

MICHIGAN WORKS! WEST CENTRAL
WDB/LEO JOINT MEETING
LUDINGTON MICHIGAN WORKS! WORKFORCE SERVICE CENTER
WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 7, 2019

MINUTES

LEO Members Present

Andersen, Janet
Byl, Larry
Emig, Larry
Hogenson, Tom
Howard, Linda
Johnson, Les
Walls, Karl

WDB Members Present

Eisler, David
Frey, Amy
Griffin, Nancy
Gustad, Eric
Kosheba, Dan
Marek, Ron
Roberts, Carla
Romanowski, Cynthia
Smith-Olson, Debbie
Thompson, Sheri
Timmers, Jon
Trucks, Mary
Visser, William

Others Present

Kuchnicki, Donald – Telamon Corporation

Call to Order

LEO Chairperson, Larry Emig brought the joint meeting of the Workforce Development Board/Local Elected Officials to order at 12:37 p.m. at the Michigan Works! Workforce Service Center, 920 E. Tinkham Avenue, Ludington 49431. There is a quorum of both the WDB and the LEO.

LEO Members Absent

Cooper, Burt
DeLaat, Ken

WDB Members Absent

Cooper, David
Fisk, Dena
Johnson, Peter
Massy, Dan
Splane, Rob
Stark, Liz
Vasquez, Jill
Vyse-Staszak, Janet
Whitney, Tina

Michigan Works! West Central Staff

Bennett, Merri	Keene, Shelly
Buss, Mark	Marr, Chad
Davis, Toni	Mokofsky, Colton
Eppley, Jon	Pickard, Renee
Eppley, Megan	Shoemaker, Connie
Gager, Kim	Smith, Aleshia

Ruppert, Tracie – Reed City Group
Ward, Chris – Reed City Group

Introduction of Guests

Guests were introduced and welcomed.

Consent Agenda (Action Item)

- ◇ Minutes of June 5, 2019 WDB/LEO Joint Meeting – Emailed Prior
- ◇ June Financial Report – Emailed Prior/Handout (Goldenrod)

Ron Marek moved to accept the Consent Agenda as printed; supported by Janet Andersen; motion accepted unanimously by both the WDB and the LEO. 12:38 p.m.

Showcase: Chris Ward, Production Worker & Tracie Ruppert, Human Resources, Reed City Group

Mark introduced Tracie Ruppert, Human Resource Manager at Reed City Group and Chris Ward. Chris is a production worker at Reed City Group. Chris came to Mark asking for assistance in obtaining a place to live. There have been challenges in finding affordable housing in the area along with difficulties in qualifying for public housing for workers who have just started their careers. With Mark's help, Chris was able to obtain a very nice home in the country. In addition, he was able to cut his auto insurance premium in less than half when he picked up renters insurance and a life insurance rider. The combined outcome allows Chris to have a great home in the country while allowing him the ability to save. All this was accomplished without any additional BRN funding beyond the staff assistance offered through Michigan Works!

Tracie Ruppert informed the Boards that they are very pleased with Chris's performance and dedication to Reed City Group. His grandfather worked here for 19 plus years; his goal is to beat his grandfather's record. Chris shows up to work an hour early every day, he's a team player and has received three "Team Player" awards and two "Game Changer" awards. Tracie explained that they

are very happy, too, with the way Mark has helped Chris and others to solve potential problems that would hinder their employment.

NOTE: Tracie Ruppert & Chris Ward left at 12:49 p.m.

Mason County Information

Renee Pickard, Talent Specialist, Ludington Workforce Service Center explained that the Ludington Center has been busy with several displaced workers. In February there were two major lay-offs in the area, one of these closed permanently. Besides there were other temporary lay-offs.

Many of these displaced workers have been enrolled into training and just this week two of them successfully completed their CDL training.

Our partners have been busy as well. Michigan Rehabilitation Services is in our Center once a week and have been pretty busy. The County Veteran's Rep has customers coming in daily and he has made himself available to see them on a one-on-one basis.

