

Program Oversight Committee Meeting
Monday, June 21, 2021
2:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.
Zoom Meeting

Members Present: Christine Tarquinio, Jenny Lampton, Lisa Thompson (proxy for Sadiqa Reynolds), Mike Hesketh, Patricia Williams

Staff: Angella Wilson, Bailey Preston, Brian Luerman, Christopher Locke, Cindy Read, Joi McAtee, Mary Rosenthal, Michael Gritton, Patrick Garvey, Sarah Ehresman, Tobin Williamson

Contractors/Guests: Angella Wells-Vereb, Ashley Janicki, Eric Hicks, Kimberly Boyd-Lane, Linda Witt, Lynn Rippy, Marsha Berry, Regan Wann, Rena Sharpe, Renee Walters, Sara Dodeci

Welcome and Introductions – Mike Hesketh

Chairman Hesketh welcome everyone. Per Ms. Read’s recommendation, he suggested a poll would be sent sometime after the meeting about the potential for returning to in-person meetings.

Review & Approve Minutes from May 21, 2021 Meeting – Mike Hesketh

A motion to approve the minutes was made by Ms. Thompson and seconded by Ms. Williams. The motion passed without opposition.

Staff Recommendation: Approve 2021-22 Targeted Occupation List – Sarah Ehresman

Ms. Ehresman explained how this list guided the potential job training opportunities provided by KentuckianaWorks, as guided by WIOA law. In-demand jobs with entry-level wages in the 25th percentile (\$12.39/hour) are eligible for inclusion on the list. Job postings were often greater than job openings, so this would be a pretty conservative estimate of demand. It did not really count for “churn,” but was, rather, a picture of the overall need for positions in the local economy. Excluded from the list were roles that typically require any educational attainment beyond a bachelor’s degree, roles that require work experience of 5 years or more, or supervisory positions. The focus was on occupations within KentuckianaWorks’ defined key sectors: healthcare, manufacturing, construction, transportation, business, and IT. The complete list of 108 potential targeted occupations (filtered out of 700+ occupations overall) was included in the meeting packet. This list was updated every year, even when not much change occurs. A survey was sent to employer groups, asking them if there were any occupations on the list they would remove; if so, why; and if there were any occupations that should be added.

- Construction Industry Feedback (7) – There were no more than two responses for any one occupation, so there was not much consensus/feedback for making any changes.
- Healthcare Industry Feedback (10) – There was not enough evidence to remove positions. Two employers suggested added nursing assistants (not on the list due to wages). Occupational/physical therapists were not included due to education requirements.
- Manufacturing Industry Feedback (28) – There was not enough consensus/feedback to warrant removing any positions or adding any new ones.

Ms. Thompson asked about the results of union vs. non-union employers. Ms. Ehresman said the survey was sent out to the construction career advisory group, but she was not sure of the union vs. non-union makeup of that group. Ms. Thompson stated she was thinking about pending federal infrastructure legislation and its impact on iron and sheet metal workers, and she anticipated there would soon be billions of dollars invested in that sort of infrastructure. With that in mind, Ms. Thompson proposed adding those occupations to the list. Ms. Tarquinio asked what the wage threshold was previously. Ms. Ehresman said it was always 200% of the federal poverty line, which she believed last year was right at \$12/hour. If a job's wages did not keep up with inflation, it could potentially be removed from the list. Ms. Read asked if nursing assistant was taken off due to decreased demand or due to the wage threshold; Ms. Ehresman said it was about the wages. There was certainly a demand for that job, but the wages had not sufficiently kept up for it to be included. They average below \$12.39/hour. Mr. Gritton provided one other piece of context: KentuckianaWorks does not have a lot of WIOA money budgeted for job training scholarships at the moment. There were conversations planned with Mayor and CLEOs about the budget this week. If there is an unexpected infusion of money, this list would become very important for the purpose of potential training scholarships. Mr. Hesketh said he the process was rigorous and solid. He was surprised how the process used leaders/supervisors as a sort of "further down the road track" role, which seemed counterintuitive to him. Ms. Ehresman said the demand was based on what has been typical of the past 5-10 years, not anticipating future legislation. Mr. Hesketh asked if there was the possibility for adjusting throughout the year; Ms. Ehresman said yes, adjustments can always be made per the Committee's recommendation. Ms. Read gave examples of how that had been done in the past with EMTs and paramedics.

