



Board of Director Meeting Minutes
April 29, 2020
4:00 pm.

Conference Call: Scott Watson, Beth Cicchetti, Tom Eisel, Jeanna Olson, Jonathan Gray, Kevin Vaughn, Martina McDowell, Patrick Hutt, Holly Henderson, Maria Mead, Tawanna Gilbert, Renisha Gibbs, Rebecca Kelly-Manders and Quincee Messersmith

Absent: Shelly Bell, Nina Self, Christina Paredes, Melissa Rudd, Amber Tynan, John Shuff, Steve Capenos and Mauricio Endara

Staff/Guests Present: Jim McShane, Dee Robinson, Kara Palmer-Smith, Matt Salera, Charlotte Brown, Dan McGrew, Rachel Oliver, Debra Dixon, Vincent Palmer, Latricia Johnson and Jeannie Booth

Recording: Patricia McCray

I. Welcome and Call to Order:

Jim McShane welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 4:05pm. He thanked everyone for taking time out to participate in this board meeting. Today's meeting is to provide an update on CareerSource Capital Region as they continue to work through the COVID-19 pandemic.

He explained that the public is allowed to participate with comments held to three (3) minute limit and 12 minutes overall.

II. Chief Executive Officer Agenda

Jim welcomed and thanked everyone for their service on the Board. He stated that he appreciated their leadership and thanked them for their service during this time of instability and disruption as they continue to be the public face of the local workforce system.

Jim stated in today's meeting, my senior staff will deliver an update to you and including our provider staff leader Dan McGrew. This hour will be used as a time to give you a full picture of where they are, what they are considering, and how they hope to move forward.

Jim introduced Dee Robinson, who is in charge of the oversight and compliance team, which is one of the most critical teams protecting them as board members as they spend the Federal dollars helping our employers and our community. Jim shared that Dee has worked her way through the system from being active with the provider and now as a senior director. She will discuss some of the things that have happened and our response to DEO's unemployment failures and how they have stepped up to assist as best they can.

III. Senior Director – ROPC Report - Dee Robinson

For the ROPC department, it is still business as usual, following our charge of oversight, operations, performance, and compliance. Due to the pandemic, they have increased their efforts to look for ways to be more efficient while providing a worthwhile experience for those seeking our services during these trying times. They understand that the way they are currently doing business will likely need to evolve and are assisting by:

- Removing policy hurdles to allow the staff to continue to provide services virtually.
 - Example 1: WIOA career seekers must be TABE tested; with our facilities being closed to the public and the requirement that TABE must be proctored, they made the decision to lift the requirement for TABE testing with the understanding that if the individual seeks training assistance in the future, they will have to do the test.
 - Example 2: Work Experience is very important and carries an expenditure rate requirement for youth. One hurdle is the requirement to conduct site reviews prior to assigning a participant to work at a site. They are amending our policy/guidelines to allow for virtual site visits.
- The region has begun assessing our current technology/virtual tools to determine what changes they can make immediately to allow for more virtual service provision. Additionally, they are looking to bring on additional tools to provide more options/support for our career seekers as they prepare to return to work or seek new job opportunities. They will have a meeting next week to look at our technology/tools to ensure they complement one another, are not duplicative as well as what gaps exist. Conducting the assessment will direct our efforts when seeking out/deciding on other technology/tools to fill identified gaps.
 - Looking at performance, quality, and compliance. Given the number of emergencies experienced this over the last year or so (Hurricane Michael/COVID-19), how will this impact our performance, quality, and compliance? In the very near future, they will negotiate our federal performance for the next program year with DEO/CSF. They are looking for anomalies/unique situations to assist in determining how best to negotiate our performance to ensure that they are able to meet our goals.
 - Reemployment Assistance – a select staff, have been trained to provide assistance to those applying for reemployment assistance with resetting their pins as well as identity authentication. These are two hurdles that are experienced by applicants, and they hope to be able to provide timely assistance so that they can get through the application process and receive the funds they desperately need. Acting as the liaison between CSCR/DEO to ensure staff has the resources necessary to help applicants.

Jim asked if there are any questions for Dee, and there was no comment.

