



**North Central Workforce Development Board  
Workforce Solutions for North Central Pennsylvania, Inc.  
Meeting Minutes  
Held Via Zoom Meeting/Call  
Wednesday, October 7, 2020 at 9:30 a.m.**

**Board Members Present – on Zoom Video/Call:** John Sutika, Tonya Coursey, George Salter, Kelly Davis, Jeff Miller, Chris Palmer, Bruce Jones, David Steele, Kate Brock, Corine Christoff, Catherine Bartruff, Leslie Neal, Sarah Hayden, James Keltz, and Chris Adamson

**Board Members Absent:** Bunny Comilla, Lisa Kweder, David Miller, Michael Hoskavich, Scott McBride, Kimberlea Whiting, and Buddy Franklin

**WDB Staff Present on Zoom Video/Call:**

Susie Snelick, Pam Streich, Linda Franco, Vanessa Hasselman, Sherri Cunningham, Colleen Prechtel, Aaron Herzing, Jocelyn Bash, and Ron Hammersley

**CEO Members Present on Zoom Video/Call:** James Moate, Matt Quesenberry

**Guests – Present or on Conference Call:** Deborah Pontzer, Blythe Brunner, Jill Martin-Rend, Sharon Engle, Terry Hinton, Todd Vanderburgh, and Melanie Erb

**Quorum:** A quorum was established

**Pledge:** The Pledge of Allegiance was recited

**Call to Order and Welcome:**

Corine Christoff called the meeting to order at 9:34 a.m. and welcomed everyone in attendance.

**Consent Agenda:**

Corine asked the board to accept the consent agenda. All members approved the consent agenda; none opposed; and the consent agenda was passed.

**Committee Action Items:**

At this time Susie asked that the board review and approve committee action items.

**Executive Committee** – The committee is recommending approval of the following:

- MOA with A Peaceful Place; this is necessary to meet the new requirements of our EARN contract with the Department of Human Services. The total agreement will not exceed \$4,680 at \$90/hour/week.
- Purchase of 12 laptops (2 for each center) for staff to use to telework
- Purchase of virus protection on all the computers for Equus staff. The cost is \$75/computer/2 years

Susie explained that Joshua McConnell is employed by Equus and is continuing his education to become an LPC. A Peaceful Place Counseling will be providing the supervision for Josh to offer these services. Corine raised the question what if no one uses the counseling with A Peaceful Place? Blythe said the counseling must be offered and as of now there are 10 enrolled customers, 6 of who are currently meeting with Josh.

**Finance Committee** – The committee is recommending approval of the following:

- Approval of an additional award to Equus - Total - \$693,640, broken down as follows:
  - Dislocated Worker - \$243,397
  - Adult - \$34,698
  - Youth - \$131,791
  - Rapid Response - \$17,754
  - Economic Transition - \$200,000
  - RAMP - \$66,000
- Request to transfer \$200,000 from Dislocated Worker to Adult on behalf of Equus

With no further questions, Corine asked for a motion to approve the Executive Committee and Finance Committee recommendations at stated above. Bruce Jones made a motion; Chris Adamson seconded the motion; all approved and the motion carried.

**Marketing Initiative:**

Pam explained this was a regional initiative to be used for the recruitment and retention of people to our area. Mary & Ferrari, a company out of DuBois submitted an RFQ and were awarded the contract. There is also an advisory committee providing input on this project. Pam explained it is early in the process but would like to share a prototype of what the site is expected to look like. The name of the website will be Work Live Discover PA Six and a logo is currently being worked on. The site will include labor market data, industries, education, medical facilities, chambers, airports, videos and pictures among other things. Pam noted that the goal is to have the site completed by the end of December, but we want to make sure we have everything right before we release the final version.

Catherine Bartruff questioned if the site would provide resources to help people moving to the area to which Pam responded yes, the site is to help recruit people to the area. Kate Brock stated this will be a great one stop shop for our region.

