



Serving as the Workforce Development Board for the Lower Shore of Maryland

The quarterly meeting of the Lower Shore Workforce Development Board was held on Wednesday, September 9, 2020, at 11:00 a.m., hosted via GoToMeeting teleconference service.

Members present: Ruth Baker, Nick Caruso, Jason Cunha, Bo Duke, Michele Garigliano, Tim Howlett, Denean Jones-Ward, Walter Maizel, Tony Nichols, Jena Paquin, Jennifer Shahan, Danny Thompson, Pattie Tingle, Francisco Vega and Ivy Wells.

Absent: Mike Corbin, Paula Erdie, Joey Gardner, Rebecca Maldonado, Freddy Mitchell, Whitney Palmer, Mitzi Scott, and Nelson Shepard.

Staff present: Shelly Brown, Shannon Alexander, Kim Dykes, Bob Hendricks, Terri Paige, Dione Shaw, Rebecca Snoddy, Becca Webster and Helen Young.

Guests: Roberta Baldwin, Director, Department of Social Services, Worcester County, Michelle Bevilacqua, ESL Intake Assessment Specialist, Worcester County Public Schools, Mike DiGiacomo, Executive Director, Governor's Workforce Development Board, Ken Lemberg, Deputy Director, Governor's Workforce Development Board, and Greg Padgham, Executive Director, Tri-County Council for the Lower Eastern Shore of Maryland.

Tony Nichols, WDB Chairman, called the meeting to order at 11:00 a.m. A quorum was present. He thanked everyone for participating in today's teleconference.

Meeting Format: Workforce Director began the meeting with an overview of virtual meeting protocol: 1) the meeting will be recorded; 2) identify yourself when talking; 3) identify anyone who is present with you during the call; and 4) mute your line unless speaking. The Workforce Director continued with a roll call.

The first item on the agenda was the Consent Agenda. The Chairman asked for a motion to approve the Consent Agenda as submitted. **MOTION:** Walt Maizel moved to approve the Consent Agenda. Michele Garigliano seconded motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

Welcome and Announcements: The Chairman informed the Board that Walt Maizel has been reappointed by the Worcester County Commissioners for another four-year term. He thanked Walt for his continued participation and commitment to the Board. Also, two new Worcester County appointees were welcomed: 1) Whitney Palmer, Practice Manager, Berlin Animal Hospital, and Ivy Wells, Economic and Community Development Director for the Town of Berlin. Walt was asked to give the Board some background information on himself. He began by saying that he owns a small consulting business in construction management and works with the Harrison Group and other well founded companies. He's been on the Board for eight years and he finds it to be a very worthwhile experience. He's always thought the WDB was the right way to help individuals that could use a "leg up." He's appreciative for the opportunity to remain on the Board. The Chairman asked Ivy Wells to give the Board some background information. Ivy was having technical difficulties; her microphone was not working. He continued with the introduction of Whitney Palmer, however, she was not able to participate in today's meeting. He told the Board that their bios can be found in your WDB packet and introductions will continue at the December Board meeting.

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Updates from the Workforce Director:

- **Wicomico Summer Youth Employment Program:** The SYEP is funded with Summer Youth Connections and RMPPIF funds. We hope everyone enjoyed seeing the summer youth program at work. A link was provided in your packet.
- **Participant Success Stories:** At the March Board meeting, two success stories were shared with the Board. Since that time, Wor-Wic Community College has highlighted Angela Martin, Adult CDL participant, in their Quarterly Newsletter and Zuleyka Quinones, Out-of-School Youth participant, is highlighted in Telamon Corporation's Annual Report. Both participant highlights were included in your packet.
- **Monitoring by DOL:** Monitoring is currently in progress. It's usually done in person, however, due to the current circumstances it's being done remotely with the concentration on participant files. Once the report is completed, it will be shared with the Board.
- **Coffee and Conversation Events:** Coffee and Conversation events were held earlier in the year; one in each county. The purpose was to share more about the Lower Shore Workforce Alliance Youth Program Committee and how others in the community can share their expertise for at-risk youth. At that time, an Advisory Committee kickoff was scheduled for June 4th. Due to COVID, we were not able to continue engagement with individuals in the community, so all plans for March and April were put on hold. Moving forward, the Youth Committee has decided to hold a virtual kickoff meeting for the Advisory Committee. It's currently in the planning stages. Invitations will be sent to the Board once plans are finalized.
- **Foster Youth to Independence:** This is a new initiative and it seeks to support young adults, 18 to 24 years old, aging out of the foster care system. Amber Bell received the first "Foster Youth to Independence Initiative" voucher in Maryland. Amber is an Out-of-School youth participant through the Grace Center. Her case manager advocated for her to receive this voucher which in turn brought the benefit to the area for others in our community. Public housing authorities in Wicomico and Somerset will now be able to request tenant protection vouchers for young adults leaving foster care without a place to go.

Old Business

Eastern Shore Business Summit: Bob Hendricks, Business Engagement Representative said that due to the pandemic the Eastern Shore Business Summit was canceled. It was originally scheduled to be held in August, on-site, at Salisbury University. After some thought, a decision was made to offer scheduled breakout sessions as webinars; therefore, the summit was referred to as the Eastern Shore Business Summit Virtual Series. There were seven events throughout July and August. Each webinar lasted one hour with an average of 45 attendees per event. Since the events were well attended and the feedback was so positive, the planning team decided to extend the virtual series through March 2021. A decision will be made in January regarding the Eastern Shore Business Summit on-site event at Salisbury University in August 2021.

