

**WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD MEETING
POCONO COUNTIES WORKFORCE INVESTMENT AREA
SEPTEMBER 7, 2022**

Members Participating in the Meeting, Hotel Wayne in Honesdale, PA:

- | | |
|--------------------------|---|
| 1. Anthony Herzog | Workforce Development Board |
| 2. Anthony Manzione | Workforce Development Board |
| 3. Barbara Diliberti | Workforce Development Board |
| 4. Ben Winn | Pocono Counties Workforce Investment Area |
| 5. Bill Cockerill | Workforce Development Board |
| 6. Brian Smith | Wayne County Commissioner |
| 7. Brooke Cho | Office of Vocational Rehabilitation |
| 8. Chuck Leonard | Workforce Development Board |
| 9. Cindy Matthews | Wayne Economic Development |
| 10. Craig Zurn | Chair, Workforce Development Board |
| 11. Cynthia DeFebo | Pike County Workforce Development |
| 12. Deborah Harrison | Monroe County CareerLink |
| 13. Dee Raneri | Workforce Development Board |
| 14. Derick Bellinger | Workforce Development Board |
| 15. Jennifer Passenti | Lackawanna College |
| 16. Joseph "Trip" Ruvane | Workforce Development Board |
| 17. Joseph Sebelin | Guest |
| 18. Julie Walker | Carbon County CareerLink |
| 19. Karen Pasciano | Workforce Development Board Member-Elect |
| 20. Katheryn Hait | Wayne Workforce Alliance |
| 21. Lisa Price | BWPO |
| 22. Lori Phillips | Workforce Development Board |
| 23. Maria Kovaleski | Wayne Workforce Alliance |
| 24. Marybeth Williams | Workforce Development Board |
| 25. Marybeth Wood | Workforce Development Board |
| 26. Samuel Hellen | Pocono Counties Workforce Investment Area |
| 27. Sharon Laverdure | Monroe County Commissioner |
| 28. Susan Rhoads-Procina | Pocono Counties Workforce Investment Area |

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD MEETING

POCONO COUNTIES WORKFORCE INVESTMENT AREA

September 7, 2022

CALL TO ORDER

A meeting of the Pocono Counties Workforce Development Board was held on Wednesday, September 7, 2022. The meeting was conducted in hybrid manner at the Hotel Wayne in Wayne County, with two board members joining by a Zoom Conference Call. The Meeting was called to order by Chairman Craig Zurn at 5:40 P.M.

Samuel Hellen verified the attendance of the members and guests participating in the Zoom meeting, quorum criteria being met.

REVIEW OF MINUTES

The Minutes of the June 1, 2022, Workforce Development Board Meeting had been emailed to the membership. A motion was made by Chuck Leonard to approve the Minutes of the June 1, 2022, Workforce Development Board Meeting, seconded by Dee Raneri - Board polled, motion carried. There were no abstentions.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE REVIEW

An August 10th meeting was held without official vote. Main options were discussed for a new Vice Chair, with the final determination being that a new vice chair will need be elected for a two-year term.

VICE CHAIR APPROVAL

Barbara Diliberti was nominated. A motion to accept the nomination was made by Anthony Herzog, seconded by Anthony Manzione. Board polled, and the motion carried. There were no abstentions.

BOARD VACANCY UPDATE

Brooke Cho will replace Sue Storm as OVR representative. Sam Hellen made an official welcome. The Board was reminded that more vacancies will arise next year, and that we will see a new member for the next meeting.

FISCAL MANAGER UPDATE

Susan Rhoads-Procina spoke regarding our audit and financial reports. Carbon County has selected the same auditing firm from the last four years, triggering the need for a waiver from the financial management policy. Executive Director Sam Hellen has confirmed the waiver with the County Commissioners for transmission to the State for approval.

Susan's report shows that while several workforce development areas left money on the table in the last fiscal year, there are better trends to start this new Fiscal Year off compared to last year. Chuck Leonard made a motion to accept the report, seconded by Anthony Herzog.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

WIOA Performance negotiations have begun, Sam has submitted his negotiated numbers with the rider that such numbers required Board approval. Examining projections, the numbers were determined to reflect the ongoing fallout from the COVID-19 Pandemic. Bill Cockerill moved, Seconded by Lori Phillips, to accept the negotiated numbers.

