



Strategic Policy & Planning Committee Meeting

May 13, 2020

3:30pm – 5pm

Present: Jonathan Gray, Beth Cicchetti, Antonio Jefferson and Kevin Vaughn

Absent: Amber Tynan, Erin Gillespie, Shelly Bell, Missy Rudd, Cristina Paredes, Renisha Gibbs and John Shuff

Staff: Jim McShane, Dee Robinson, and Kara Palmer

Recording: Patricia McCray

I. Call to Order & Welcome

Chair Jonathan Gray welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 3:32pm and stated that the public is allowed to participate; however, public comment is held to a three (3) minute limit.

II. ACTION ITEM I – Meeting Minutes Approval

February 7, 2020 meeting minutes not approved did not have a quorum of committee members.

III. Action Item II: DEO Grantee Subgrantee Agreement

- i. DEO Grantee Subgrantee Agreement Template**
- ii. DEO Grantee Subgrantee Q&A**

Jim stated that CSCR has their comments to DEO Director Ken Lawson and also provided him a letter that was signed by CSCR board chair, Scott Watson and chief elected official, Nick Maddox. The request from the Board and the Local Elected Officials was to support the letter that was created and submitted by Citrus, Marion and Levy counties as it was very comprehensive regarding the issues with the Grantee-Subgrantee agreement. Jim believes DEO will not make any further changes to the agreement. This afternoon at 2pm, the 24 LWDB's received an email from DEO extending the deadline to sign the agreement until July 17, 2020. Jim believes this is a good sign and hopes that this means DEO is taking the comments from the local areas seriously. Jim believes the issue in the long run is going to be basically removing any of the county's ability to object or have say with the way the agreement is currently written, and giving DEO the final and ultimate authority.

Jim informed the committed that Marti Cooley is the lobbyist for FWDA and she continues to try and work between the parties to make sure that in the end they get a product LWDB's can all agree to. Jim hopes that DEO will provide a revised agreement for the LWDB's to sign

because at this time he cannot recommend that the board and elected officials sign the current agreement.

Currently with the results of COVID-19 with unemployment, DEO is still submerged with 390,000 people to process through adjudication to make sure that they deserve what they applied for. They have processed over 1.1 million people so far out of 1.8 million filings, so they are way behind.

Jim stated that he has asked also for data on each of the counties that they serve in order to determine the individuals that are receiving unemployment and may not be registered in Employ Florida due to the current waivers. As a pre-requisite to receive the information, the local areas had to notify DEO how the data would be used. He and his team would use the data to send letters to the individuals filing for/receiving reemployment benefits, inviting them to contact us and to work with us to assist them in finding employment. Staff have been advising career seekers to continue to seek work; however, many of the individuals don't want to look for work because of the unemployment assistance of \$600 plus the \$275. Others are waiting to hear from their employer whether they have got a job when they return to work. Jim believes there certainly will be a percentage of people hired back and that will take them off the unemployment insurance rolls. The Business & Employer Solutions team is working in concert with the Greater Tallahassee Chamber to post about 200 jobs that are available right now in our region. Based on what staff is finding, employers have not stopped recruiting and hiring.

Recently Jim had a conversation with the chairman of CareerSource Florida, who stated that the Reemployment Assistance team felt that the local areas were not being helpful. Jim stated that is contrary to what he and his team are doing daily. Based on Jim's understanding, the Secretary Satter, who is now in charge of DEO unemployment system may not understand all that the LWDB's do due to his primary job being with Department of Management Services. CSCR's has continued its operations during the COVID-19 pandemic. Although the career centers are closed to the public, staff has consistently worked with employers and career seekers to provide solutions. Additionally, they are assisting DEO by serving as a local outlet with Reemployment Assistance claims, questions and pin resets.

CSCR is performing work online and in the process of enhancing some of their technology so that we can increase the type and effectiveness of providing services remotely. Our goal will be to do as much online as possible and really limit at least for the next six months, the number of individuals we work with work face to face in order to keep our staff and our customers' safe.

Jim informed the committee that yesterday he was notified yesterday, that the career centers need to be open by Monday, May 18th and we are working towards that. Shortly after this meeting Jim will meet with his senior staff and the service provider management to see how far they are on their reopening plan and making sure that we are opening in a safe way. Jim believes that the traffic will likely be light coming into the career centers. The marketing team has provided the signage on their website that lets everyone you must wear a mask when you come to our centers. Staff will also take temperatures as soon as the order for the temperature monitors arrive. Individuals will also be required to attest that to their knowledge they are not COVID-19 positive and have not been exposed to COVID-19. Matt has

already purchased a great deal of cleaning materials to ensure we are able to follow our internal cleaning protocols.

Jim is hoping that we will be in a good position to be able to have a soft opening next week. This way we can follow the edict to reopen but slowly work into having more capacity.

They will need to test out some of their new equipment or new software that they have recently purchased to make sure it works. Dee has been excellent in taking the lead on their IT software and what we are doing for customers. Jim stated they will be able to do more things that people can just take a snapshot with their phone and send us a copy of their birth certificate and do some of those things that we were never able to do before. They are currently using DocuSign so they can get signatures without having people having to come into the office.

Jim informed the committee members that there is just a plethora of new things they will unveil and enrolled to that they will share with the board members at the next board meeting so that they are up to date on some of the things that a) their recent purchases and some of the things have reviewed b) and what they are considering to do by that time on how things are moving forward.

