action Council (BMAC), Walla Walla Community College and Spokane Community College. This consortium, as a whole, would act as the One Stop Operator with the ESD serving as the fiscal agent. During the meeting there was discussion on the funding level in addition to the consortium concept. Following discussion, the Administrative Committee unanimously agreed to approve the proposal from the Consortium. Larry asked for a motion to approve the recommendation from the Administrative Committee. **Jeff Koffel made a motion to approve the proposal from the Consortium to act as the One Stop Operator with the ESD acting as the Fiscal Agent. Jim Drake seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.**

Larry reported that also at the May 14, 2021, meeting, the committee reviewed the responses to the questions that had been received by the program service providers. Regarding the Adult program service providers (RRCA and BMAC), it was determined that the statement of work could include more detailed language, however, the Administrative recommends approval of the PY21 WIOA Adult Program proposals from BMAC and RRCA. **Leslie Druffel made a motion to approve the proposal for the WIOA Adult Program PY21 service provision from Blue Mountain Action Council as presented. Todd Kimball seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. Scott Hutsell made a motion to approve the proposal for WIOA Adult Program PY21 service provision from Rural Resources Community Action as presented. Leslie Druffel seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.**

In addition, at the May 14, 2021, meeting, it was reported that the committee reviewed the question responses that had been received from the Colville Employment Security Department (CESD) and the Walla Walla Employment Security Department (WWESD) regarding service provision in PY21 for the WIOA Dislocated Worker Program. The Committee had agreed unanimously to recommend that the WDC approve the proposals as presented. **Leslie Druffel made a motion to approve the proposal of the WIOA Dislocated Worker Program PY21 service provision from the Colville Employment Security Department. Scott Hutsell seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. Jeff Koffel made a motion to approve the proposal for the WIOA Dislocated Worker Program PY21 service provision from the Walla Walla Employment Security Department as presented. Todd Kimball seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.**

7. Youth Committee: Angela Merritt reported that the Youth Committee had met on March 8, 2021. The committee received an overview of the services provided to youth in the EWP service area. Copies of the notes from that meeting were included in the Board Packets. There was a discussion regarding the WIOA 14 Youth Elements. Kathy Covey (BMAC) and Kelly Charlton (RRCA) were in attendance at that meeting and shared how the 14 Youth Elements requirement was met in their area. Both Kathy and Kelly were asked to leave the meeting after the discussion. After review of the questions and the proposal process, it was agreed to proceed with submitting those questions to both RRCA and BMAC for a response on providing Youth services in PY21.

The Youth Committee met again on May 14, 2021, to discuss the answers/proposals received from RRCA and BMAC. After review, it was unanimously determined that the Youth Committee recommend to the WDC approval for both BMAC and RRCA to provide WIOA Youth Services in PY21. ***Jeff Koffel made a motion for Blue Mountain Action Council to continue providing WIOA Youth Services for PY21 as recommended by the Youth Committee. Todd Kimball seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. Jim Drake made a motion for Rural Resources Community Action to continue providing WIOA Youth Services for PY21 as recommended by the Youth Committee. Leslie Druffel seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.***

The service providers were invited back into the meeting.

8. Director's Report: Rod began by updating the WDC on decisions made for on-site delivery. It was recognized that all agencies have been working virtually with limited services. However, things are now moving forward, and a plan has been developed. Rod shared that both BMAC and RRCA have been open for limited training and employment services, since they both provide an array of different social services to the communities. After discussing reopening with ESD and other state agencies, it has been determined that they will begin work on the facility lists that have been provided by the state with the intent of reopening the offices to service-by-appointment beginning on July 6, 2021. Staff will be coming back to the offices on June 16, 2021 to allow them to get reacclimated to the offices and address any technical issues that may occur. Rod reported on the Economic Security for All (ECsA) program, funded with WIOA Governor's discretionary dollars. The program is extending out past those agencies that participated in the pilot program. The intent of the program is to bring impoverished families to 200% above the poverty level. The EWP will be participating in this project along with other partners. The initial region of focus will be Asotin, Garfield, and Whitman counties. Emphasis will be placed on enhancing coordination of services/case management and potentially looking at co-location opportunities. The goal for the first phase is to develop a successful model that can be replicated in other regions of the EWP. Rod also reported that allocations for funding of PY21 have been received for all WIOA programs. The state's funding fell 9.3% to 9.4% below the previous year. However, the individual Workforce Development Councils amounts varied in amount of loss of funding. For EWP, the funding was approximately 20% less. While this amount is dramatic, the EWP is coming out of a year when the funding had been increased by about the same amount (20%). The end result is funding that will be similar to the PY19 level. Rod ended his report with recognition to Kathy Covey for her service to BMAC and the EWP for over 40 years. Kathy has made the decision to retire in September. Rod recognized Kathy for her work as a director for the Employment and Training programs and eventually as the CEO of BMAC. As CEO she led capital campaigns that resulted in the creation of a Teen Center as well as a new (centrally located) office building for BMAC. There are countless individuals who are living productive lives who have benefitted from Kathy's leadership in workforce development without even knowing her impact on their success. Kathy is graciously thanked for her commitment and wished all the best (and safe travels) in her retirement. Scott Hutsell added that Kathy has been an advocate and a warrior for the people that were fortunate to receive service from her.
9. Labor Market Report: Ajsa Suljic presented the Labor Market Report through April 2021. [click here](#).
10. WorkSource Report: Jennie Weber presented the WorkSource Report that ran from February 2021 through April 2021. In addition, the Area and Partnership Activity was presented by the various partners.

Old and New Business: Rod asked for input from WDC members (especially business owners) on what they have experienced and what is now occurring due to the pandemic. Tony Maiorana volunteered to share that in the Lewiston/Clarkston area they are starting to see manufacturing move ahead. He noted that he was able avoid any layoffs last year and actually hired two new employees. He commented that he was able to hire from suggestions of other people and did not see available potential employees coming of

UI. He did note that he was impressed with the efforts reported today to engage individuals on UI and encouraging them to take advantage of training and employment opportunities sooner than later. through the ESD Partners. One of the biggest issues he is now facing is the cost of raw materials. The time to receive the materials also remains an issue. It is difficult to get the materials from the west coast. However, when ordering from other locations, the added shipping fees become a problem. These issues are affecting the price of his product(s). Tony noted that it is important for all to understand that at the local level, folks are not ready to jump right back into the labor market. This may be due to the inflation that is starting to hit. The housing market is evidence of the rise in costs. However, for those that are ready to start back to work there is so much opportunity available. Tony's operation is focusing on improving their skills program(s), starting at the high school level. He is willing to train! He concluded with the idea that there are needs everywhere and opportunities available to work with those that are going to be retiring soon. The experience is important. His advice to workers was to "be persistent!".

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 2:13 PM.