Operational Updates from the Workforce Director:

- **The American Job Center:** Remains closed. At the present time, no partners within the building are meeting with customers in person. We have prepared protocols that will be put in

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LOWER SHORE WORKFORCE ALLIANCE

Serving as the Workforce Development Board for the Lower Shore of Maryland

place once the building does re-open (e.g. customer flow; keeping people from congregating in the common areas; customer check-in system; social distancing; and signage). There have been no updates from the partners since the Governor moved to Phase 3.

- **Shore Transit:** Currently operating and has been operating the entire time.
- **LSWA Staff:** Is still being encouraged to work from home. Almost everyone has been provided a laptop, so staff are able to work from home and the majority of staff are doing just that.
- **Electronic Enrollment:** Has been successful. An initial barrier to remote enrollment was safeguarding Personally Identifiable Information (PII), but we have figured out a way through technology, secure email, and by phone to enroll customers in programs remotely.
- **Youth Contracts:** The pandemic has affected the Youth contracts. There are three sub-grantees this year and their contracts started in October. They were not even half through the year when the pandemic happened, so they are not going to have the enrollment outcomes they proposed and expenditures will not be met. In December 2019, the WDB approved to return to funding In-School-Youth and again due to the pandemic this was derailed.
- **Mobile:** The target date to have the new Mobile out in the community was set for July or August. However if we are not comfortable meeting customers in the building, we certainly wouldn't want the Mobile out in the community putting staff at risk. We are currently in the process of hiring a new driver and developing the on-boarding schedule.
- **Budget Impacts:** Generally, there is carryover from the previous year, but, with the limited ability to provide services and actually spend that money, the carryover this year is significant. The biggest concern is the ability to interact and serve customers to spend the funds.

Time was allotted for the Board to ask questions.

Membership and Current Needs:

- Workforce Development Board - The Workforce Director said that Worcester County Business membership seats are now full; thanks to the newly appointed Whitney Palmer and Ivy Wells. There is still one Business member vacancy in Somerset County, and one Business member vacancy in Wicomico County. Some time ago, a request was submitted to the Wicomico County Executive Office requesting an appointment for Roger Martinsen, and some push back was received on that request. Because of the current status of the County Executive Office, this will probably be delayed even longer. Due to scheduling conflicts, Mitzi Scott has only attended one out of the last eight meetings; therefore, we will be asking Wicomico County for an appointment to fill that Business member seat, as well. The Workforce Director said any potential leads would be greatly appreciated. We need to be strategic about what industry representation we have on the Board. For decision purposes, we want to have a connection as to where there is growth or demand.
- Steering Committee – Two business members of the Board are still needed on the Steering Committee.
- Board Chair and Vice-Chair – Tony Nichols' second term as WDB Chair ends in December. The WDB Guidelines state that the Chair is limited to two one-year terms. Jason Cunha is no longer able to serve as the Vice-Chair. And, the Youth Committee Chair term also ends in December. The Workforce Director said without some assistance from the Board members we are not going to be successful; this needs to be a group effort. The Chair said "don't let fear of the unknown" stop you from considering one of these positions. If there are pieces or components you are not

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familiar with, ask us. All calls are welcomed.
Time was allotted for the Board to ask questions.

Organizational Overview, Part II

Previously, the Workforce Director had asked what is it that the Board needs from the Director to be successful and to feel that your time here at these meetings are valued?

The Workforce Director began with a brief review:

- March Board meeting: Reviewed and discussed action words that are written into WIOA law.
- June Board meeting: Reviewed and discussed the local Workforce area from top to bottom.

The Workforce Director said that she wants to give the Board a solid foundation and continue to build on the Organization Overview so that everyone understands the role of the Board and how everything works.

Today's Discussion Items:

1. Board Structure and compliance with WIOA
2. Organizational charts for the Lower Shore Tri-County Council and the Lower Shore Workforce Alliance

Time was allotted for the Board to ask questions.

- Danny Thompson said that it was hard to keep members engaged prior to March, and now it's more of a struggle. For new Board members, he recommends a tour of the AJC and an orientation in smaller group settings. The Workforce Director said that onboarding new Board members is in the process.
- Jason Cunha referenced the Chair term limits written in the WDB Guidelines. He said it takes a while to get a level of understanding and a two-term limit of one year just isn't enough time. Tony has agreed to continue as Chair for another term, if the guidelines are amended. The Workforce Director will discuss amending the WDB Guidelines at the next Steering Committee meeting, and will present a proposal at the December Board meeting.
- Greg Padgham suggested a brief orientation that describes the Board's position on specific clusters from the demand side (employer) and supply side (LSWA).

The Workforce Director said that there will be more presentations over the course of multiple Board meetings. Suggestions and/or recommendations are always appreciated.

New Business

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion: The Workforce Director said that this is a topic that many Boards across the state and across the country are honing in on. It tackles things from several perspectives: 1) the Board, 2) the Organization, 3) Services, 4) Staffing, and the 5) entire picture of how your organization is

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LOWER SHORE WORKFORCE ALLIANCE

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being sensitive and aware. After discussing this topic at the last Steering Committee meeting, it was decided to do a presentation for the Board at the December meeting. Mike DiGiacomo, Executive Director, Governor's Workforce Development Board, told the Board that there is a meeting setup for local Chairs and Vice Chairs on October 21, 2020, 9:30 – 11:00 a.m. The facilitator will be Freeman Hrabowski, UMBC President.

Adjourn: A motion was made to adjourn the meeting at 12:32 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Dione Shaw
Operations Coordinator

Approved December 9, 2020

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