Jim introduced Kara Palmer Smith, who is the senior director who came to us after working in the Chamber's Economic Development department. She has taken on our special grants since that time and done an excellent job at managing the grants and meeting the performance requirements. Kara will talk about what our business solutions team is doing, how they are operating, and some of the hiring and other events planned for the near future using technology.

IV. Senior Director Report - Kara Palmer Smith

Kara shared the highlights of some of the BES team activities from March 16, which is when the CSCR team moved towards a remote or virtual work environment. The special projects, business and employer solutions, and executive center teams have been working very hard and adjusting to a remote work environment. Most are actually practicing a hybrid model, working mostly from home and a few days in the office while practicing social distancing. The team conducts meetings with employers and career seekers via email, phones, Zoom, and other remote tools. Kara provided some interesting facts about our Zoom engagement.

Since CSCR purchased Zoom, there have been over 850 engagements within our Zoom account. They have had meetings with various teams within the organization, as well as external meetings, webinars, and events. So that is the period of March 27th to April 26th, they have definitely become a Zoom organization. The BES team put together a tool kit that offers a simple and effective one-stop source for businesses to find assistance during this time. The tool kit is designed to assist Gadsden, Leon, and Wakulla County businesses and organizations by providing access to critical workforce development tools and resources during this time. Some of the programs that the BES team focuses on are the short-time compensation program, which is for businesses that are looking to help maintain their staff as a result of having to reduce weekly work hours due to a temporary slowdown. The BES team is working to assist businesses and spread this information where needed.

Also, the BES team is providing information on the temporary layoff program. That is, if an employer has to lay off people for a certain amount of time, perhaps it's eight weeks, four weeks, or whatever the time frame, the BES team will provide them with information on that as well. Employers are requested to reach out to the BES team to understand what all the options are and what the best options may be for their particular company.

The BES team has a Rapid Response team that assists in the unlikely event that an employer has to lay off people or close their operations permanently. The Rapid Response team will ensure that immediate access to the affected workers is here to help them quickly reenter the workforce. They also play an essential role in providing solutions both to the dislocated workers and employers.

One of the other projects the BES team has been working on is offering virtual hiring fairs, and they are hopeful that this will be online very soon. They are currently surveying employers in our area to find out the appetite for offerings, such as solutions. They will have a survey that will be closing tomorrow, and at that time, they will then assess to see what the employers have said. The BES team believes that it is something our employers will show great interest in.

Additionally, in May, they will host at least one virtual recruitment event that we're currently setting up for a local employer as well as an information session for employers and career seekers. They have also been focusing on training grants, and have asked companies to use this time to help staff with training.

The BES team is focused on their incumbent worker training grants, professional development through our manufacturing sector strategies grant as well as our registered apprenticeship grant. They recently, last week, started collaborating with the local, AC Association who was recently approved for a registered apprenticeship program through the department of education. Additionally, were featured on the WTXL rebound project. And they were able to offer valuable resources for employers and career seekers alike through that program. The BES team held a critical thinking workshop webinar yesterday that featured almost 70 employers who took advantage of that and individuals from various employers within our community. Kara thanked the Board members that were on the call today.

The BES team will host their IT and Professional Development Sector Round, on May 5th. There are currently 50 people that registered to participate in that, and they are hopeful that it will be a success as well. Our May 13th emotional intelligence webinars they are offering had 40 people register within the first two hours of us releasing their information. With that many people registering, there is a need, and employers are looking for training during this time for their employees. The Business Partnership Advisory Council close out meeting will be virtually on May 19th, the Sector Rounds in June, manufacturing on June 2nd, and June 23rd in construction and the trades. One of the local manufacturing companies, Altura, has actually pivoted their business model, and they're now making face shields, as a result of the pandemic. They're one of our partners, and they serve on our sector round planning committee.

Kara thanked Chair, Scott Watson, for his assistance in providing them with several employers to serve on our construction and transportation, logistic trades, sector round planning committee as well.

Additionally, each day the BES team is pushing out a campaign, "We Know Where The Jobs Are," which is featured on our website as well as our social media pages. The BES team will be partnering with the Office of Economic Development, the Tallahassee Chamber of Commerce, among other workforce development organizations within our region, going essentially to the East and the West of us, and in Georgia as well. Kara thanked the Board and Jim for their support and stated they are here to help.

Jim asked if there are any questions for Kara.