### **PA CareerLink® Website Redesign:**

Bruce Jones explained to the board that this change has been in the works for quite a while. The new website design is more user friendly for job seekers and is much easier to register on the site. A brief video presentation was shown of the redesign that will go into effect on October 9<sup>th</sup>. Bruce stated that this is the first effort to redesign the sight and more updates could be coming.

Chris Palmer stated that the site was more user friendly but did not like the fact that there were no words. This will not be helpful to people with an auditory disability. Bruce said he would pass this information along.

### **Success Stories – Blythe Brunner:**

Blythe stated that during the Covid pandemic, the PA CareerLink® continued to serve customers and shared two recent success stories.

PA CareerLink® Elk County - James reached out through the CareerLink email in search of training opportunities as Covid-19 left him unemployed and in need of re-evaluating his career choices. That email led to a discussion of what the WIOA program could offer and James was very interested in pursuing his Class A CDL with Tanker and Hazmat endorsements. He was enrolled in the WIOA program and began the Tanker and Hazmat course with Northern Pennsylvania Regional College which he successfully completed on July 31, 2020. James immediately began job searching and received several offers. On August 14, 2020 James began employment with Lansberry Trucking of Woodland, PA.

PA CareerLink® Jefferson County – Tara met with a Talent Development Specialist in the Jefferson County CareerLink in December 2019. Tara had previously been enrolled in the Practical Nursing Program at Jeff Tech, but due to unforeseen circumstances had to withdraw from the program. Tara enrolled in the WIOA Adult Program and received ITA monies to assist with paying for her schooling. She was determined eligible and in July of 2020 graduated from the Practical Nursing Program. Tara applied for an LPN position at the Punxsutawney Hospital. She was hired and the Jefferson County CareerLink worked with the hospital to obtain an OJT for Tara. Tara started work at the Punxsutawney Hospital on 8/27/2020 and is full-time. Tara has applied to take her LPN examination and is waiting on her date.

### **Equus Highlights:**

Linda stated that all PA CareerLinks® are currently open to the public and serving customers both virtually and in person.

Blythe provided an update on customers the CareerLink has served in the past quarter, July 1st – September 15<sup>th</sup>:

- 57 New Customers, 122 Carryovers
- 124 ITA's
- 63 OJT's

Blythe stated that many employers are ready to hire but are having trouble finding job seekers. She also stated that Covid has increased the number of customers receiving ITA's and OJT's, so the additional award would be a great help. As of now, 30% of the current budget has been expended and 80% obligated.

Blythe also took this time to recognize Ron Hammersley as the new Site Administrator at the CareerLink in McKean and Potter County. She stated that Ron has already been busy meeting with people in the community and building his relationships with businesses.

Blythe stated that efforts were also underway to increase and improve collaboration with other PA CareerLink® partners. She was excited to say that they are already seeing referrals from this collaboration. She also wanted to bring to attention the recent attempts on outreach and marketing for the PA CareerLink®. Social media is being used much more, especially Facebook, to reach potential customers. We have also been using the PA CareerLink® tents to hold outside events and mentioned that they may want to look into purchasing additional tents in the future.

**Other Business:**

- Susie announced the winners of the PA SLIP Photo contest.
- Susie identified her Smart Goals for the year as the following:
  - Quarterly Newsletter to keep the board better informed on Workforce Solutions' events, programs and activities taking place.
  - Individual Board Member Meetings – Susie explained that she will be reaching out to all board members within the next few weeks to set up individual meetings to hear their ideas, concerns and thought on training they would like to have. The meeting will be held via zoom or conference call due to the current pandemic.
- Susie also wanted to bring to attention the resignation of long-time board member Bob Cardamone. He has been a dedicated board member for many years but has decided the time has come for him to enjoy retirement.

Susie also took this time to thank everyone and to say how proud she is of all the hard work being done despite the current situation we are facing with the Covid pandemic.

The next quarterly board meeting will be held January 6, 2021.

With the meeting concluded, Corine asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Kate Brock made a motion to adjourn; Chris Adamson seconded; all were in favor and the meeting adjourned at 10:30 a.m.