Credential Attainment and Measurable Skill Gains were noted as key points that influence these numbers, frequently affected by case management obstacles, which Sam mentioned as necessary to be diligent on.

We were approved for State Grant Money for a project with E-Impact to create a workforce development information dashboard for the PCWIA website. This information includes occupation earnings, snapshots of the labor force, unemployment claims, and job information, etc. and will be available to Workforce associates as well as the public at large. While the current version of the dashboard is clearly still in development, Sam asks for review and feedback on it from Board members.

Sam has also begun looking into Board management software for the use of LEOs, Board Members, and other staff from the consortium to streamline communications about Board activities. Optimally this will also organize materials for members and streamline the process of conveying updates. Quotes are still being sought by Sam and feedback was sought. Lori Phillips suggested that a training module for Board members would be helpful to inform new members of the functions and roles of the Board. Pricing and Functionality are currently points of decision for Sam, which he briefly described.

Sam has also begun transferring our documents from Microsoft to Adobe PDF format for ease of use and standardization of contracts. Sam announced new Board surveys he will be sending out to gauge opinions for minor changes with regard to timing and placement of Board meetings.

The EARN program was monitored for PY20-21 and a Corrective Action Plan was submitted summarily. The conversations with our monitor were productive and the lines of communication remain open and accessible.

Finally, the Local Area Plan modifications are coming up. The Plan was set in place in 2021 with modifications beginning now. The modifications are due in February,

so more discussion will occur in December; Sam notes we may need to invoke a digital vote if timing of the meeting is not advantageous. Sam notes he will convey information on it as it comes. Board approval and public comment, as well as a 90-day posting will also be required.

DEPUTY DIRECTOR / LOCAL MONITOR UPDATE

Ben Winn discussed the Monitoring Update provided by State Monitor Bob Pisko in June. The report was described as generally positive, but guidance was given on documentation procedures for recommended review with administrators, notably with regard to signatures, case notes, and Individual Plans and Strategies. Further, personally identifiable information is to be limited in communications among staff, particularly in digital communication; in lieu of such information, participant ID numbers are recommended as standard identification.

Youth monitoring is ongoing; of the 130 total youth participants for the consortium, approximately 20-21% will be audited for compliance. Dates and times for in house file checks are being determined as the desk audit is conducted. Detailed results will be provided at the December meeting.

Finally, the new internal review process for Individual Training Accounts was detailed by Ben. A new review tool, developed by Sam in Adobe, contains checklists for some of the main points of compliance, including service authorizations, program approval, and application completion. Cost estimate forms are still written in collaboration with the participant, but are now sent to Ben before Sam and Susan for review who performs the spot check before passing approved ones on. Ben stressed that such checking is not equivalent to annual monitoring and should not be seen as

equally in depth, rather it is strictly to ensure case compliance and provide a paper trail for expense justification. So far the process has led to the remedy of some cases that lacked documentation, as well as an invoice process hiccup with subcontractors.

RFP APPROVALS

Debbie Harrison described the Pocono West CareerLinking Academy that is coming to the region thanks to the assistance of St. Luke's. She asked that the contract be effective September 12th so as to allow participants in high school to begin as soon as possible with preparatory work to enter in the Spring semester. The program will allow them to visit healthcare locations on site to learn about the career opportunities in the industry, with students presenting on their experiences at the end. The area in Monroe County was chosen due to the economic need with the hopes for future expansion to surrounding counties. The program will take students into hospitals to view the workings, as well as receive information and training on career skills such as resume writing.

A motion to accept was made by Chuck Leonard, Seconded by Dee Raneri. The Board was polled, the motion carried. There were no abstentions.

CAREERLINK REPORTS

The Chair noted that the CareerLink reports were sent out to the Board members prior to the meeting and asked if there were any questions from the Board members regarding their reports. There were no questions and all reports were accepted as submitted.

**PA CareerLink® Carbon County
Operations and Staffing**

PA CareerLink® Carbon County has had some additional staffing changes. Heather Brown has moved on to new employment. Julie Walker, previously the TANF/WIOA Case Worker has moved into the position of Carbon County Careerlink Administrator. Kristel Pinckney has taken the position of TANF/ WIOA Case Worker and Kumra Vukelj joined the WIOA office in a new position as a TANF/ WIOA Coordinator. Beth Marsteller was employed in April as a WIOA Case Worker coordinating the Summer Youth Program.

