



Upper Shore Workforce Investment Board
Tuesday, December 19, 2023
5:30 PM
Chesapeake College, Dorchester Building, Second floor
Agenda

Attendees: Bill Bailey, Bill Christopher, Cliff Coppersmith, Jim Cutter, Eric Daniels, Eric Kuster, Dan Lessard, Jena Paquin, Terenda Thomas, Tom Timberman, Matthew Tefteau, George Weeks

Guests: Dan Schneckenburger, Ellen Lafrankie, Samantha Parker, James Mayberry, Rachael Parker, Debbie Parsons, Sharon Dove, Shelley Neal-Edwards (for Jenifer Dubosq)

- I. Call to Order- 5:30p.m. Bill Christopher (for Scott Warner)
- II. USWIB Financial Audit update- James Mayberry, PKS
Board vote for approval
James Mayberry of PKS & Company, P.A. presented financial statements. There were no findings for fiscal year 2023.
Tom Timberman motioned for approval of the financial audit. It was seconded by George Weeks; the motion carried unanimously. At 5:51 pm.
- III. Presentation: Rachael Parker, Executive Director, Governor's Workforce Development Board
Rachael Parker of the Governor's Workforce Development Board presented information on the state plan. She discussed revisiting the vision/mission statement to examine the values that will guide their work. A timeline of the state plan was presented. Having representation from the Eastern Shore on the board along with ensuring that small employers were represented were both suggested. The goals, stakeholder engagement, and credentials for Blueprint, especially the CTE Committee, was discussed. Budget concerns regarding funding of Blueprint were discussed as well.
- IV. Minutes September 26, 2023 (board vote for approval)
Program participation, labor market information, budget snapshot, updated board roster.

George weeks motioned for approval of the minutes from the 9/26/23 meeting. It was seconded by Tom Timberman; the motion carried unanimously at 6:30pm.

Discussed scholarship activities - 169 total scholarships for a total of \$434,525.90, which encompasses all funds. The total is lower than last the previous meeting. This is due to ARPA funds drawing down. The Maryland Department of Labor report shows that Maryland continues to trend low for unemployment reaching a 1.6 % unemployment rate. Local unemployment rates in the five county area: Caroline at 1.9% with 333 individuals unemployed; Dorchester at 2.2% with 360 individuals unemployed; Kent at 2.0% with 215 individuals unemployed; Queen Anne's at 1.7% with 497 individuals unemployed; and Talbot at 2.1% with 369 individuals unemployed.

A snapshot of funds from Business Office was presented. A change in funds of \$175,000 was made from the Dislocated Worker Fund to the Adult fund. The changes were noted. The Summer Youth grant totaled \$28,491. ARPA funds are down to \$282,423. No new scholarship approvals are being made; however, \$100,000 has been set aside for registered apprenticeships for adults, which will take approximately 9 months to one year to spend. SNAP funding has a lot of carry-in \$377,222. DSS is looking at new guidelines regarding Able Bodied Adults without Dependents (ABAWD). ABAWD individuals have to do employment activities. Blueprint funds for account number 463 includes all five counties. Certified training has been funded by the USWIB for career coaches in all five counties. The Support for Communities grant has \$71,228 available in funding. The funding is designated to help the community with the Opioid crises and is available until the end of 2025. The Board roster was provided in the meeting packet.

- V. A Stronger Workforce for America Act- WIOA amending and re-authorization
Provides critical updates to WIOA to upgrades the skills of more Americans, to deliver greater accountability and program quality, to strengthen pathways to economic opportunity, and to fuel innovation for a skills-based economy. A lot of guidance come out in the last month. The Maryland Workforce Association sent a letter to the Maryland Delegation regarding three areas of potential controversy: 1) the dedication of 50% to individual training accounts (ITAs), which would limit the ability to rapidly meet the needs of employers; 2) Increasing the Governor's Set Aside with the Governor having the ability to set aside 15% and the state's ability to set aside an additional 10%; 3) The redesignation of local workforce areas. The biggest complaint is that it is hard to get people to be eligible. Be more flexible with requirements to be able to train more people.
- VI. Open Job Fair, 11/30/23: update
The November Job Fair had 67 businesses, which was a slight drop-off from the previous job fair possibly because of the date. Employers had openings; however, there were less than 80 job seekers in attendance. The next job fair will most likely be scheduled for the spring.
- VII. One Stop Operator Report-Samantha Parker
The quarterly meetings consist of all five counties together. These meeting are now including speakers with a focus on professional development. The April 2, 2024 spring professional development will have speakers focus on customer service. She will be reaching out to directors to recommend individuals first. It will not be conference style; it will be an all together in one room to try to look at customer service. The evaluation form will be revamped to focus more on what participants will be taking and using in their jobs. The questions will be given throughout the event to try to get more info and to get better feedback.

There were 35 attendees at the meeting last week. Jo Powers from the Talbot County library presented information on free resources and training opportunities offered at the library. The next quarterly meeting will be in March

VIII. Executive Director Report-Dan Schneckenburger

Mr. Schneckenburger reported on activities since the September meeting. There have been no official meetings with elected county officials. He attended the ribbon cutting at the Cambridge AJC with about 50 attendees. He also attended the Junior Achievement ribbon cutting in Salisbury at the Purdue Training Center; Cliff and Dan had a meeting with Jamie Hayes, the Executive Director. The Eastern shore recovery Project with Scott Warner is working on a statewide economic development dashboard. When the dashboard is ready, a tutorial will be given for the WIB Board of Directors. The EARN grant was discussed. Mr. Schneckenburger has attended multiple meetings with the Blueprint coordinators and staff to plan and to share information. Mr. Schneckenburger has been accepted into the Leadership Maryland class of 2024. We are currently planning an Artificial Intelligence conference and should have a date for the event soon.

IX. Announcements

Next board meeting February 27, 2024 (in person; Chesapeake College)

X. Adjourn

A motion to adjourn was made by George Weeks and seconded by Tom Timberman. The meeting was adjourned at 7:24 pm.

Happy Holidays to all!

Board Members will adhere to provisions of the Upper Shore Workforce Investment Board Conflict of Interest Policy when conducting the business outlined in this agenda.

The Upper Shore Workforce Investment Board is an equal opportunity employer/program
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