

Bucks County Department of Workforce and Economic Development

Board Meeting Minutes

Date of Meeting: December 16, 2020, 9:00 a.m.

Teleconference

In Attendance

Board of Directors: Greg Krug, Paul Bencivengo*, Mark Bortman*, Anita Diggs, Ted Dorand, Marybeth Ferguson, Jim Horan, Louis Kassa*, Jonathan Mercer*, Jessica Peiffer*, Dana Pezza*, Marcine Schiehser, Archana Sharma, Brian Shields, Yolanda Udvardy*, Jennifer Wendling*

**new Board members*

Bucks County WED Staff: Billie Barnes, Alice Colyar, Dianna Kralle, Frank McGovern, Kris Shovlin, Andrea Walls

Guests: Brian Cummings, Susan Herring, Amanda Masullo, Larry Melf, Greg Hart, Jessica Peterson, Robert Pisko, Michelle Ruiz, Eunice Rush-Day

Next Meeting: March 24, 2021, 9:00 a.m.,

Location: TBD

Agenda Discussion

I. Welcome & Call to Order, Greg Krug

Greg Krug called the meeting to order at 9:01 a.m. and greeted attendees. Mr. Krug thanked all Board members for their service and new members for joining the Board during an exciting, optimistic time.

II. Meeting Minutes, Greg Krug

Mr. Krug directed Board members to review the September 24, 2020 meeting minutes. Mr. Krug requested a motion to approve the September 24, 2020 meeting minutes.

Action/Vote: Jim Horan made the motion. Marcine Schiehser seconded the motion. All were in favor; none opposed.

III. Board Member Updates, Billie Barnes

Billie Barnes welcomed new Board members to Workforce and Economic Development (WED).

Commissioner Bob Harvie was unable to join the meeting in person but recorded a video message for the Board to thank them for their service. Commissioner Harvie thanked the Board members and explained how they are part of WED's efforts to form the workforce of the 21st century and build the future.

Ms. Barnes thanked Dennis Jones, who could not attend, for his leadership as Chair and his service during the past ten years. He guided the Board through changes and brought on new members. Mr. Krug also thanked Mr. Jones for his dedication and service.

With Mr. Jones' term ending, the position of Chair is open. Board members interested in submitting a nomination are encouraged to reach out to Ms. Barnes and Ms. Krall. Nominees must represent the private industry per WIOA legislation. The Board will vote for their selection at the next meeting in March.

IV. Program Introduction, Respective Contractors

Brian Cummings introduced himself to new Board members and launched the PA CareerLink® Bucks County presentation. In 2019, PA CareerLink® Bucks County served more than 21,000 participants at the Bristol and Perkasio locations. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, staff are seeing less traffic but quickly pivoted to offering services online.

PA CareerLink® Bucks County works with operating partners: Bucks County Agency on Aging, Bucks County Assistance Office, Bucks County Community College, Bureau of Workforce Partnership and Operations, The Wardrobe (formerly Career Wardrobe), Educational Data Systems, Inc., PA Office of Vocational Rehabilitation, and Vita Education Services.

Michelle Ruiz provided an overview of the Employment, Advancement, and Retention (EARN) Program. EARN addresses barriers to attaining and retaining employment, taking each participant through their journey to self-sufficiency. The average participant is 31 years old and a female with children under six years old, whose primary concern remains housing. Benefits and services include barrier remediation, Keystone Education Yields Success Program, and licensed counseling, which is a new offering. With EARN, all roads lead to employment.

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) is an employment-first program that assists eligible Bucks County residents with additional services. Participants work with employment counselors for one-on-one case management, and Veterans receive priority notification of services. Services include computer literacy services and virtual workshops. A full calendar of services is available online at bucksworks.org/job-seekers. Participants can enroll if they are dislocated workers or on an income-contingent basis. For more information, contact Michelle Ruiz at 215-781-1073 or mruiz@buckscareerlink.org.

Jessica Peterson provided an overview of Business Services, which offers job placement assistance to all Bucks County employers. Manufacturing, health care, and logistics have the most considerable need. All services are free to Bucks County employers, including job postings on PA CareerLink®, recruiting events (onsite and virtual), and candidate screening. Business Services also offers guidance with creating registered apprenticeships. For more information, contact Jessica Peterson at 215-781-1073 ex. 2203 or jpeterson@buckscareerlink.org.

Eunice Rush-Day provided an overview of youth programs for participants age 16-24 years old. Programs serve youth disengaged from high school and are looking to receive their GED, employment services, or pathways to careers and post-secondary education. Employers receive compensation for on-the-job training of youth participants, while participants can receive certification in OSHA, CPR and First Aid, metalworking, and industrial maintenance. The programs seek to spotlight stories and highlight participant success. The In-School Youth Program serves high school juniors and seniors in nine Bucks County schools (possibly two more in spring 2021) with resume building, career assessments, and job training. For more information, contact Eunice Rush-Day at 215-258-7741 or Eunice.Rush-Day@bucks.edu.