Quincee stated it takes a special person to be Kara, and she is one of the 25 people you should know, and I really appreciate her.

Jim thanked Quincee and said yes, she is fantastic, to say the least.

Beth thanked Kara and her team for their support recently for a Facebook live event that occurred through the Gadsden FLDEV Facebook page and partnership with all of the main street programs and the CRA, the department of health in Gadsden County. That was extremely beneficial. They had over a hundred and reached over 187 people. So, it's difficult, as they know, sometimes in our rural communities to reach our small businesses. And so they really appreciate your partnership in that endeavor.

Jim thanked Beth and stated that Kara was pleased to participate and glad they had a large turnout.

Jim introduced Matt Salera, our chief financial officer, and a person who has been part of this organization longer than anyone else. Matt has managed our finances with clean audits for the last 18 years. They have received our first of what I hope will be many more grants aimed at our Dislocated Workers. Jim estimates at this time that they have about 3,500 people out of work in our three-county area. While not all of them will try and seek help from us, that's still a considerable number of people that they will need to assist in finding employment as quickly as possible. Matt will give you a synopsis of where they are financially.

V. Chief Financial Officer Report - Matt Salera

The Audit Committee just meet today to review the annual audit report which the audit firm will present to the upcoming Exec and BOD. Happy to announce that the report was clean with no disallowed costs, findings, material weaknesses, or significant deficiencies.

Yesterday they received a grant allocation from WIOA DW - NEG COVID 19 funding for \$211K to cover costs associated with the attainment of supplies such as face masks, gloves, shields, hand sanitizer prior to re-opening our career centers and the funding will also be used to place Dislocated Workers in work experience with local employers.

Been working on the FY 2020-21 Budget, which goes to the Finance Committee on May 21. The latest funding projections have WIOA, which is our largest funding stream of about 2/3 of our funding has the state at an -8% reduction or roughly -250K. On the bright side, our WT, Apprenticeship Expansion, Sector Strategy programs have had the funding availability dates extended through 20-21, which were originally set to expire June 30. So with these grant extensions and us being very under budget with regards to our current year allocated costs 67% through March, which is 75% through the year & the just received NEG COVID grant. Allowing us to carry over around 600K into next year. This large additional carryover should keep the budget at a level where they can meet our 21-22 carryover requirements and not be forced to cut any budget line items.

2019-20 WIOA allocation \$3.1M. -8% reduction is \$250K.

Jim asked if there are any questions for Matt.

Holly asked Jim about being 8% under, how has working remotely the last month and a half or so, contributed, or is that directly tied to that 8% expenses or other offsetting expenses? I was just curious about how working remotely affected our overall expenses.

Matt stated part of the \$600K that I'm looking at in additional carry over, part of that is under budget on our current year budget. With staff working remotely, there have been additional expenses from having to work remotely. But there have been cost savings, especially in travel and supplies. So while the additional expenses he believes are going to be upfront and one time, they see continued cost savings in our travel budget and even supplies. When looking at a \$6 million budget, it's really not that substantial. But as time goes on, they realize cost savings. But when it comes to the 8.8% reduction, that you know, is our allocation from the Feds. Matt stated our allocations from the Feds when divided between all the States, has nothing to do with what's going on right now.

Holly thanked Matt for the clarification.

Jim stated that he hopes that there'll be more Federal dollars coming down the road. He just got a sample of a potential addition to the bill that they're considering for the next group out of the Federal funds. The additional funds would put a whole lot of extra money into the workforce system. Knowing that they're all going to be struggling with helping people find jobs and additional training. So that they can get a job that will pay them more than what they might've had before. Jim stated he's optimistic that by September, October, they'll have some more dollars they can work with.

Jim introduced Dan McGrew, the General Manager, and Regional Director for your Service Provider, Dynamic Workforce Solutions will give you a short presentation on where our centers are, how things are going, what types of services have been active at this time, and what they're thinking on to be able to open at some point in the future.

VI. General Manager, DWFS Report - Dan McGrew

Dan stated that he employs or manages 40+ staff that operate the three-county career centers in their region.

His guiding principles for our team from the beginning has been to 1. Stay Safe, and 2. Help People. To that end, he will report what they have been doing as it relates to these principles at the career center.