Also our GED program has been in full swing with summer school enrollments being up.

Plans/Modifications Summary – Handout *Blue (Action Item)*

1. Capacity Building and Professional Development (PI 19-18) – **Action – Signatures Required**

Capacity Building and Professional Development funds may be utilized for, but not limited to, supporting state and local partnerships, enhancing system capacity to provide opportunities for individuals with barriers to employment to enter in-demand occupations, developing and improving local program performance and goals, and assisting ongoing system development and proficiency, including professional development and technical assistance. Michigan Works! West Central has received a total allocation of \$13,429 that will expire on June 30, 2020.

2. WIOA Statewide Activities Funding for Program year 2019 High Concentration of WIOA Eligible Youth (PI 19-23) – **Action – Signatures Required**

The Department of Talent and Economic Development (TED) is allocating WIOA Statewide Activities funding to provide additional assistance to local areas that have a high concentration of WIOA eligible youth. Michigan Works! West Central has received a total allocation of \$2,990. The funding will expire on June 30, 2020.

3. Allocation Year (AY) 2019, Wagner-Peyser Employment Service (ES) funding for Michigan Works! Service Center (MWSC) Operations (PI 19-21) – **Action – Signatures Required**

The purpose of the MWSC funding is to support additional workforce development activities, including activities that support and enhance the One-Stop service delivery system. Michigan Works! West Central will receive an allocation of \$83,407 that will expire on June 30, 2020.

4. PATH Program Plan Redistribution Funding (PI 18-32, Change 2) – **No Action Required**

This is the Plan for customers who apply for or are receiving public cash assistance. Michigan Works! West Central staff work closely with DHHS staff. There is a 21-day Applicant Eligibility Period (AEP) to prepare and engage applicants in positive activities that promote job readiness and meeting the work participation requirements. These efforts continue for the duration of the customer's participation with DHHS and Michigan Works! Several MWAs are de-obligating TANF funds. The funds are being redistributed based on MWA request. The State has released an additional \$50,000 in TANF funds for Michigan Works! West Central. The overall budget has increased from \$769,065 to \$946,605.

5. Community Ventures (CV) (PI 18-20 Change 4) – **No Action Required**

The Department of Talent and Economic Development/Workforce Development Agency (TED/WDA) has released additional allocations across the 16 MWAs of \$1,500,000 to support the CV Program and Business Resource Network models. Michigan Works! West Central has

received an additional allocation of \$29,737. The overall budget has increased from \$193,769 to \$223,506.

David Eisler moved to accept the Capacity Building & Professional Development; the High Concentrations of Youth; and the Michigan Works! Service Center Operations as presented by Kimberly Gager; motion supported by Sheri Thompson; motion accepted unanimously by both the WDB and the LEO. 12:53 p.m.

June Program Reports – Handout

◇ Enrollment/Expenditure Reports

Shelly stated that this is the final report for the Programs administered by Hope Network. After this the format will be changed somewhat.

Newaygo County Service Center Update

Shelly informed the Boards that the move is coming along very well. She held a bidders' conference yesterday for furniture and had four bidders attend. These bids are due August 23, 2019.

Shelly did talk to Superintendent Dr. Lori Tubbergen-Clark about an extension and she graciously gave a 30 day extension. November 15th is the tentative move in date this allows for a two week window. The new Center is located south of M-82 and M-37 on the west side of the road. Everything has gone very smoothly and we are looking forward to the additional space.

Michigan Works! West Central Transition Update – Handout

An updated organizational chart was handed out to the Board members showing that the positions are almost filled.

Aleshia Smith was introduced. Aleshia is the Quality Assurance Performance Specialist. Aleshia started at Michigan Works! July 29th and for the prior eight years she worked as an office assistant, and head of Customer Service. She is looking forward to be “out of the spotlight” as far as customer service and work more behind the scenes.