Operations continue in Carbon County as stated in the previous reports. The staff continues to best support customers as effectively as possible, providing resources and assistance whenever possible.

Services and Programs

Workshops: As of September 1, 2022 Educational Opportunity Center (EOC) will no longer be providing in person workshops to residents of Carbon County as the Pocono's is no longer a part of their grant. The Carbon CareerLink® will continue to provide a schedule of virtual workshops through EOC on Zoom or Go To. Workshops for September include; Job Search Boot Camp, A Targeted Plan, Budgeting 101, Virtual Interviewing Tips, Hot Jobs of the Future, Resumes and Cover Letters, Getting Your Resume Seen and Matching My Skills.

In person workshop providers are being researched.

WIOA Training: There has been an expected increase in ITAs, as RESEA and KME Rapid Response services has increased Dislocated Worker ITAs. The most prevalent requests for training are CDL A, Welding, HVAC, CNA.

EARN: The EARN program is continuing to accept referrals and work with individuals in the program. Currently Carbon County has 7 active participants with 2 new referrals expected September 6th. The EARN program is now requiring individuals to attend in person services. The program continues to work with the County Assistance Office (CAO) and the Department of Human Services to provide services for EARN, Work Ready, SNAP, KEYS, and ETANF referrals.

RESEA: BWPO Staff continues to offer RESEA services to selected participants. The RESEA program had a total of 47 claimants that were profiled to the program with 21 participating, 20 exemptions due to return-to-work dates and 6 that did not report as of August 12th. This resulted in a 40% show rate. The majority of those profiled were seasonal layoffs such as school staff including cafeteria workers and bus drivers.

Unemployment Compensation and ID.Me: The UC Equity Grant was implemented on June 14th and allowed a UC representative to assist claimants in the Careerlink. This resulted in assisting a total of 112 claimants as of August 12th. Appointments began in

person then went virtual due to a staffing change. In person appointments will begin again on September 13th. There have been no issues to report.

Rapid Response Services with KME: The Carbon Careerlink continues to offer WIOA training, resume and job search assistance as well as assistance with online employment applications to displaced KME workers.

Foot Traffic/LMI

From June through August, PA CareerLink® Carbon County had 729 people come through our doors. 283 customers have come to us with Unemployment Compensation concerns. 31 for ID Me-assistance, 5 for the ID Me Form and 2 for RESEA. 13 EARN participants attended in person program activities, 38 customers came to the Careerlink for OVR services and 23 for Careerlink workshops. 172 customers have used our Career Resource Room for job search or to build a resume. 132 customers have come to the office for WIOA reasons, which can include registration, career services, or to pick up paychecks for our Summer Youth Employment Program.

From June through August the Carbon Careerlink has seen a slight increase in foot traffic, most likely due to in person UC appointments that began in June 14th. A UC representative is present at the Careerlink to address UC appointments on Mondays and Tuesdays. There is currently a two week wait list for appointments.

Foot Traffic

Total Foot Traffic: 729

Monthly Foot Traffic

- June: 259
- July: 238
- August: 232

Foot Traffic per Day

- June: 13
- July: 12
- August: 11

According to PA Workstats, the unemployment rate in Carbon County is 4.7% for July, including 1,500 unemployed. which is higher than the state average of 4.3%. There are

554 online job postings within Carbon County. From August 2021-July 2022 there are were 380 UC Exhaustees; namely from the Hospitality and Trade/Transportation Industries, as well as Education and Health Services Industry.

PA CareerLink® Monroe County

Highlights

This past quarter has certainly seen an exponential increase in foot traffic coming through the doors of the PA CareerLink Monroe County. Overall, we served 700 more individuals this quarter than in the previous one. The Unemployment Compensation traffic doubled, due to having the in person UC Representative who is booked solid weeks in advance. There were also 200 more Job Training Appointments, mainly due to the Summer Youth program. From the last report at the end of May, through the entire month of August, 1,798 customers have physically come through our doors and were served as follows:

- Unemployment Compensation Concerns: 912
- Career Resource Room for Job Search: 531
- Career Resource Room for UC (ID Me): 671
- WIOA – Job Training Appointments: 467

As we continue to move forward, we are holding more in person meetings and events to further the PA CareerLink Monroe County's thumbprint in the community. Some of the events are listed and then broken down in the team reports.

