

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

Approved by Operations
Committee

Approved 8/9/2023

Board Members Present: Cathy Witherspoon, Chair; Chris Winstead, Treasurer & Chair of Resources; Grant Provost, Chair of Recruitment

Not Present: Razell Ward, Secretary; Laurie Glidden, At-Large Member; Sara McLaughlin, Financial Manager; Patti Saarinen, EMDC Director of Workforce Services

Others Present: Erin Benson, Executive Director; Carrie Parker, Administrative Assistant

Call to Order

Chair Cathy Witherspoon called the meeting to order at 8:37am.

Review and Approve Last Meeting Minutes

VOTED: To approve June 14 meeting minutes.

Motion: Chris Winstead **Second:** Grant Provost

Discussion: Chris stated that after a motion and a second it should be considered that everyone present approves unless someone speaks up with a question or concern. Moving forward there will be no call to all for approval but considered all in favor after seconding the motion.

Vote: All present in favor

Board Membership Update

Erin mentioned board membership continues to be needed. David Duguay has made suggestions to Erin for possible board members within the healthcare sector, but there are already board members within healthcare serving and Erin would like to see members that represent other sectors. There are currently four open member spots, however, Bruce Tisdale has not attended a board meeting since January 2022 and according to the bylaws, he should be removed from the board, which would open a fifth spot. Erin did not get a response from Jason Brochu from Pleasant River Lumber; Chris will check in with him again. Cathy mentioned Lisa Gibson from Remington Fairview as a possible healthcare representative with legal knowledge. She knows we have representation from several hospitals, but that could be a possibility and she will reach out to her. Chris sent an email to Amanda Cooley and for introductions, Erin will reach out to her about any interest she may have in joining. Erin would like to see someone from a local bank and someone with a technological background joining the board. Chris will send a few emails to people he knows who may be interested. He mentioned holding an informational session with possible candidates explaining what we do to get more people interested and to have candidates for future connections. He also recommended reaching out to Maine Primary Care as they cover all areas, and this would gather members from counties that are not currently covered with members. CEO Board are responsible for nominating people to the board.

High Risk Update

Sara and Erin finished the review and editing of the financial manual, the last of the five requirements to remove the board from high-risk status. Erin emailed it to Ginny Carroll who has some editing suggestions. Sara will review and send back with appropriate edits by the end of the day or week at the

latest. Erin emailed Kim Moore informing her that this final requirement will be sent to her shortly and invited her to speak at the next board meeting on July 27th to announce that we are no longer on high-risk status.

Provider Update

Patti will provide an update during the board meeting on July 27th.

Financial Update

Sara will provide an update during the board meeting on July 27th.

Open Discussion/New Business

Staffing—Carrie Parker has been hired as the part-time Administrative Assistant for CWMWDB. Her first day was June 26th and she has been working on getting the Augusta office set up with office needs, and learning tasks and responsibilities that will be handed to her as part of the position. Carrie introduced herself to the members and gave a short overview of her background, board members received her resume from Erin earlier in the week with the agenda and previous meeting minutes.

\$500,000 grant—the \$500,000 ARPA grant was revised by Erin on Monday, July 10th. \$100,000 has been designated for marketing and \$100,000 for Community Based Organizations. \$300,000 will be set aside for support for clients. The former two will be part of the first contract; the latter part of a later amended contract. This allows us to take more time to develop the strategy around the how to spend \$300,000 on additional clients. Erin will send the RFA for the CBO grants and the RFP for marketing to board members for comments.

Other info—see list of meetings below. Keep in mind that any connections with businesses might lead to future board membership. Erin discussed a recent meeting she had with Spruce Mountain Adult Education. They currently have a van for transporting Adult Education participants but do not have a driver. This led to a conversation on partnering opportunities with apprenticeships, a work taxi option and other ways that working together could benefit people across the board.

Erin would like to close the PO Box in Lewiston that is scheduled to expire in September or October as it is not in use and all mail goes directly to the 87 Winthrop Street office. Chris requested that she check everything on file to ensure that important business items are not going to the wrong address and that all current contracts and any upcoming have the current address on them. Erin stated that Sara is handling things on the business end, and they should all be up to date already. Chris told Erin that it would be a good idea to have a board member and their information listed on file as a secondary contact for back up needs only. He also said to check with Razell on the PO Box before closing it as she may know why we have it and if it is important in some way that no one on the board knows at this time.

Erin is looking to change the credit card from the current card through Bangor Savings Bank, which is run by Elon, to another organization. Sara must redo her security code each time she needs access and every step from purchasing to paying bills is a hassle and the limit is only \$1,500 so every purchase needs to be closely monitored. Board members made suggestions to check into Machias Savings, Androscoggin, and Skowhegan savings and Capitol One for Business as none of these require a social

security number for opening a business card account. Erin will look into business credit card options and update the Operations Committee once she has more information to move forward.

Executive Session

An executive session was called.

Voted: Erin work with the Operations Committee to send a letter to EMDC regarding ongoing concerns with staffing.

Motion: Cathy Witherspoon **Second:** Grant Provost

Vote: All present in favor

Adjourn

Chair Cathy Witherspoon adjourned the meeting at 9:48am.

Next meeting: Wednesday, August 9, 2023, at 8:30am

Meetings attended by ED

6/14/2023 met with two members of ITN America with Galan Williamson of NWDB. They went for a MDOT grant but were turned down because of lack of emphasis on workforce. Galan and I will discuss partnering and resubmitting the grant. They are in the throes of several major grants but will get back in touch over the next few months.

6/16/2023 met with VP of Membership at NAWB to discuss ways they can support CWMWDB. They will pair me with a very experienced ED in an area that is similar to our region and provide templates for policies and RFPs.

6/21/2023 co-presented with Patti Saarinen at the Maine Adult Education Association conference. Title of the session was: Workforce boards and adult education: how do we work together? The session was well attended, and connections were made.

6/23/2023 Sara and I presented the budget to the Chief Elected Officials.

6/27/2023 attended the Regional Care Team: Region 2. A group focused on youth in corrections. They meet every other month.

6/29/2023 met Gendron & Gendron construction during the June 8 Housing & Employment Fair in Auburn. Set this meeting up with their HR person, Patti Saarinen, and me to discuss OJTs, and how WIOA can help businesses.

7/6/2023 hosted a pizza party for the EMDC staff to thank them for their work, especially with apprenticeship.

7/1/2023 met with Tri County Mental Health staff, along with Patti Saarinen and Razell Ward to discuss career pathways in mental health.

7/6/2023 spoke with Larry Robinson, President of the Maine Manufacturing Extension Partnership about meeting some of the businesses with whom they work. He will invite me to MEP's next staff meeting so I can explain our services. He suggested going on ride alongs with his staff to meet various businesses.

7/11/2023 met with the ED of a Kansas workforce board region similar to CWMWDB to develop a mentoring opportunity for me. The connection was made through NAWB.

7/11/2023 participated in the monthly Employee Growth Services meeting, a workforce development arm of the Manufacturers Association of Maine (MAME).

7/11/2023 visited the Spruce Mountain Adult Ed in Livermore Falls. They are a training partner and referral source for WIOA.