Kim informed the Boards that the Mecosta County Business Resource Network will begin in early fall. Megan Eppley will transfer to Mecosta County to be the Success Coach. Interviews for her replacement in Newaygo County will begin in the coming weeks. The current Newaygo County Business Resource employers have been notified and informed of the transition.

Career & Educational Advisory Council (CEAC) Update

Kim explained that at the last meeting of the CEAC held on June 11th it was reported that unfortunately none of the area ISDs were funded for the Marshall Plan.

Last month, Kim was fortunate enough to visit the Capital Area Michigan Works! CEAC meeting. They have a very robust CEAC group.

The focus of the Michigan Works! West Central CEAC will include registered apprenticeships and promoting Career Pathway events and exploration events. The next CEAC meeting will be held on October 8, 2019 at West Shore Community College.

Newaygo County Business Resource Network Report

Megan Eppley pointed out some highlights for Newaygo businesses – unofficially the numbers for requests for service continue to grow. Since July 1 there have been already 35 requests and over \$3,000 in expenditures. In addition there have been seven approvals for Bridge loans in Q2. Most of the active requests for service have been in automotive repair.

She is in the process of working with Gerber Federal Credit Union to provide some financial counseling.

Megan also shared one testimonial: “This program was a life saver for me. I was unable to work for several years due to health issues and after getting things back in control, I hit the workforce again but had no transportation. Trying to change scheduled times to catch a ride was beyond difficult, and walking to work in the winter having Lupus and Fibromyalgia was impossible. When I was referred to the car ministry program I was grateful and when I was chosen for a car I was beyond excited, happy and relieved! Then to have the work program able to assist me with new tires for my car, clothes for my new job and insurance help, I was in tears, tears of joy! I had been off work for a month due to surgery and had so much anxiety due to having bad tires, but thank God this program came along. This program has changed my life for the better and helped me get back on my feet. Thank you all so very much!!

Osceola/Lake County Business Resource Network Report

Mark Buss explained that the data for Osceola County illustrates 81 unduplicated service requests since beginning as Success Coach in Mid-June and going through July. A majority of the activity to-date is in relation to auto repair and maintenance. The Lake Osceola State Bank established a bridge loan which is starting to generate interest. Mark will begin providing services in Lake County beginning in September.

Outreach Activities

◇ New Business Services Specialist – Colton Mokofsky

Merri introduced Colton Mokofsky as the newest member of the Business Services team. Colton is part time and will be covering Lake, Mason and Oceana counties.

Colton grew up in Swartz Creek, his wife grew up in Ludington and that is what initially brought him to Mason County. He is learning about the latest technology with different elements of video production which is what he has his degree in. He's looking forward to being part of the Michigan Works! team.

◇ USDOL Apprenticeships

Merri and Jon attended a two-day apprenticeship forum in Lansing in mid-June. They gained a great deal of information including how to file the apprenticeship standards documents, incorporate WIOA funding and participated in an exercise identifying what does and does not qualify as an apprenticeship.

Jon also attended an apprenticeship event on July 31st, at the Muskegon Community College. There were about 15 employers from the western side of Region 4, as well as, representatives from the college, USDOL, West Michigan Works! Jon shared information with the employers about apprenticeships and how they can be applied toward the upcoming Going PRO Talent Fund grant. Most of the employers were outside West Central's six county area. One was from Newaygo County, whom Jon is already working with on apprenticeships.

Merri and Jon are holding an employer apprenticeship information session/lunch and learn at West Shore Community College on Friday, August 16th. Along with West Shore they are also partnering with Northwest Michigan Works! Dave Jackson the USDOL representative will also be there. All interested employers are welcome to attend.

NOTE: Renee Pickard left at 1:14 p.m.