To prepare for eventual shifts in operation, they began March by making sure all staff had google voice numbers and free zoom accounts. They also completed an at-home technology assessment to determine who could work from home if needed and who would have to due to child care and school closings. They also created virtual work agreements for our employees and created rotating schedules to reduce the number of staff in each center in the event they had to do so. Staff was continuously reminded of CDC guidelines for handwashing and staying at home if showing symptoms during this time.

Things moved pretty quickly at this point, and he is thankful that they took the time to plan ahead for our employee safety and continuity of operations so that they would quickly adjust as the environment changed.

As you know, the Leon County shelter-in-place order began March 23rd, at which point the decision was made to cease face-to-face services and close our centers to the public. At this point, staff continued to work in the centers and began to provide services remotely via phone and zoom. While CSCR worked to secure organizational Zoom accounts, Dynamic Workforce Solutions made our corporate GoToMeeting account available so that remote workshops could be held immediately. Additionally, DWFS opened its already existing remote workshops available to all customers for the month of March - over 30 workshops a week in various topics.

Welfare Transition and SNAP applications continued to come in, and they made accommodations to provide orientation and work registration sessions available remotely via conference call rather than zoom or go to meeting to ensure that customers could gain access with minimal technology.

In response to the governor's safer-at-home order on April 1st, they immediately implemented our pre-planned rotating staff schedules to reduce the total number of staff in the center at any given time. Some staff in our Leon career center were assigned to Gadsden and Wakulla if more convenient to their home, and the remaining staff was put on a split shift schedule if they were able to work from home. Staff who had to work from home due to child care or other reasons were assigned to telework. Additionally, the staff was repositioned throughout the office where necessary to maintain safe social distancing and CDC guidelines. DWFS has also allotted up to \$100 per employee to purchase personal PPE and be reimbursed by the company. To date, no provider employees have become infected with COVID-19, and they hope to maintain this track record.

Simultaneous to ensure the safety of their staff, they have also been working diligently to continue to help folks in their community in as many ways as possible.

The primary need throughout March and April has been fielding inquiries about reemployment assistance. As many have likely heard, the state system has been unable to handle the volume of applications. Because phone calls to the state were resulting in long hold times or disconnects, many individuals were calling us for assistance. To handle the call volume, they routed calls away from one single number to each individual center, which allowed us to have nine people answering calls rather than one person.

Their staff has been reviewing the FAQs from DEO practically daily as they have changed continuously in order to advise callers best. Additionally - a handful of staff in Jim's team has provided access to conduct simple PIN resets so that problems could be solved locally rather than sending people to a queue at DEO.

As soon as they were made available on April 4th, staff put in a bulk printing order for 1000 applications and pre-addressed envelopes to distribute at our centers. By Tuesday, April 7th, applications were made available at all career centers and our administrative office for walk-up distribution. On Monday, April 13, a revised version from DEO was released, and they reprinted to replace all older versions. Throughout April, they have distributed about 483 paper applications.

Workshops are being delivered via zoom by not only our local team but also our Dynamic Works Institute team. They are currently offering 30+ workshops each week to our community. Through April 4th, they had over 100 career seekers in attendance. They will continue to provide these workshops through May free to our community. Initial survey results have been outstanding, with a 94% net promoter score.

Last Friday, they launched a new virtual service to our community in the form of Career Edge. Career Edge offers online content to assist career seekers in building resumes, preparing for interviews, and

career exploration and soft-skill development. Career Seekers can go through the content self-guided, and our staff can monitor their progress, offer coaching, and assign content through the site. They have bulk-enrolled all of our WIOA Adult, DW, and youth into this resource. They purchased unlimited access to this resource through the end of May, and they will be promoting to our community heavily as a resource. CareerEdgeCapital.com is the website. CareerEdge, along with the current online courses like 5-Minute Series and Industry Scholars, provides a wealth of content that our community can access right now for free.

Our WIOA Youth program continued to enroll participants in March and April, and they successfully delivered our Dynamic Futures program remotely via Zoom to 4 participants at the beginning of April. They currently have about 13 youth in active work experience activities. Due to COVID-19, seven youth were displaced from their worksite. Five have been reassigned with two more in the process of being reassigned. Our next Dynamic Futures is scheduled for next week, and they have two youth already scheduled. Outreach and eligibility determination is proving challenging, but the team is working with as many community partners as possible to keep new applications coming in.