- Announcing the appointment by the Monroe County Commissioner's of new Workforce Development Board member Karen Casciano, the Human Resources Director of St. Luke's University Health Network Monroe.
- The PA CareerLink Monroe County received both an ADA Audit by the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation and a County Fire Extinguisher Inspection during the month of August.
- St. Luke's responded to the RFP for the CareerLinking Academy program and we will be requesting approval from the Workforce Development Board at the September board meeting.
- Two of the most recent new hires for Monroe County Job training have attended the CareerLink 101. This program is now done virtually, but we are very glad to see it back as it is a great introduction to CareerLink history and services for new employees.

- ESU Innovation Center hosted a collaboration for State and Local Services to a new employer in Monroe County, Orange Pavers Corporation, which have already broken ground in Jackson Township. Orange Pavers Corp. has roots in the Ukraine and utilizes many international resources. Attendance at the meeting included the PA Department of Community and Economic Development, East Stroudsburg University, ESU Business Accelerator, and Monroe County Representatives that were from the Commissioner's, PMEDC, and PA CareerLink Monroe County. We informed the business of the services offered to employers in Monroe County by CareerLink with Job Postings, Recruitments, and Training Opportunities.

I. Business Services Team (BST)

- The BST held six in-person job fairs and the employers were NEPA Inclusive, FCI Canaan, Scot Run Diner, Roto Rooter and Taco Bell (2). We also hosted a statewide virtual job fair for the Federal Bureau of prisons.
- Attended a rapid response for Pleasant Valley School District.
- Hosted two UC seminars for employers: UC 101 and Separation Issues
- The RESEA attendance is steadily increasing as the state clears out the fraudulent issues with UC. June 26, July 39, and August 44.

II. Career Guidance Team

- The Summer Youth Employment Program started on July 5, 2022 and ended on August 19th. There was a total of 62 participants enrolling through the WOFO application, and also the CareerLink application/website. Out of those participants, 46 completed the entire process providing the required documents and paperwork. 32 participants were qualified through the TANF training dollars and 14 participants were qualified through the WIOA training dollars.
- The success in acquiring work sites to place the participants in the summer work experience was enhanced when Monroe County Job Training and YES staff coordinated visits to both new and previously used employers that included Fun Zone, Pocono Services for Family and Children, Pocono Go Karts, Legacy Barbershop, Harbor Freight, and PA CareerLink. With the help of these worksites, we were able to give true work experience to the participants, which will help them in the future when they apply for work.
- The Summer Career Exploration Camp, contracted through PSFC's YES, had 12 participants ranging from K-6th graders who participated in fundamentals of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM). The program was 5 weeks long and held at the Mountain Center.

- Twenty-two (22) Participants are enrolled in EARN, they are all currently active while one (1) is on SNAP.
- Twenty-five (26) adults are enrolled in the GED program.
- Thirty-four (34) ITA's has been written.

Twenty- four (24) Adults

Five (5) Dislocated

Two (2) Out of school Youth

- Most Participants enrolled in the CDL-A Training program; below is the breakdown of the number of participants currently in training.

CDL-A = Nineteen (19)

Certified Medical Assistant = Four (4)

Welding = One (1)

Barbering = Two (2)

Nursing RN = Two (2)

Plumbing = One (1)

III. Customer Information & Resources Team (CIRT)

- For May, June, and July, we assisted over 600 individuals in the Career Resource Room (CRC). Most of the people are those that need assistance getting through the ID.Me and unemployment processes.
- In the last three months, staff has been able to refer individuals with UC problems to the UC Representative. She was able to meet with 112 participants that were having unemployment problems. In June, the UC Representative started seeing individuals in person. There is at least a two-week waitlist to meet with the representative.
- The switchboard fielded over 2,000 phone calls from May thru July.
- The seminar attendance has seen an increase over the last few months. We have served 500 participants in our seminars in the last three months.

