

Central Western Maine Workforce Development Board
Operations Committee Minutes
April 12, 2023

Board Members Present: Cathy Witherspoon, Chair; Razell Ward, Secretary; Laurie Glidden, At-Large Member; Chris Winstead, Chair of Resources; Grant Provost, Chair of Recruitment

Not Present: Peter Wright, Treasurer

Others Present: Erin Benson, Executive Director; Sara McGlaughlin, Financial Manager

Call to Order

Chair Cathy Witherspoon called the meeting to order at 8:39 am.

Review and Approve Last Meeting Minutes

VOTED: To approve March 8 meeting minutes via email.

Motion: Laurie Glidden **Second:** Razell Ward

Discussion: No discussion.

Vote: All present in favor

Board Membership Update

Have filled all workforce positions on the board. Of the five required partners, all have been filled with the exception of the economic development position. Christian Savage, ED for town of Skowhegan, has been approached. He is interested but will give his final answer in early May. If he says no, there is another person on the Central Maine Growth Council that Erin will ask. The board still needs four business representatives. Chris sent an email to Jason Brochu asking if he would be open to someone from Pleasant River Lumber serving on the CWMWDB board. Erin asked the HR person from Central Maine Motors with no response.

High Risk Update

Of the five tasks outlined in an official letter from the state to remove CWMWDB

- Board submittal of revised financial policies
- Board submittal of revised personnel policies
- Documentation of Board staff training on grants management (i.e.: SMART training)
- Board submittal of updated position description of Executive Director role
- Submittal of error free drawdown requests

The updated personnel policy is complete and accepted. Erin followed up regarding official certificates from WorkforceGPS for attendance at the SMART training. They do not provide them. The state said they would accept emails from Erin, Sara and EMDC financial manager, Ashley Bubar that they attended the training. All have been sent. Using guidance from the state for the error-free drawdowns. Submitted two so far that are error free. MDOL accepted revised position description of Executive Director role. Sara and Erin will begin work of editing revisions of the financial manual.

Provider Update

Seeing as the full board quarterly meeting is in two weeks, the provider update will be delivered at that time.

Financial Update

Seeing as the full board quarterly meeting is in two weeks, the financial update will be delivered at that time.

Open Discussion/New Business

Staffing—the position description for the administrative assistant has been updated and will be posted. Laurie Glidden and Sara McLaughlin will serve with Erin on a hiring committee.

Retirement—Erin shared retirement contribution information from several entities and sent to the committee. The Operations committee should discuss and make a recommendation to the full board on April 27.

\$500,000 grant—Erin submitted a proposal to the state for the \$500,000 grant from ARPA money for the three local workforce boards. \$200,000 will be set aside for marketing to disconnected youth. \$100,000 will be added to the \$54,000 set aside in the Quest grant for partner community-based organizations. This money will bring in more partner organizations to help us recruit. \$200,000 will be set aside for pilot programs in each county to help with supports not covered by WIOA.

Conference—Erin attended the National Association of Workforce Boards annual conference in Washington DC March 25-28. It was information overload, but she made contacts and has ideas for strategies.

Adjourn

Chair Cathy Witherspoon called for a motion to adjourn. Razell Ward motioned to adjourn; Laurie Glidden seconded. All in favor. Cathy adjourned the meeting at 10:14 am.

Next meeting: Wednesday, April 12, 2023, at 8:30 am.

Meetings attended by ED

3/9/2023 met with HR person at Central Maine Motors with Maine Apprenticeship team to discuss ways to fill her employment needs.

3/10/2023 attended SWB meeting; met with Kim Lindlof for ideas for board members; met with MDOL people to go over ideas for \$500,000 grant.

3/14/2023 met with city council chair of Waterville, Rebecca Green, to discuss workforce issues and the needs of Waterville. She suggested people with whom I should meet. Also met with all the FSS coordinators from around the state who, together, serve 495 low-income families.

3/16/2023 met with Whole Family Case Coordinators who serve in the central western region. These coordinators meet with a subset group of Fedcap participants. Referrals will help to address the priority populations of low wage workers, individuals with disabilities, and women with dependent care challenges. Also met staff of Somerset Career & Technical Center to discuss WIOA youth programs and ways to partner. And met with HR person from Central Maine Motors to discuss apprenticeship, OJT and work experiences.

3/17/2023 met with Tree Street Youth, an organization in Lewiston that serves the New Mainer population. We have worked successfully to enroll their participants in the WIOA Youth program, and can now utilize Quest to serve even more.

3/23/2023 met with Kennebec Behavioral Health club directors to discuss Quest and other grants that can help their participants explore and obtain employment. Referrals will help to address the priority population of individuals with disabilities.

3/30/2023 met with Mohamed Khalid of the Community Organizing Alliance to discuss ways to connect with the Somali community.

3/31/2023 met with the Maine Youth Action Network to discuss WIOA youth programs and partnerships.

4/2/2023 Attended the Maine Counseling Association's annual conference and hosted a panel: If Not College, Then What? The panel included Kelly Flagg from Associated General Contractors of Maine, Joan Dolan from the Maine Apprenticeship Program, Lisa Hartnett from EMDC, and Grant Provost from Local Iron Workers 7. Attendance was modest but the interest was high.

4/6/2023 Met with Mark McInerney, Director of the Center for Workforce Research & Information, to discuss labor market information. He will present at the July board meeting, focusing on the central western Maine region.

4/7/2023 went to Waterville to meet with the city manager, a member of the Central Maine Growth Council, the soup kitchen, and the local teen center. Talked about WIOA and partnerships.

4/10/2023 attended meeting set up by BES with Waterville school official to discuss their need for school bus drivers.

4/11/2023 Met with the chamber director in Skowhegan and visited with Maine Grains.