Our partnership with Leon County's Summer Youth Program is moving forward, though they have pushed the start date out to July rather than June. Our last push for applications in April brought the total count from 100 applications to over 500. They are hosting a virtual job fair in June to place the youth at both county sites and community businesses where they will pay the wages while youth gain valuable work-based training and experience in various industry sectors. They hope to be able to have 60 youth participate this summer.

Our Welfare Transition and SNAP applications continue to rise, and with work requirements waived by the state of FL, our team continues to push services to this population, including child care referrals, job referrals, and career coaching.

"We Know Where The Jobs Are Campaign" is well received, and staff continues to not only find positions but also connect customers to job opportunities in our community. They have made close to 200 referrals in April alone, and staff has personally recorded 35 placements on clients during the month. They have been working with two employers directly to fill positions with St. Marks Powder and NGA. Monday, our Wakulla office administered WorkKeys assessment to six St. Marks Powder candidates, and they have been pre-screening candidates for an NGA hiring event scheduled today.

Finally, while the staff has been busy continuing service delivery in a safe, remote environment, they have also made time for ongoing professional development. Dynamic Workforce Solutions launched "a How Do I" series of live webinars throughout March and April for staff and boards to learn and develop, share best practices, and prepare for a new environment of service delivery. Topics included Work from Home, Online Eligibility Determination, Youth Participation, Managing Virtual Teams, and more. Our staff have attended many of the workshops and logged close to 123 hours of professional development during this time.

Behind the scenes, at the national and local levels, the DWFS team has been putting together plans for resuming face-to-face services. They are working closely with Jim and his team to ensure that our staff can remain safe and continue to help our community through what will be a challenging environment economically.

Jim asked if there were any questions for Dan.

VII. Chief Executive Officer Report - Jim McShane

Jim stated, now that you have heard from the operational leadership team, I must say that they have been stellar in understanding our current situation. They have continued to move forward in innovative ways while modifying our future behaviors, given that it's likely this virus will be around for quite a long time.

Jim stated, one of his priorities, as they look to the future, is to 1, ensure the safety and health of our staff at our centers and also at the executive office. 2, is to continue to look at technology advancements that they can implement to provide more services via the Internet, telephone, iPad, and whatever technology that best reaches our employers and job seekers. 3, provide the PPEs, plastic screens, facemask, wipes, and work with our building owners to intensify nightly cleaning so that our workstations are sanitized before they come to work each day. 4, they will determine staff members that can work from home and continually do what's already being done at the career center in rotation so that there's not a large number of our staff in the office all at once. Jim stated, the use of Microsoft teams will need to ramp up to allow for more efficiency in our communications. They are also adding online technologies that will give the job seeker many more options for training and enhanced skills. These investments are not inexpensive, and they are trying some of them out to see how many of our customers participate.

Jim stated they are beginning to get pretty comfortable with the Zoom meeting platform as well as the Microsoft Team's platform, which is essentially Skype. As those of you on our Board, as well as our chief elected officials, become comfortable with this mode of operation, they hope to be able to increase our participation and discussion given that there will be no travel or food requirements until they meet together again.

Jim stated that he is operating with the best interests of the staff and community, and relying on the directions of the CDC when it would be best to open up again. Although it is apparent that our region is not hit very hard with this virus, the numbers are still going up every day in our entire region. I worry as I went Lowe's the other day, where I observed that maybe one in 20 people, including myself, was wearing a mask. I think people underestimate how prevalent this virus is.

Jim shared with the Board that the leadership team meeting will start planning for re-opening. Luckily they have multiple documents from other regions as well as what the CDC recommended for Smithfield meat plant to be able to pull key recommendations that they think will work for us. Matt has already started accumulating the necessary PPE for us to have in stock. Jim stated he's sure for the next six months, at least, they will require any person from the public to be wearing a mask they're going to come into our center.

Jim stated that finally DEO has sent every workforce area a draft subgrantee agreement, which is causing a lot of concern in our system. The tenor of this grant and some of the language in the agreement are unacceptable in the contract. Jim shared some comments and documents with the County Administrator in Leon County and intend to give similar documents to the two-county attorneys of Wakulla and Gadsden. Unlike the last contract that was written back in 2012, which was a document that spoke to collaboration and technical assistance with an eye toward partnership, this document is strictly punitive. It contains language that assumes individual decisions at the local level that are not true. As part of the Florida Workforce Development Association, Jim stated that he's hoping to have our counties stand up to this document and refuse to sign it if it stays the same as the current draft.

