

**Program Oversight Committee Meeting**  
**Friday, April 17, 2020**  
**8:30 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.**  
**Cisco Webex online meeting**

**Members Present:** Mike Hesketh, Deana Karem, Jenny Lampton, Christy Ralston, Lisa Thompson (proxy for Sadiqa Reynolds), Patricia Williams

**Staff:** Michael Gritton, Cindy Read, Elizabeth Davis-Terhune, Jaime Disney, Sarah Ehresman, Patrick Garvey, Chris Locke, Brian Luerman, Bailey Preston, Rider Rodriguez, Mary Rosenthal, Aleece Smith, Tobin Williamson, Angella Wilson

**Guests/Observers:** Marsha Berry, Kimberly Boyd-Lane, Sara Dodeci, Ashley Janicki, Demitra Suazo, Renee Walters, Regan Wann, Jennifer Welch, Angela Wells-Vereb, Linda Witt

**Welcome and Introductions** – *Christy Ralston*

The meeting began shortly after 8:30 a.m. Ms. Ralston welcomed everyone and reminded everyone to mute themselves to limit background noise. She added the emphasis on keeping everything on schedule due to the packed agenda.

**Review & Approve Minutes from February 21, 2020 meeting** – *Christy Ralston*

Ms. Thompson asked to be listed as a proxy of Sadiqa Reynolds. A motion to approve the minutes was made by Mr. Hesketh, seconded by Ms. Karem.

**Staff Update** – *Cindy Read*

Ms. Read wanted to share with the Committee the spreadsheet of how KentuckianaWorks contractors are still serving customers in the work-from-home era. By the week of March 16, everyone was working remotely. The most important part is that programs were incredibly resourceful and creative, still serving over 1,500 people per week. The two most challenging was the Urban League's KentuckianaBuilds (the current class is graduating today!) and the manufacturing training, who last had a class on March 7<sup>th</sup>. Staff are still working to get that converted to an online format. Ms. Ralston thanked Ms. Read for the update. Ms. Read asked Mr. Williamson to do a roll call to make sure there was a quorum.

**Staff Recommendation: Laptops and Internet added to Supportive Services Policy** – *Mary Rosenthal*

This has been a discussion point for the POC previously, back in April, but the current health crisis is pushing it back to the forefront since trainings are increasingly done online. It is a necessary modernizing of the supportive service policy, which are directly available to WIOA career training services participants (examples of supportive services costs include textbooks, uniforms, tools, and testing fees). Two key questions: 1) is WIOA funding allowed to be used for this, and 2) does KentuckianaWorks have the capacity to be a technology provider? Some states specifically allow computers to be purchased, so there are examples around the country. The policy would be aligned closely with WIOA guidance and the state's trade policy (such cost reasonableness by matching the cap of \$600/computer). One area that would diverge with the state's trade policy is the recapture clause, which would be an administrative burden that we do not have the capacity for doing; think of it as similar to textbooks. The folks getting the computers will be involved with case manager and getting ongoing support throughout the process. Ms. Rosenthal presented three options:

- 1) Including computers and internet access as allowable supportive service costs for WIOA participants enrolled in post-secondary training, internship, or pre-apprenticeship programs, with a cap of \$600 on the computer and the overall limit on supportive services remaining \$1,000;
- 2) The same as #1, just with the exclusion of internet services;
- 3) No change to the current policy, which does not allow purchasing of computers/internet.

Ms. Rosenthal recommended Option #1 moving forward. Ms. Karem asked about safeguarding the laptops, getting clarification on inappropriate use of the technology. Ms. Rosenthal said KentuckianaWorks would be the purchasers of the computers, so cost reasonableness would be considered. As for how the laptops would be used, Ms. Rosenthal said there is not a monitoring mechanism in place, though she would defer to Mr. Rodriguez for specifics. Ms. Rosenthal confirmed Ms. Karem's ask that the laptop is the participant's at that point. Mr. Hesketh asked about the impact on budget; he had discomfort about potentially obligating ourselves to paying for something significantly more than anticipated. Ms. Rosenthal clarified that supportive services are always dependent upon financial availability. Ms. Read said it does not change the amount of money being allocated per person (\$1,000), it will just allow for a new product to be purchased under the policy. Ms. Ralston said the proposed policy is consistent with industry standards for computer purchases and tuition reimbursement; her opinion is that it's "fantastic and about time."

Ms. Karem made a motion to accept option #1, per Ms. Rosenthal's recommendation. Ms. Lampton seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously following a roll-call vote.