Jim stated his biggest concern is the safety for the staff first. He does not want to be responsible that one of our people ended up getting COVID-19 and dying because we opened our centers. He is very serious about that. He concerned that from what he sees that under this order, they would not be following what the CDC guidelines. The CDC guidelines state that they should have less people every day getting sick with COVID-19 in our counties for at least a week before opening. It was said earlier 14 days, but now they are saying about a week of not increasing cases for us to feel comfortable to open up. Jim stated the COVID-19 cases are increasing in all three of our counties. He is not comfortable with it, but opening his centers is something that he cannot control.

Scott asked Jim if staff was required to come in or do, they have an option based on their comfort level.

Jim stated that staff have been doing rotations - half a day at this point so that there is not too many people in our office at one time. That was one thing that Dan put into place and they have been doing that for a few weeks now. They do have a couple of people that are cancer survivors and from his standpoint, they can work from home as long as we can have them work from home. Jim does not want to put them in jeopardy. So as much as they can do that, they will be doing that and so on.

Jim stated that he will probably work from home at least another month or two just because he falls within the vulnerable group. The age point for the critical ages is two to 82 years old. Two years old, 22 years old in our County here in Leon. And the average age is 41 here with the local COVID-19 cases. So, it is not old folks like Jim, but we are all not sure what is happening and sure what is happening at the nursing homes and if that is getting counted right now. But hopefully it will be, and they will be able to have a better sense of what is going on.

Jim stated that he is working with the Sheriff's department just to be safe in case they have a sudden crowd in front of their buildings with angry individuals and angry mobs. He does not want that to happen, but he is preparing to protect his staff. He has a point of contact now with the Leon County Sheriff's department. He is hoping to establish a contact with the Gadsden Co. and Wakulla Co. Sheriff's offices so ensure that the Gadsden Co. and Wakulla Centers are covered in case they need help. In all their centers individuals must make an appointment and they must wear a mask. They have to be well and as long as they have those requirements, we can assist them.

Chair Gray thanked Jim for his information. Chair Gray asked Antonio Jefferson if he had anything to report. Antonio stated nothing for the good of the order.

IV. INFORMATIONAL ITEM I – EDO Quarterly Reports

Chair Gray asked Dee if there was anything else that needed to be reported.

Dee stated only if Kevin has a report for Wakulla Co.

Chair Gray asked Kevin Vaughn if he had a report for Wakulla.

Kevin stated nothing to add for Wakulla at this time. But he did have a question. Kevin was concerned that it may not be appropriate for this committee, but one of the things he is concerned about is the board does not have a legal counsel available to them. Kevin asked, what the thinking behind that is, and should they consider getting someone on retainer for some of these legal questions that they may have.

Jim stated that they do have legal counsel and it is Lila Jaber. She worked for Gunster Law firm. She is now separated because of working on a utility board the Gunster Law firm represents. However, she did read it and did go through the sub grantee agreement. Her assessment of that agreement was that it was a political document and not really a good contract. She provided that to without a charge. She usually does not charge us unless she feels like she's really got to get into the middle of it. Jim stated that he did agree with Kevin that it might be something that the board may want to take a look at. She is now an independent person sort of and still tied to the company in some way. Jim does not know how, but the advantage for her is that she was on the CareerSource Florida board when it was Workforce Florida. Lila was on that board for many years. She knows their system probably better than most attorneys would. Our system is not easy to understand all the things that we do. Jim stated he is open, and it is the board decision. Jim asked if anyone knew of someone that wanted to recommend to him to let him know. Jim stated that they do not put their attorney on a retainer due to not having the funding to support that.

Jim stated on his previous boards, he did have had an attorney on the board and then the attorney would give us as much advice as they could legally. And then if they did not know enough in that area or had concerns, they would refer them to someone that would be able to help them. Jim found it to be helpful because most of the time, even if they were not skilled in that area of what they were asking, they could give Jim good advice on who to go see. And he appreciated the referral. Sometime ago, they did have Sean Pittman on their

board for a short period of time. Jim thinks having an attorney on the board would really be a great help.

Beth stated, no but wanted to ask since you are a member of FADA did you have a chance to talk to Colleen, and could she lend any insight to all of this?

Jim stated that yes, he has spoken to her and she is doing a wonderful job of trying to negotiate between the governor's office and DEO. She is now trying to work with the new gentleman who is in charge of unemployment, however he is not returning her calls, but all others are working with her. She is very persistent and will eventually speak with the new gentleman. Jim stated that he likes Colleen and she has a level head. She is not going to let them get out of control and she is still working on the agreement.

Jim informed Beth that before she joined the committee meeting, that they were told to open on Monday, so they will be doing that. And DEO, well they have been asked, FADA has been asked for all the data on how they are helping DEO. Robin will present that to DEO and to the gentleman that is the head of the unemployment to let them know that all LWDB's are working together.

Jim stated that they are getting hundreds of calls a day that his staff is taking for unemployment questions/concerns. However, it is DEO's own stipulation that they will not allow anyone that works for their vendor to be able to access their system and help individuals. It is very frustrating, and in the grant, it actually says that they cannot access any of DEO's electronic systems, which includes Employ Florida. So how are they going to do their work if we cannot get into Employ Florida.

Beth asked if that is a way of saying that workforce boards should not outsource the career centers?

Jim stated no, the interesting thing in that would be the opposite of DOL's position. Jim stated that he is sure that through their working with DOL on Pinellas and Tampa. They have made it clear to DEO that DOL does not like boards doing direct services, period. That has been their position since WIA. Jim thinks that must have come through to John in Tampa because he is open and currently has a bid out for having a provider. Pinellas did not, because their chief elected officials decided they did not want to do that. And Pinellas and Panama City, they have not been closed during all this time. They had been open and serving people like normal. Anyone else.

Chair Gray asked if anyone had anything else to report.

V. Adjourn: Meeting with adjourned at 3:54pm

Next Meeting:
August 12, 2020