Jim stated that he will send each of the board members and the three elected officials after this meeting, the link to the DEO site that has all the comments posted on the site. Many of these comments have been put up by other attorneys working for other boards. Jim encouraged each of the Board members to read and see almost every question has not been answered and instead is under advisement.

Jim asked if the Board had any questions.

Holly asked, Jim, do you envision at some point sending back a marked-up document? Or are you're trying to provide comments with others weighing to encourage DEO to send us a new document that's more in line with the agreement they previously operated under?

Jim stated, yes, number two is what they are hoping that DEO gets the message clearly. Some of our elected officials at the state legislature are aware of this. Jim thinks there will be pressure that they are going to have to modify the language so that it's acceptable to all 24 of the workforce boards. Jim is hoping that DEO will put it under consideration.

Jim thanked Holly for that question.

Jim opened the floor to Chair Watson.

VIII. Chair Comments - Steve Watson

Scott thanked Beth and Jim for starting the meeting and thanked everyone for participating. And on behalf of the Board, they applaud the CareerSource staff, Dynamic Workforce Solutions, and everyone's efforts to respond and to do a 180-degree turn while maintaining operations. Scott stated that every day, the team continues with normal operations as they continue to provide services remotely and continue to provide services to operate in a more safe environment that's a heavy lift. And he recognizes that, and I've been in contact with Jim and Kara and everyone during this process. He applauds everyone's effort to adjust so rapidly and continue to be able to provide services that are going to be on a much-increased demand, as everyone has mentioned in the coming days or weeks or months.

Scott stated that he knows that DEO's unemployment system continues to be in the news and garner not necessarily favorable press towards the failure of the automated system. And that's going to continue to be the case until they can see some significant changes and improvements in that delivery model. That work will probably be shifted more and more to some of the local workforce boards to assist with that. And I fully anticipate that as they discussed.

Due to the effects of COVID-19, an increased amount of funding is probably going to be required to have the staff and the things that they need them to make the additional workload happen. It will be an interesting time moving forward, and they really may need to call on some more board members to exercise some contacts that they have. Scott stated that he's not sure exactly how that's going to work, but just be prepared that they may ask for some more input on an individual level moving forward. Scott thanked everyone and stated this has been a professional and an efficient effort again to adjust operations to accommodate all of the new circumstances.

Jim thanked Scott for his comments and asked if there any other questions for me or my staff. Any other comments?

Martina thanked Trish for the outstanding webinars presented yesterday. It was valuable information presented in a significant way. So thank you so much for putting that on.

Jim thanked Martina for her comment on the webinar provided by Trish.

Jonathan stated he wanted to mimic Scott, great job to the team at CareerSource and Dynamic Workforce Solutions. He knows this is all different for everybody, but it does seem like they are effective, given the circumstances. So stay at it, good job team.

Scott stated that there was one other point he forgot to mention in his comments earlier. He stated he's concerned that the money spent now, and the resources and relief provided during this COVID-19

process will come to bear in a couple of years or for several years moving forward. He anticipates that there may continue to be some reduced funding, not just for CareerSource, but for a lot of programs, as the government tries to fund repayment of these dollars. So, that's just another thing for everybody to keep in their mind. He stated this is his personal feeling, and he does not have anything to base that on only other than historical observation. There's a lot of dollars being spent right now. Scott stated that he believes that at some point, they will have to retract and start repaying some of those dollars. And that may undoubtedly impact funding from the Department of Labor and other agencies.

Jim stated he agreed, and if asked if there are any other questions? No one responded. Jim thanked everyone for attending today and said they would keep in touch. Jim also mention, they have our next quarterly meeting on June 4th, and it will be in this format.

Jim said he looked forward to Board's continued participation in our committees. He thanked the Board and the staff who did a super job.

Holly, Matt, Beth, Martina, and Scott thanked everyone.

IV. Adjourn:

S. Watson adjourned the meeting at 5:05 pm.

Next Meeting:

**June 4, 2020
12:00 pm**