**Staff Recommendation: WIOA Youth Program in the Regional Counties – Cindy Read**

The POC approved a Request for Proposal back in February because the contracts can only go for five years. A competitive procurement was done with Louisville Metro Government. The RFP was issued via Bonfire on March 9<sup>th</sup>, sent out to 14 bidders and potentially hundreds more. 31 organizations downloaded the proposal, but in the end, only one proposal was submitted: Goodwill Industries of Kentucky, the current contractor. A select committee (Mr. Hesketh, Ms. Lampton, and Willie Byrd) was formed. All proposals are reviewed carefully, whether there are ten or one; if there are no competitive proposals, the RFP can be reissued. The committee reviewed Goodwill's proposal and felt it was a very strong one, based on factors such as organizational capacity and implementation approach. The committee had a Webex meeting on April 11 where they asked specific questions to the Goodwill staff before finalizing their scoring. The committee found strengths included strong organization, depth/experience, implementation framework, demonstrated adjustments to changing environments, and letters of support from the six county judges. Areas of improvement included access to mental health services and improved outreach. Ms. Read recommended entering into contract negotiations with Goodwill Industries of Kentucky, with a budget not to exceed \$400,000 per year starting July 1, 2020, followed by four renewable one-year terms.

Ms. Karem said she was very confident in Goodwill's ability to handle the project, and said it was important that having Board members familiar with the regional committees on the select committee was important, acknowledging that sometimes a regional perspective could be stronger.

Ms. Karem made a motion to accept the recommendation of entering into contract negotiations with Goodwill Industries of Kentucky, seconded by Ms. Williams. The motion passed unanimously.

**Staff Recommendation: Contract Renewals**

KentuckianaWorks can only enter into contracts for one year, so these renewals come up every year.

**Goodwill Industries of Kentucky: Power of Work (TANF) – Cindy Read**

This program is run through the Kentucky Cabinet for Health & Family Services. KentuckianaWorks has had this program a long time, and Goodwill has run it the entire time. They have excellent statistics and meet their mark every year, helping people come off welfare into unsubsidized employment. The contract is not to exceed \$1,017,160 from July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2021. Mr. Hesketh made a motion to accept, seconded by Ms. Lampton. The motion passed unanimously.

**Goodwill Industries of Kentucky: SNAP E&T – Cindy Read**

KentuckianaWorks works with participants who are on SNAP to gain employment. Goodwill runs this program and has excellent statistics. The recommendation was to renew contract with Goodwill for a

contract not to exceed \$164,027 from July 1, 2020 – June 30, 2021. Motion to accept made by Ms. Karem, seconded by Ms. Lampton, and passed unanimously.

**ResCare: One Stop Operator – Cindy Read**

This contract is set up for four years; this is starting year two. There have been some positive changes this year (i.e., the new UniteUs tool) and everything is on target to meet goals. KentuckianaWorks has worked with JP Morgan Chase to provide vocational ESL for healthcare certifications. Ms. Wann hired Birget Zepf to work specifically with immigrants & refugees. Recommendation was to renew the contract with ResCare to exceed \$165,000 from July 1, 2020-June 30, 2021 (contract amount may vary based on final determinations). Mr. Hesketh made a motion, seconded by Ms. Williams, approved unanimously.

**Louisville Urban League: Kentuckiana Builds – Angella Wilson**

LUL has operated the six-week KentuckianaBuilds training program since October 2016. Participants receive a national certification, work-readiness training, and other benefits. LUL is on track to meet their outcomes for the year. 283 people (including 256 minorities) have completed the training and 216 have placed into construction jobs, with an average earnings of more than \$15/hour. The contract is not expected to exceed \$377,000 for the program year. Funding is a partnership between the Kentucky Department for Workforce Innovation in Frankfort (\$250,000) and KentuckianaWorks (\$250,000). KDWI has provided funding for four years. The 20<sup>th</sup> graduation class was holding its graduation ceremony later today. Motion to accept made by Ms. Lampton, seconded by Mr. Hesketh, and passed 5-0 with an abstention by Ms. Thompson.