A motion to approve the staff recommendation (with Ms. Thompson's proposed addition for sheet metal and structural iron & steel workers) was made by Ms. Thompson and seconded by Ms. Lampton. The motion passed without opposition.

Staff Recommendation: Approve Renewal of Contract with the Center for Employment Opportunities – *Angella Wilson & Tobin Williamson*

Mr. Williamson explained that last year, KentuckianaWorks received National Dislocated Worker Grants funding from the U.S. Department of Labor to work with people dislocated from work due to the COVID-19 pandemic. For this program, KentuckianaWorks partnered with the Center for Employment Opportunities, a national non-profit with an existing Louisville presence. Participants who are re-entering society following incarceration work at the Dare to Care food bank with things like food box preparation and on-site sanitization. CEO's program model is to take folks re-entering the community, give them a salary, and provide skills training for future employment. In the first year (starting from July 2020), more than fifty participants received transitional jobs and vocational services (exceeding the original goal of 30). Fourteen participants have obtained permanent full-time employment at an average wage of \$13.66/hour. Overall, things are going well. KentuckianaWorks, CEO, and Dare to Care are all happy with it.

The funding was for a two-year grant; however, since KentuckianaWorks only does one-year contracts with the potential for renewal, it was now time to renew the contract for another year. Therefore, Mr. Williamson was recommending to the Committee they enter into contract negotiations with the Center for Employment Opportunities to be the service provider for a

second year for the program serving re-entry workers, as funded by the DOL's NDWG program. The budget is not to exceed \$275,000, and the contract will run July 1, 2021–June 30, 2022.

Mr. Hesketh was particularly impressed by CEO providing transportation to their participants. He asked about any CEO staffing issues. Mr. Williamson explained KentuckianaWorks had a contract meeting with them last week where the regional leader provided an update. They were hiring a Louisville Site Director, a Business Account Manager, and a Job Coach. Ms. Wilson wanted to mention the staffing issue was not unique to CEO, another contractor was having similar issues. Mr. Williamson praised CEO's regional and national leadership for taking a strong interest in the Louisville site. Ms. Wilson clarified there was an on-site supervisor at the Dare to Care facility. Mr. Gritton told Mr. Hesketh the non-profit space was being impacted by hiring challenges seen throughout the economy, saying it takes a special kind of person to want to do this kind of work. That said, CEO was in almost 30 cities, so they have been branching out and finding success; but, like Equus, the challenge was finding staffing with such a thin budget. Overall, Mr. Gritton said KentuckianaWorks and Dare to Care have loved CEO's work so far. Mr. Williamson added the KentuckianaWorks communications team had been putting the final touches on a CEO success story video that would soon be available for sharing.

A motion to approve the staff recommendation was made by Ms. Williams and seconded by Ms. Lampton. The motion passed without opposition.

Staff Recommendation: Approve Selection of New Contractor for IT Managed Services for Launchpad – *Cindy Read*

