



Carroll County Workforce Development Board Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, November 13, 2024

Exploration Commons, 9:30am

Attendees: Zach Tomlin, Bryan Zuber, Bill Eckles, Matti Franzén, Denise Beaver, Karen Bernard, Mike McHale, Julie Givens, Sharon Plump, Scott Yard, Jesse McCree, Heather Powell, Stan Whiteman, Tammy Haines, Tammi Casson, Scott Singleton, and Shelby O’Leary.

Guests: Susan Leibman, Brandon Butler, Ed Singer, Corey Hardinger, Teresa Mena.

Meeting began at 9:33am.

1. **Welcome and Introductions-** Mr. Tomlin thanked the Board for attending and began introductions.
2. **Action Items-**
 - a. Approve Minutes from September 18th, 2024, meeting- There was not a quorum at the meeting so the minutes from the September 18th meeting will be voted via email.
3. **Old Business-**
 - a. Vice President Update- Mr. Tomlin announced that Mr. Zuber has been voted as the new Vice President of the Carroll County Workforce Development Board.
4. **New Business-**
 - a. Local Plan Update Committee- Ms. Powell invited members of the Board to join a committee to work on updating the policies of the local plan.
5. **Focus: Maryland Workforce Association Overview-** Brandon Butler, Executive Director of the Maryland Workforce Association (MWA), presented the organization's vision and its efforts in promoting workforce development. The Maryland Workforce Association is made up from the directors of the 13 workforce boards in Maryland. He highlighted MWA's annual conference, Raising the Bar, which attracts over 1,100 attendees, and its professional development programs, including MWA Learning. Mr. Butler mentioned MWA's advocacy efforts at the state and federal levels, including testifying on bills and commenting on policies. He mentioned the association's efforts to capture federal and state grants, as well as philanthropic funds, to support local workforce areas. Brandon also highlighted the MWA Learning Professional Series, which is currently being developed and will be announced soon. He encouraged individuals to engage with the public workforce system for individualized career counseling. Mr. Butler also discussed the importance of local-level decision-making in the public workforce system, emphasizing the need to focus on the granular level rather than centralizing at a state or national level. He highlighted the need to promote local success stories and the importance of partnerships, particularly with NAWB and other national groups. He stressed the importance of local flexibility in providing career counseling and the growth of registered apprenticeships in Maryland.
6. **WIOA Partners Highlights:**

- a. Division of Rehabilitation Services (DORS)- Ms. Plump shared with the Board how WIOA law emphasizes coordination and collaboration at the Federal, State, and local levels to ensure a streamlined and coordinated service delivery system for jobseekers, including those with disabilities. Eligible jobseekers with disabilities are assigned a counselor and together they work to determine employment goals and services needed to reach those goals. DORS partners with jobseekers with disabilities to assist them with becoming skilled workers. Some services include assistive technology, career assessment and counseling, higher education/career training, job training, job coaching and placement, work-readiness training and other supportive services. Ms. Plump stressed that the employment categories they are able to place jobseekers in include more than just entry-level jobs, such as architecture engineering, art and design, healthcare, speech language therapy, teaching, chefs, etc. She concluded her presentation with a success story of a participant who has overcome challenges and has become an elementary school counselor.
- b. Maryland Department of Labor- Ms. Givens shared an overview of the services the Department of Labor offers. They work with all individuals looking for employment, but specifically with a mandate to work with reemployment, unemployment insurance claimants through their RESEA and ROW programs. They also provide job search assistance, one-on-one assistance, labor market information, veterans services, and reentry services. They also manage the Maryland Workforce Exchange system.
- c. Carroll County Department of Social Services- Ms. Bernard discussed the various family investment programs available, including the Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP), Temporary Cash Assistance Program (TCA), and Medical Assistance. She explained that these programs are income-based and aim to provide assistance to families with tight budgets. She also mentioned the Emergency Assistance Program (EAF) and the Summer Nutrition Program, which provides an additional \$40 during the summer for households with children aged 5 to 18. She emphasized the importance of these programs, especially for working parents and those with limited financial means. She concluded with the Maryland Health Connection and the Maryland Think program, which provide medical coverage for individuals and families.
- d. Carroll Community College, Adult Education- Ms. Leibman discussed the reorganization of adult education from the Department of Education to the Department of Labor in 2009, emphasizing its alignment with the workforce system. She highlighted various programs under federal funding, including adult literacy, secondary education, family literacy, English language learners, workplace literacy, and integrated education and training. She also shared the growth of their English for speakers of other languages program and the expansion of their services to the Pantherplex, formerly North Carroll High School. Ms. Leibman mentioned the possibility of offering workplace literacy customized to employers' needs and the success of their integrated education and training program for registered behavior technicians. She also noted their commitment to meeting state targets and providing a transitions navigator to help students navigate the workforce system.

7. CCWD Updates-

- a. Workforce Updates- Ms. Powell discussed the utilization of all ARPA funding, the potential for increased summer youth numbers, and increased trainings. Unfortunately, Carroll County was not chosen for the National Dislocated Worker Grant, however, Ms. Powell will communicate with surrounding workforce areas who did so that customers who were affected by the Key Bridge collapse in Carroll County can be referred to those areas. Ms. Powell shared that National Apprenticeship Week is November 17th -23rd and the Carroll County Commissioners will issue a proclamation through Priority Carroll on November 14th. Ms. Powell shared that the state fiscal audit came back with a clean report, Ms. Powell thanked Christine Cruz, the fiscal manager for her hard work. Ms. Powell also shared that there is a need for new board members, she will work on recruiting more board members. She concluded that the 13 workforce directors will be meeting with Secretary Portia Wu to discuss workforce changes, summer youth funding, rapid response services, and other issues.

- Resource Sharing Agreement Update-Mr. McCree reported the Memorandum of Understanding, the Resource Sharing Agreement, and the budget have been sent out to the WIOA partners. He requests the partners sign and return them as soon as possible.
- b. AJC Construction Update- Mr. Whiteman shared that the building construction is almost complete. Staff are moving back into their offices and is expected to return to normal operations by the end of the week.
- c. Premier Virtual Updates- Mr. Singleton shared a new tool through Premier Virtual called Career.i.o. This is an artificial intelligence tool that can assist with resume building and job searching. It is not meant to replace staff but to assist in tasks such as resume building and job search. It also generates relevant interview questions based on the job description and assesses the candidate's performance. The conversation ended with a demonstration of Career.i.o.'s features.

8. Member Updates-

- a. Teresa Mena, Maryland Department of Labor, shared with the board about an in-person event on November 13th from 4-6pm at the Public Safety Center designed to help promote apprenticeship and workforce solutions.
- b. Ms. Beaver shared that Carroll County Government has received it's Triple A bond rating designation once again. The bond sale will be the following week. She also shared that Economic Development has sponsored a table at the Regional Manufacturing Institute' Stars of Manufacturing event and will be bringing employees from Fuch's and UniTech for the event. On November 21st, Economic Development will also be sponsoring a luncheon with Carroll County Chamber to invite the Greater Baltimore Committee to share their All-In 2035 plan. Ms. Beaver shared that the small business administration will be visiting several small businesses in Carroll County, including Stratosphere Social. She concluded with the "Downtown Darren" program that encourages citizens to shop local for the holiday season.
- c. Mr. Tomlin shared that he spoke at the Digital Equity and Inclusion Summit in October. He also reported that he presented at Ignite 12 on the hiring processes. He also toured the GLAD academy, a school specializing in students with neuro-divergence and looks forward to learning more in the future.

Ms. Beaver motioned to adjourn the meeting at 11:15 am. Mr. Zuber seconded the motion.