- A new seminar, called “Getting Your Resume Seen”, was added in July. This seminar goes over tips and tricks for getting your online applications to get passed the Applicant Tracking System.
- For seven weeks, our office had two in-school youth participating in the Summer Youth Work Experience Program. They assisted with answering phones, working the front desk, customer service, filing, and redoing the CRC bulletin boards.
- We currently have two people from the AARP Experience Works Program in our office.
- A member of our team regularly attends the monthly safety committee meetings at the Monroe County Administrative Building.
- CareerLink was represented at State Senator Mario Scavello’s Senior Fair in July.
- Looking ahead to new workshops.....we will be designing a new seminar for applicants on how they can network in a technology environment.

Pike County

We continue to assist job seekers and enroll persons interested in training programs. Staff continues to assist individuals with Unemployment Compensation as best we can. Job seeker and training activities are picking up and unemployment services requests are lessening.

Additional staff activities and services include:

- Constant Contact newsletters and social media for sharing information and services.
- Job search and resume assistance -
- Employment retention strategies.
- Employer services – identifying and posting employment opportunities.
- Providing information regarding available resources.
- Accepting and processing applications for training.
- Virtual Seminars/Workshops provided by staff at the Monroe County CareerLink® and the PA Department of Banking and Securities.

Attached is a copy of the most recent Pike County Profile from The Center for Workforce Information & Analysis for your review. Unemployment is down significantly (4.5%) from this

time last year (6.9%) while the labor force has increased for from 24,300 (June 2021) to 25,700 (June 2022).



Pike County Profile
Aug 2022.pdf

State Staff: Charlie Montalbano from the Monroe County CareerLink® comes 1 day a week to assist with veteran employer services and CareerLink® job postings. TJ Warholic comes every other week to assist with UC and ID.Me.

Events and Outreach: Our in-house hiring events are starting to pick up. We are seeing a lot of employer interest with more job seekers attending.

We are hosting “sidewalk” job fairs at our office on, with 15 employers attending each event. We have a larger job fair scheduled for September 20th at the Waterfront at Silver Birches. We anticipate 40+ employers will attend.

We are utilizing our social media accounts including Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Constant Contact, and Instagram to promote our recruiting events, employment opportunities, available services, and job search/employment retention tips. Please follow the link to see our latest newsletter, <https://conta.cc/3PnZYi2>

Staff recently attended the National Night Event at Hemlock Farms in Lords Valley, and Elder Justice Day in Milford. And we are scheduled to attend mock interview day at USP Canaan.

Staff Development: WIOA Title I and Welfare program staff recently completed the following programs:

- Federal Protections Against Employment Discrimination Based on Sexual Orientation or Gender Identity
- Harassment, Sexual Harassment, Retaliation, and other related issues
- EARN programs monitoring review
- CWDS/Careerlink® data entry
- Breaking Down Employment Barriers Second Chance for offenders
- 2 staff are scheduled to attend CareerLink 101 training

WIOA Training: Training options are becoming more available as schools reopen and some are offering virtual options.

PY 2021 (July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2022)

- \$174,275.00 - Individual Training Accounts (ITA)

PY 2022 (July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023)

- \$28,091.00 - Individual Training Accounts (ITA)

We had 32 Summer Youth Employment and Training participants and 3 placed with 30 employers throughout the county. These programs are generally 8 weeks long and participants' wages are paid for with program dollars. Most have returned to high school or college and several will stay on working after-school and on weekends depending on available funding.

Welfare Funded Programs in Pike and Wayne Counties: Clients in these programs are transitioning from remote activities to in-person activities for better engagement. These activities include job search, subsidized or unsubsidized employment, training, and community service.

We currently have 10 clients in the EARN program. 6 are actively job searching, 2 will be entering training programs, and 2 completed the job search phase of the program (with employment) and are in retention. Participants in the EARN program receive intensive case management, career counseling and retention strategies/services.

We continue to rent office space in the Hawley Silk Mill from Lackawanna College – Lake Region Center, to better serve our Wayne County EARN program participants.

Customer Satisfaction: Customers completing our customer satisfaction services survey responded positively with a perfect 100% .