**ResCare: Adult Career Services – Angella Wilson**

ResCare is completing the first year of their five-year contract, and KentuckianaWorks recommends a one-year renewal. This contract encompasses adult career services Code Louisville, Tech Louisville, and various case management and career services. Of note is a redesign of the Kentucky Health Career Center (KHCC), which has three staff members. There will be a case manager at the Cedar location, a business service team member, and a quality assurance coordinator. The KHCC individual brand will be eliminated but the staff's expertise retained. To date, ResCare has met 90% of its job placement goal of 900. ResCare has received 96.4% customer satisfaction through its customer services. Recommendation for a renewal of the contract, not to exceed \$2,361,000 for the upcoming year (a mix of ~2,000,000 from WIOA and ~300,000 from private grants for Code and Tech Louisville). Ms. Karem made a motion to accept the recommendation, seconded by Ms. Williams, passed unanimously.

**Staff Recommendation: Louisville Forward agreement – Michael Gritton**

Mr. Gritton thanked Ms. Ralston and all of the committee members for their willingness to do the work in the middle of a 100-year event. He mentioned how starting in 2015, Louisville Forward asked the Board to fund 75% of the salary of a workforce liaison person to work on economic development deals. The position costs KentuckianaWorks \$50,000-\$60,000 per year. Mr. Gritton's recommendation is to renew the agreement for another year. Mr. Hesketh made a motion to accept the recommendation, seconded by Ms. Karem, passed unanimously.

**Executive Director's Report – Michael Gritton**

Mr. Gritton commended Ms. Read and the team for doing a great job. Over the past month, all customer services have been shifted to online or over the phone. The KentuckianaWorks staff has been working really hard while working from home.

On a personnel note, Mr. Gritton mentioned that Jennifer Novak has left the post of Chief Financial Officer to take a new job at the University of Louisville. Deputy CFO Lori Hiser has been acting as the interim chief in the meantime, though her job has been complicated due to the accounting software being down due to the accounting company's data system being breached a few weeks ago.

Mr. Gritton mentioned there have been three to four events in the past twenty years that might previously be called once-in-a-lifetime events: 9/11, the recession of 2008/09, the Trump election and administration,

and now the COVID-19 pandemic. None of these events are like anything else that he has ever seen. Tight labor markets are our best friend; now, the economy has completely shifted. The challenge for KentuckianaWorks over the next two years at least are high unemployment rates and the slow return to “normal.” One good piece of news for KentuckianaWorks is that future Congressional recovery stimulus packages will likely include workforce funding. Mr. Gritton said he has no inside information about that. He referenced a letter of support from the National Skills Coalition that calls for significant investments to the workforce funding stream. This would provide a lot of opportunities but also a lot of challenges. Mr. Gritton mentioned how in the previous stimulus of 2009, Congress doubled workforce funding and gave workforce boards eighteen months to spend it. Stay tuned for further updates. Mr. Gritton also said he looks forward to hearing from the Committee, especially from the employer side.

Mr. Hesketh said one of the early concerns is the extra \$600/week makes it very lucrative for some workers to stay on unemployment. Mr. Gritton said this echoed a lot of small business owners who were complaining about extending unemployment benefits following the recession ten years ago. He was not sure what is going to happen in the short-term, but he believed their calculus would change as the \$600 added benefit goes away. Ms. Ralston said she has heard similar concerns in every sectors, including healthcare. She also thought fear plays a role in the desire to stay at home, but she hoped that will change as we move forward this summer as long as employees can have a safe work environment.

Mr. Gritton asked Ms. Ralston for insight into what is happening in healthcare in the Louisville market. She said her hope is that once when coronavirus stabilizes, everyone will be brought back as soon as possible. The issue is keeping current staff safe while bringing back elective procedures. It is a tricky balance, and she mentioned being thankful to city and state leadership. We need to get back soon, she said, but we need to be careful about how we do it.

Ms. Read had a couple of other things to mention. She gave a special shout-out to the KentuckianaWorks communications team for getting the job board up and running on the website. Ms. Read also mentioned Ms. Thompson giving her the news that Lieutenant Governor Coleman would be attending the KentuckianaBuilds graduation on Facebook Live later that morning.

Finally, Ms. Read discussed the unemployment claims situation. ResCare and Goodwill staff are helping with the inundation of calls by getting trained on the Amazon Connect phone system, led by Rider Rodriguez. The statistics are amazing. At the start of March, twelve workers were getting 1,000 calls per day; now, it is 80,000 calls per day. However, there are still just about fifteen people in the state who can resolve the most complicated issues. Mr. Gritton said this was quite historic; the Wagner-Peyser law requires state merit-based employees to handle these issues, so using contract staff is unprecedented. He called Mr. Rodriguez and Ms. Disney unsung heroes for the work they are doing to make this happen.

### **Adjourn**

Motion to adjourn made by Mr. Hesketh, seconded by Ms. Lampton, and passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 9:56 a.m.