Business Activity

◇ Going Pro Talent Fund

Merri, Jon and Colton had a webinar for the Going PRO Talent Fund Tuesday, August 6th. This year's application period will run from September 12th through October 2nd. As in the past Michigan Works! agencies will have time after that to work on applications received so that deadline will be October 18th. The application process will be online this year. There have been several trainings on the new process including a hands on workshop. There are still a lot of bugs to be worked out by the state. However, they have stated that if the bugs are not worked out by the end of August, they will use the old application process. They are hopeful the online process will be ready to go. Merri, Jon and Colton have already started meeting with employers to see if they want to apply this year.

◇ Employer Led Collaborative Grant

As Merri mentioned at the last meeting West Central is in the process of establishing an industry sector collaboration or employer led collaborative in Health Care. They have applied for a grant through the state which was made available to organizations starting a new collaborative. They needed two employer letters of support, West Central receive five. They also received ten partner support statements. At this point they have not heard if the application was approved.

◇ Job Fairs/Success Stories

Since the last Board meeting, Jon reported that a total of 19 job fairs were held by eight different employers at our Service Centers. They also marketed hiring events for Effex Staffing/Magna Mirrors in Newaygo; Service Master in Stanwood; Youth Opportunity – Ewart Academy in Ewart; and GEO in Manistee.

Also, there were no Rapid Responses conducted in the West Central area since the last meeting.

Success stories were shared for Out-of-School Youth, Adult Ed/WIOA, Wagner-Peyser, PATH and Career Connect/Adult Ed. These stories highlight the clients who walk through the front doors of the Service Centers.

◇ Updates Mecosta/Newaygo/Osceola County

◦ Mecosta County

Harbor Freight is coming to Big Rapids this fall and looking to hire three full time supervisors and 20 to 25 part time associates. Two job fairs will be held at the Big Rapids Service Center. They will be opening in the former Staples building.

◦ Newaygo County

Jon attended a ribbon cutting for the new \$9 million Harbison Walker International expansion located in White Cloud. This adds 35% more floor space which most of it will be warehouse. The expansion also includes the installation of a new manufacturing line.

◦ Osceola County

Reed City Group is planning an \$8 million 80,000 square foot expansion into the vacant building across the street in the former Nabco building. The company estimates 30 full time positions will be created during the next five years.

Yoplait is working with the Michigan Economic Development Corporation and the City of Reed City to obtain a half million dollar grant for machinery and equipment operations improvements, which will allow the plant to add 35 new jobs. Yoplait had previously closed a facility in California, and potentially could be bringing some of that production equipment to the Reed City plant.

What's New in our Region?

Kim and Shelly met with Eva Rohlman from Mid-Michigan Community Action Agency in Farwell to discuss partnering with them regarding the Homeless Veterans Reintegration Program. West Central will assist with employment assistance which will include development of Individual Service Strategies, Career Readiness 101 which is a remediation program. They will also be given the Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System, which is a testing that measures basic skills, the English language and literacy skills needed to function effectively. Math and reading skills will also be tested.

Toni reported that Lake County is issuing the third \$100 incentive for completion of a Work Experience. The three youth who completed the Work Experience, two of them have been offered permanent employment.

The Shelby Center staff met with the Oceana College Access Network (OCAN) to discuss how we can continue to build relationships with local businesses and connect with students leaving high school. Hopefully connecting high school counselors and students to the out-of-school youth WIOA program. Staff in the Shelby Center are also planning the "Students in the Workplace" days that take place in the fall and spring for Junior and Senior students of Oceana County.

Chad mentioned that they met with Angela, Director for the Center for Leadership and Career Services at Ferris State University to continue to partner with them. Also new future opportunities are being checked out to partner with Career Development and initiating tours of Michigan Works! West Central.

Unemployment Ranking June 2019 – Handout

The average for the West Central area is 5.0 for the month of June.

2019 ALICE Report – Handout

ALICE (Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed) shines a light on the challenges ALICE households face. ALICE households exist in all age groups, across all races and ethnicities, in single and two-parent families, and in households with or without children. ALICE households live in urban, suburban, and rural areas, and in every county in Michigan.