Wayne County

Within this period, Workforce Alliance has welcomed two new Career Specialists. Each brings years of experience in working with children and families seeking to better their situations. During the training and acclimation period, partnerships with Juvenile Justice, Probation, Drug & Alcohol, Libraries, Businesses, and others have been rejuvenated for direct referrals for services.

An increase in individuals seeking services has been noticeable. Service delivery is provided in person, off-site and remotely to remove transportation barriers. The re-launch of scheduled workshops includes resume writing, career exploration, job search and placement, career guidance and access to educational opportunities (high school completion, GED instruction and testing, and higher education possibilities). Our Partner, The Educational Opportunity Center (EOC) is in offices twice a month for GED assistance and financial aid assistance.

Building better Business Relations has been top priority. Staff members attend community events, including Wayne Tomorrow! and National Night Out in Hawley, PA. Staff members meet with businesses in their own environment. Knowing the work environment is equally as

important as the skills an employer is seeking in a prospective employee. The result of this Business Relations has added 9 new worksites for paid work experiences and interest in On-the-Job and Incumbent Worker Training.

Summer Employment Opportunities & WAYNE TOMORROW! WORK CREWS

21 youth participated in paid work experiences at a variety of host sites within Wayne County. Aligning and supporting the *Wayne Tomorrow!* initiative, (a community-based partnership) *Wayne Tomorrow!* Work Crews provided work experiences and career exploration activities with several *Wayne Tomorrow!* partners including County agencies such as Aging, Children & Youth, Probation, the Historical Society, and other community-based non-profit organizations within the County that could use a helping hand.

Work Crew members participated in an eight-week paid work experience and incorporated financial literacy, entrepreneurship, and soft-skills exercises including team building activities.

The overarching goal was to provide young people with real-world work experiences that expose them to a variety of potential career paths right here in Wayne County. Much of this interaction happened during the “Lunch & Learn” segment of the day.

“Lunch & Learn” took place at each of the work sites. The youth had the opportunity to talk with volunteer community members about career paths, their industry, and how young people can obtain positions in that industry. We thank our Business Community for sponsoring the lunch portion and providing their time and expertise in the learn portion.

Other Services Statistics – Employment Services 70 Unemployment Assistance 398

Workforce Alliance leverages other programs and services to support not supplant WIOA. The extensive portfolio maintained expands the range of services. Examples include.

A Federal Workforce Opportunities in Rural Communities Grant focuses on the intentional approach to Recovery to Work. The barrier is the only eligibility requirement as we are keenly aware that addiction does not discriminate and permeates all income levels. To date 16 individuals are participating.

A USDA grant supports the Intern-to-Hire initiative. Any individual 18 and over seeking work is matched with an employer for an 8-week period. This “Try before you buy” philosophy ensures both the employer and employee will proceed with employment permanency. The grant covers the wages during this on-boarding period. To date, of the 80 internships established 64 interns have been hired! This program has also expanded the interest in WIOA On the Job Training subsidies.

The SHINE (Schools and Homes in Education) Program is the opportune time for Programs and Services to be shared with families. The required “Parent Engagement” portion affords staff to discuss the portfolio of services that can be availed to them.

The new Digital Literacy program is a partnership with the Wayne Library Alliance. Wayne County demographics demonstrate an older population with limited technology. In Wayne County, broadband infrastructure is approached in not only the accessibility and affordability of

technology but also the ABILITY or literacy aspect. Classes are being conducted through the various library locations and range from how to use a smartphone (Note: Parent surveys from SHINE demonstrated that most families had only ONE device in their household...a smartphone) to Google Suite classes. The ability to use a computer is a skill necessary for most jobs.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None was offered.

OTHER BUSINESS

The hospitality industry was discussed as a potential high priority industry. There exist difficulties in quantifying some of the jobs within said industry, but Sam notes too that there would be value to focusing further on hospitality for the region given its growth within the consortium. There was discussion of ways to promote the industry and jobs within it through petitions to CWIA, as well as the need to address the growing need.

There was further discussion of the promotion of other careers based upon the compensation and benefits shown to the public.

ADJOURNMENT

The next meeting will take place December 7, 2022 in Monroe County with a location to be determined. With no other business to be brought before the Board, a motion was made by Tony Herzog to adjourn, seconded by Bill Cockerill. Board polled – motion carried, there were no abstentions. The meeting ended at 6:33 P.M.