



Mississippi Valley Workforce Development Board

**Chief Elected Officials (CEOs)
August 18, 2021**

Meeting Minutes

The meeting of the Mississippi Valley Workforce Area CEOs was held on August 18, 2021 at 1:00 p.m. in person and via Zoom.

CALLED TO ORDER

Willey called the meeting to order at 1:04 p.m.

CEO PRESENT

Present: Jack Willey, Brad Quigley, Nathan Mather(late), Jim Irwin, Chad White, and Brinson Kinzer

Absent: Shane McCampbell and Rick Larkin

Staff Present: Miranda Swafford, Executive Director and Phyllis Wood, Executive Assistant

GUESTS

Cherisa Price-Wells, Kendra Schaapveld, Nic Hockenberry, Jacob Nye, Kirby Phillips, Michael Witt, Carolyn Farley, Jeremy Ritchie, Matthew Nicol, and Dennis Duke

QUORUM

There was a quorum present to conduct business.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Irwin made a motion to approve the agenda, seconded by Kinzer, motion carried.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Quigley made a motion to approve the prior meeting minutes, seconded by Irwin, motion carried.

IOWAWORKS DISCUSSION

Ritchie provided an overview of pre-pandemic sites for the Northern Region and Farley provided the same for the Southern Region. Witt provided some history regarding Title III outreach locations leading up to our current situation and asked the board for direction on where to go from here. Irwin commented he is glad to be getting back to business and having the right location is paramount to success as proved in Clinton. Irwin believes there needs to be consistency in location but different days than Title I. The traveling IWD individual would be able to use the Clinton County Resource Center but Irwin would want to meet with the IWD representative prior to starting. Irwin stated the same location with different days is what would work for Clinton County but may not be the same model to follow in other counties. Witt said IWD would work with Equus to have coverage spread. Swafford stated the location, dates, and times question was the catalyst for this conversation and asked the CEO what they wanted. Quigley would like to see us start acting like these staffing centers go after people to get boots on the ground.

Willey spoke with HICAP/ Operations New View in Maquoketa and was told the person from IWD reported she would not be coming back, and she only handles training enrollment, not unemployment and not job placement. Willey shared the public library had hosted IWD's outreach but stopped due to the lack of computer literacy of the individuals creating too much work for the librarian. Jackson County fought to get an outreach person to return but there is no signage, no advertising, and nothing in the paper. Willey feels no one knows IWD is present. Witt shared they had initially done local radio spots, social media, and stuffed flyers in grocery sacks, but it shouldn't have been a one and done operation. Witt added IWD would map out the services these individuals are supposed to be doing and ensure understanding. Witt asked if the New View was still a good location for which Willey said yes. Schaapveld commented that building had been inaccessible except by appointment only and that was not working for her staff. Willey said the building is open and accessible now; there are several programs operating out of the space now with people coming and going. Swafford stated Equus was currently in Muscatine and Clinton counties and will be in Lee County at the Goodwill Store fulltime. Schaapveld spoke about the accessibility, location, and resources available at the Keokuk sight. White asked how many people were served at the Mt Pleasant center. Schaapveld said none. White wondered if there had been any marketing around the Mount Pleasant location. Could there be some advertisement done for the Mount Pleasant location? Quigley brought up the point that there is also no outside marketing for Burlington center location also. Willey noted there is nothing to indicate the Iowa *WORKS* office is inside. Farley said their name is on the marquee out by the highway but nothing on the doors or exterior of the building. Farley will address the mall manager to get signs on doors. Witt questioned if the board was going to need to meet again to decide on locations or what would be the next steps as IWD will wait for board direction. Once the board provides locations, Witt offered IWD would work with Equus for coverage and address marketing. Price-Wells spoke about the Audio Go platform of marketing that offers commercials on satellite radio to anyone driving through a geographical location. White said he would provide radio and newspaper contact information for the Mount Pleasant area if anyone needed it. Quigley asked how much and who is budgeting for outdoor signage and possibly portable signage for the satellite sites. Witt explained all partners would share cost bases on staffing percentages for signage that benefits the center. IWD can share in those costs. Nicol asked Schaapveld about the social marketing campaign and if the company had made any recommendations for improvements. Schaapveld said Facebook would allow for greater reach but we have no access to the IWD Facebook page. Swafford announced the Executive Committee just met and authorized a board Facebook page which is being developed. Discussion turned to the phonelines where Witt reported there is a main greeting, so all calls are answered, then based on option selected the call then goes through a hunt group of individuals but if unanswered ends at a voicemail which the entire hunt group has access to. However, there are times the hunt group employees will be unable to answer because they are working with a customer or covering the front. Wood asked if their phone system allowed for the phone messages to be forwarded to email and suggested creating a group email in-basket for the hunt group. Witt said each center manager has a map of the phone system and they would do an audit to ensure there is a person associated with each extension. Swafford requested Ritchie, Farley, and Schaapveld discuss the business services offered as CEOs have had questions. Quigley said her would like to have one of our next meetings at a center, perhaps Davenport to check out the signage and get a walk through of what they do and see how they work. Farley has a specific business marketing person at the Burlington center to work with businesses to list employment needs but also to educate them on labor law, provide labor statistics, and explain tax credits. Ritchie said they have the same in Davenport and their person works with Vocational Rehab and Equus business partners. Farley added that once an individual seeking employment has completed the steps and is ready for employment the individual would be connected to

the business teams for placement. White asked if there had ever been any outreach done at the Old Threshers annual event in Mount Pleasant. Farley said not in her time with IWD but she would discuss with Schaapveld about coordinating an outreach effort for the event. Irwin asked about how do we address the issue of people who are working for \$11 but can't work for \$15 because they will lose the aid from other programs. Farley said legislators would be were to start. Hockenberry stated childcare subsidies had recently changed from the drop-of cliff to eligibility to be a step-down dollar for dollar. Schaapveld shared that centers also limit their slots available to subsidized childcare recipients. Schaapveld explained another barrier to entrepreneurial growth amongst renters is landlords will not allow individuals to run a business out of their home. Witt had to exit early to make another meeting and that tabled the remainder of the topics related to the Iowa *WORKS* discussion.

EDA – GOOD JOBS CHALLENGE

Hockenberry presented an EDA funding opportunity. He approached Kelly, a federal grant advisor, who indicated the board would likely be the best entity to lead the application. The funding could be additional money to support incumbent worker programs and subsidize training. Swafford felt like it would be better to combine with another LWDB and start at tier 1 as she felt the board did not have suitable multiple sector partnerships to move directly to tier 2 program design funding. Hockenberry offered to put Swafford in touch with Kelly to see what tier we are in and where to start. Swafford thought it feasible since the due date for applications wasn't until January 26, 2022.

TICKET TO WORK / BANK ACCOUNT

Swafford reports Brian Dennis with IWD indicated that \$13,558 would be coming to the board for the Ticket to Work program. These funds are managed by the board and will go into the board bank account which the balance has not changed since the previous Ticket to Work deposit of \$11,187. At some point, the board will have to decide how to spend those funds.

LOCAL PLAN

Swafford said all comments had been incorporated into the final document and believed it was ready for posting for public comment. Irwin motions to approve the Local Plan to be posted for public comment, seconded by Quigley, motion carries.

NEXT MEETING

Swafford let the board know their next meeting was scheduled for Aug 24 and asked if they would like to do a virtual or in person. Quigley said he would like in person. Irwin said he may have a conflict with another meeting but would try to be in person. Chad White will be out of state and unable to attend. The meeting will be in person with a Zoom option.

OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no public comments.

ADJOURN

Willey adjourned the meeting at 2:38 p.m.