

East Tennessee Local Workforce Board Meeting  
Tuesday 13 December 2022  
ETHRA office  
Knoxville, Tennessee

Present

Pete Barile  
Jimmy Brooks  
Joe Daugherty  
Chris Griffey  
Sean Hensley  
Gary Human  
Mark Palmer  
Thomas Payne  
Tim Richmer  
Grant Rosenberg  
Julie Simpson  
Brian Vaughn  
J.J. Walker  
Billy Worsham (ex-officio)

Present on WebEx

Jessica Belitz  
Windy Noe  
Angie Respass  
Bryan Shoffner

Absent

Sam Alexander  
Brad Hale  
Cindy Holt  
Jennifer Pace  
Mike Raiford  
Rob Rule

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. New Workforce Director, E.L. Morton, welcomed both guests and Board members to the meeting. He commented that he knew that he had big shoes to fill since Bill Walker had retired. He shared that he had been in the Army for 20 years, he was a two term Mayor in Campbell County, Operated Campbell County Tourism, and started out as a tobacco farmer.

Julie Simpson, Vice Chairwoman introduced herself and said that Chairwoman Cindy Holt was under the weather and that she would facilitate the meeting. She opened the meeting by calling for an acceptance of the September Board retreat minutes as written. The motion to accept was made by Pete Barile and seconded by Gary Human. Motion passed.

Ms. Simpson asked that we adjust the agenda of the meeting to accommodate Board member Belitz's schedule and discuss the American Job Center in Blount County. The lease for original site is up and we are in the lease extension time now. The center has about 6,000 square feet now to accommodate partners and services. The rent in the current building is \$69,000 per year. Vocational Rehabilitation has asked for space for three people in the new location. Director Morton has continued the work that retired Director Walker began in looking at the available spaces. The first space is located on Pellissippi State's campus, the drawback is inadequate parking and that the space is split between the first and second floor. Victor Oakley also commented on the disadvantages of this location. The second building that Director Morton looked at was the Tennessee Rehabilitation Center, which has adequate interior space, traffic flow and the location may be a problem. It would also require some build out in the 12,000 square foot building. The third location would be in the Midland Plaza complex. There are three spaces available and he is waiting for pricing information. The location is right across the street from the old center, it looks adequate in size and the parking is acceptable. We have 90 days to figure out a site that can be state certified. Director Morton would like to keep the same or reduce the rent that we pay now for the Glascock Street center.

Ms. Simpson opened to the Board for discussion. Mr. Human asked if we had to rent the entire twelve thousand square feet in the Vocation Rehab center. The answer was yes. Board member Mr. Daugherty thought that the Midland Plaza was a good location, centrally located. Ms. Belitz said that the management of the Midland Plaza was hard to get in contact with, but she thought that it was a good location as well. Director Morton asked her if she could help facilitate the communication with Midland Management. Board member Barile said that it was important to consider transportation or lack of as well as parking and security are key to the success of the AJC. Board member Mr. Rosenberg thought that the Pellissippi campus was a good location for the AJC. Ms. Jennifer Eppley said that Marc Green, the Team Lead in Blount said that they have a lot of walk in's from the neighborhood in their current location. The discussion ended with an explanation of what an IFA (Infrastructure Funding Agreement) was, and that each partner in a location shares costs of their square footage. Ms. Belitz said that she would gather and send Director Morton information on Wednesday.

Ms. Kathi Hollander discussed financials, and the way that money is distributed from the state. She also talked about the IFA, Youth funding, Adult, and Dislocated Worker funding. Mr. Rosenberg asked when does the Board vote on what money is spent for. Victor Oakley said that the state uses funding stream dollars and because of the restrictions placed on programs the Board does not vote on the spending of funds, but they do vote on how much money is spent for some programs.

Mr. Victor Oakley shared with the Board the State Scorecard for the East LWDA. He talked about priorities of performance. The super priority was to increase the labor force participation rate to 65%. On the scorecards in the Board packet he said that green highlighting is good and that red highlighted areas were bad. Board member Barile asked what does exit mean. Victor Oakley explained that an exit occurs when the person has completed receiving assistance and a job has been attained and maintained for a certain amount of time.

Director Morton discussed that with the work first posture that Governor Lee wants that money spent on clients will be used to subsidize housing, transportation, child care, and employment needs for the first sixty days of employment. Education will still be available, but funded on a smaller scale than employment.

Ms. Jennifer Eppley, our One-Stop Provider, reported on American Job Center activities in our sixteen county area. Dr. Jerry Leger's report centered on community outreach for each county and American Job Center's lack of signage. Advertising services were also discussed because of the limited budget for both of those things. The reason for such a small budget for signage and advertising is because the metric measure minimum participant cost rate (mpcr) of spending funds on participants is so high and the budget has been cut so that it does not allow for extravagant spending on anything to keep our percentages on track. Ms. Dana Wilds reported that Job Center Case Managers are going out into their communities talking about services, Job Fairs and ETSU is committing time and energy for a "boots on the ground" approach for community involvement. ETSU staff has taken part in over 250 community outreach activities. Ms. Eppley also discussed quarterly training for AJC staff, employer spotlighting, as well as justice involved activities.

Director Morton talked with the Board about the purchasing of classes for Jail populations in Claiborne and Monroe Counties. At this time he explained that with the purchased classes we were not able to count the numbers toward the MPCR. We are looking for a way to make jail participants qualified for the MPCR in the future.

Director Morton also discussed the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) is up for review, renewal, and approval. Because it is such an extensive list of 130 providers and 400 programs that needs to be dealt with, it was suggested that only the programs rejected by the Executive Committee be brought to the full Board for a vote. Ms. Simpson asked if it was necessary for the list to be that long. Mr. Victor Oakley responded that it had not been handled for a while and that denial letters had not been signed or sent out, which makes the usual list longer. Ms. Simpson asked why the rejection letters had not been sent out and Mr. Oakley responded that he could not answer that question. Mr. Rosenberg suggested that we present one new provider each meeting so it would not be so overwhelming. Mr. Oakley responded that we have to look at programs when they are new, costs rise, or something added which means it revolves around often.

Director Morton asked the Board permission to take \$125,000.00 from formula funding to be used for Business Service grants. It was explained that the state no longer provided grant funding for employer training and that the money had to come from formula funds. Which means that it would drop the MPCR for clients, but that it does provide training services for employers looking to grow their employee talent. The motion to approve \$125,000.00 for Business Service Grants was made by Mr. Tim Richmer and seconded by Sean Hensley. Motion passed.

The next order of business was setting the Executive Meetings. It was suggested that Mr. Oakley send out a doodle poll and the Executive Committee meetings would be held by WebEx. The remainder of the full Board meetings will be Tuesday the 14<sup>th</sup> of March, Tuesday the 9<sup>th</sup> of May, and Tuesday the 12<sup>th</sup> of September 2023. Dinner will be served at 5:00 pm. and the meeting will begin at 6:00 p.m.

With no more new or old business the motion for adjournment was made by Gary Human and seconded by Joe Daugherty. Meeting was adjourned at 8:16 p.m. with full Board approval.