Mr. Cummings will offer tours of the PA CareerLink® Bucks County office in Bristol after the pandemic. For more information about all PA CareerLink® services, contact him at 215 781 1073 ext. 2218 or bcummings@buckscareerlink.org.

V. PA CareerLink® Bucks County Relocation, Billie Barnes

Ms. Barnes provided an update on relocation. Although the pandemic placed negotiations and tours of potential sites on pause, the search resumed in August with the assistance of the County's General Services. Bucks County Technology Park, located at 4800 Street Road in Trevese, has been selected for negotiation. Board and stakeholders have seen the building through virtual tours, and a reduced rate is available. The location offers a high level of visibility, area amenities, and upgraded facilities to complement rebranding efforts. The rates are still in negotiations with anticipation of level or decreased costs.

Mr. Cummings added that participants often comment on how difficult it is to find the Bristol office. The Trevese location has a SEPTA stop at the entrance and will allow for visible signage from Street Road. This level of visibility and access will allow PA CareerLink® Bucks County to serve more employers and job seekers.

VI. Fiscal Updates, Jim Horan

Jim Horan stated that WED is in full compliance and good standing with the budget.

Frank McGovern reviewed the Fiscal Grant Summary Report and explained the revenue sources that fund services. Core funding consists of WIOA Adult, WIOA Dislocated Worker, and WIOA Youth. Other funding streams include EARN, Federal Dislocated Worker Grant, SLIP (a competitive grant awarded by the State), SEPA Partnership (in collaboration with Montco Works), ENGAGE Program, and PREP.

The LWDA PY19 Budget is reported to the State every quarter. It provides actuals for Title I Adult, Youth, and Dislocated Workers by allocation. Available funding for each category is listed on line 8, training services are listed on lines 26-36, and WIOA Youth for in-school and out-of-school programs are listed on lines 38-51.

The LWDA PY20 Budget Dislocated Worker shows training that has been reallocated to fund the Bucks CareerLink Title I provider. Approved by the State, PY20 Dislocated Worker training will be funded by the Federal Dislocated Worker Grant, Rapid Response dollars already provided by the State (Contract# 020184155 \$87K), CARES funding administered through EDSI and BCCC, and \$500K in training funds from Montco Works. The State has indicated additional Rapid Response dollars are available if all current resources are spent.

Mr. Horan requested a motion to approve the LWDA PY19 Budget.

Action/Vote: Mr. Krug made the motion. Mr. Dorand seconded the motion. All were in favor; none opposed.

Mr. Horan requested a motion to approve the LWDA PY20 Budget.

Action/Vote: Ted Dorand made the motion. Fred Krug seconded the motion. All were in favor; none opposed.

Mr. McGovern presented the Procurement Policy Addendum and explained its background. It was created in response to monitoring by the Federal Dislocated Grant in August and October. The document addresses the Sole Source Policy for Federal regulations, accompanies the County's Purchasing Manual, and adds to internal controls.

Mr. Horan requested a motion to approve the Procurement Policy Addendum.

Action/Vote: Mr. Horan made the motion. Mr. Dorand seconded the motion. All were in favor; none opposed.

VII. General Discussion

Jon Mercer asked if PA CareerLink® syndicates to other jobs platforms, e.g., Zip Recruiter and Indeed. Ms. Peterson stated that postings on the PA CareerLink® job board are free for employers, but there are fees associated with listing on other job platforms.

Paul Bencivengo offered to coordinate a hospitality-business and workforce facing webpage that would link to the various programs and resources.

Mr. Horan and Mr. Mercer offered insight on workspace design. Mr. Mercer stated that he would apply what he has learned at Stacks for pandemic and non-pandemic times.

Ms. Kralle discussed an item for an electronic vote, which will be sent via email. The recertification, due every three years, encompasses accessibility to the site, improvements, and communications. She shared that the document will be sent out by Monday, December 21 and requested votes be submitted by the close of business on Monday, December 28.

Ms. Barnes provided the status of two ongoing projects: a Board orientation manual and a video. The County of Bucks Office of Public Information will be assisting with video production.

Board members were asked to return the Conflict of Interest and Statement of Financial Interest forms to Ms. Kralle.

VIII. Adjournment, Greg Krug

Mr. Krug thanked all attendees and requested a motion to adjourn the meeting at 10:36 a.m.

Action/Vote: Mr. Krug made the motion. Mr. Shields seconded the motion. All were in favor; none opposed.

The meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted:

Andrea Walls

December 16, 2020