Next Meeting October 2, 2019 – Hart Community Center – Hart City Hall

The next joint meeting of the WDB/LEO is scheduled for Wednesday, October 2, 2019 at the Hart Community Center/Hart City Hall, 407 South State Street, 49420.

Round-the-Table

- » Trucks, Mary, FiveCap, Inc. – Mary asked for a moment of silence for the recent shooting victims.
- » Roberts, Carla, Fremont Area Community Foundation – had their first Business Leaders Lunch; created a list and working on the second one and planning the third one. Very pleased with the Business Resource Network; working to be better partners to work together to resolve problems.
- » Walls, Karl, Lake County Commissioner – GEO has already made an impact in the area. He is receiving calls every day inquiring about rentals and right now nothing is available. We expect this housing growth to continue. It has been a huge impact on Lake County.
- » Griffin, Nancy, Michigan Rehabilitation Services – MRS is no longer under DHHS, they are now part of Labor & Economic Opportunity. They are excited to see more alignment with Michigan Works! MRS has already left the DHHS in Hart and is spending more time at the Michigan Works! Center. In the fall they plan to talk more about collaboration.

- » Thompson, Sheri, MOISD – After a very long school year, school will be starting again August 21st. Mid-Michigan Community College’s satellite location is being launched on the MOISD campus this fall. These classes will be offered to our local dual-enrolled high school students and the general public. Ferris State University is offering concurrent enrollment dual enrollment pricing to students in the MOISD, which is a great benefit to our local schools. There is also a collaboration in the works with Mecosta and Osceola counties and Ferris to provide vision screening through the School of Ophthalmology for elementary students, identifying key deficiencies in eyesight, making the student at risk for learning crucial reading skills. Meceola Tech offers career and technical training for adult learners in the region. Fall courses are scheduled in Welding, IT, Intro to Manufacturing, Automotive Electrical Systems, Culinary Basics, EMT and CNA. Please put out the word to adults who may be interested
- » Gustad, Eric, Consumers Energy – the “dragon” has been approved and expect to start construction yet this year.
- » Eisler, Dave, Ferris State University – testing student’s vision and it is amazing how many vision problems were undiagnosed. Students will be arriving and an ice cream social is planned for September 29th. Ferris football season coming up and looking to have another outstanding year.
- » Howard, Linda, Mecosta County Commissioner – this has been the height of tourist season with rentals at a premium. Leprino has been mailing letters from Mt Pleasant to Big Rapids encouraging people to apply.
- » Hogenson, Tom, City of Big Rapids – transportation has been a topic of discussion for some time; housing has been a challenge; the housing authority may build some new homes but this is far from fixing the problem. The new fire engine for the City of Big Rapids came over from Wisconsin on the Badger.

- » Byl, Larry, Oceana Commissioner – had 60,000 people at the Electric Forest celebration. Mediatechnologies in Shelby makes classroom and Library furniture including track mounted cabinets. These components are interchangeable and a classroom can be changed in a matter of hours.
- » Marek, Ron, Reed City Group – Mark Buss is doing a great job for the Reed City Group, sometimes it's the small things that really make a difference.
- » Andersen, Janet, Mason County Commissioner – very appreciative for the space provided for the County Veteran's Rep in the Ludington Center. He is doing a great job and just recently a 97 year old vet came in for assistance. The Michigan Works! Center is the perfect location – new opportunities and a win/win.
- » Smith-Olson, Debbie, Lake Osceola State Bank – agrees that GEO has made a very big impact on Lake County, from restaurants hiring more help, to new people in the workforce and housing. Trout-Arama for the first time in 63 years the parade had to be cancelled due to thunder storms. The County Road Commission applied for emergency status, many culverts that were small got washed out and one bridge over the Baldwin River is impassable.

Other Business

Reserved for the Public

Adjournment

Meeting stands adjourned at 1:44 p.m.