Ms. Read explained how Launchpad was a case management data system that all non-KEE Suite programs would be using after July 1. It was a Salesforce platform, and KentuckianaWorks did not have the staff expertise to act as an admin. A data transfer and user testing would be taking place over the next few days. One feature that staff hoped to add was being able to text customers, and an organization that can help with tweaks like that was needed. As always, KentuckianaWorks worked with Louisville Metro Government throughout the RFP process. An internal committee was formed, consisting of Ms. Read, Ms. Elliott, and Mr. Luerman. Four companies ultimately put forth proposals: Coastal Cloud, Lola Systems, MMI Business Consulting, and MTX Group. The proposals were scored. MMI was eliminated with the lowest score; the other three were interviewed by the committee. The committee recommended a selection of Coastal Cloud for this contract. They already had a contract with KentuckianaWorks for a number of years to provide a similar service with SummerWorks (Mr. Locke was happy with them). They were a national company with a strong Louisville presence. They were all about Salesforce and had lots of public sector experience. The hourly rate from the proposals ranged from \$140 (MMI) up to \$200 (Coastal Cloud). Even though Coastal Cloud was the highest rate, they did not require a specific number of hours locked in, and the committee felt that could bring about some savings. A list in the memo included all the services Coastal Cloud would provide; specifically, maintaining a help desk would be very important, as would security management and good advice. Overall, the staff felt very good about their decision. Ms. Sharpe added in the chat that her company (Goodwill Industries) was very pleased with the services provided to them by Coastal Cloud. Specifically, she did not see them to be excessive on billing hours and she was happy with their texting program. Mr. Hesketh asked if there was a cap on the number of billable hours; Ms. Read said yes, and staff would monitor it very closely.

Ms. Read's recommendation was to enter into contract negotiations with Coastal Cloud, LLC as the IT managed service provider for the Launchpad application. The pricing will range from \$185-\$200/hour, depending on monthly usage. The funding for the contract was supported by KentuckianaWorks' administrative budget, as well as program budgets (Reimage, Compass Rose, WIOA Youth, and Code Louisville).

A motion to approve the staff recommendation was made by Ms. Thompson and seconded by Ms. Williams. The motion passed without opposition.

Staff Recommendation: Approval of New Staffing Arrangement at Code & Tech Louisville

– Michael Gritton & Brian Luerman

Mr. Gritton pondered about how much discretion the Executive Director had to make executive decisions without seeking Board approval. Mr. Georges and Mr. Quick suggested bringing this issue to the POC and the Board since it was such a "big picture" issue. Some background: some WIBs are housed directly in their local government's office. For the first ten years Mr. Gritton was here, the fiscal agent for KentuckianaWorks was Louisville Metro Government. Even to this day, all KentuckianaWorks staff are technically Metro employees. This comes with pros (city benefit package) and cons (slow and bureaucratic HR). This sort of job model really pre-dates Mr. Gritton and 2002, back to when KentuckianaWorks became the workforce board. The federal law clearly wanted workforce boards to get out of running career centers and to contract that work out. There were two exceptions, each listed in the attached memo: the College Access Center and a work-around for hiring people with criminal backgrounds. KentuckianaWorks' first instinct when Code Louisville was rolled out was to have it directed by and run by us internally. As the program was staffed up, staff thought the easier and more convenient thing to do was to run those employees through the Equus contract. However, the honest truth was this model just did not work very well for Code & Tech Louisville. Therefore, Mr. Gritton recommended the KCAC structure be used to staff Code & Tech Louisville: As of July 1, we would try to convert those employees to being Ahead HR employees, rather than Equus employees. All of the HR legalities would be handled by Ahead HR, not Louisville Metro Government. In the fifteen years KentuckianaWorks has worked with Ahead HR, there has only been one tiny issue (a former employee sued, and the county attorney represented us in the suit). Mr. Gritton had one other thing to add: in the included memo, he mentioned the state has granted KentuckianaWorks almost \$700,000 in discretionary funding to roll Code Louisville out statewide. Mr. Gritton and Mr. Luerman met this morning, and the feel was that it was a little bit like the dog who catches the car. Staff have to move and quickly change on a dime, to figure out what was working vs. what was not. Equus was a national expert about running career centers and workforce programs, but this was a little bit of an odd duck. Moreover, Mr. Gritton asked the Committee for approval to shift the Code/Tech Louisville staffing model to where employees in those respective programs would be co-employees of KentuckianaWorks and Ahead HR.

Ms. Lampton asked about any potential anticipated issues with using this model; Mr. Gritton said the KCAC model had worked wonderfully for them and there have never been any problems with it. Referencing a question from Ms. Tarquinio, he also did not anticipate this to impact the capacity to produce graduates locally; indeed, he expected it to go full-steam ahead here. The one other thing Mr. Gritton added about Code Kentucky was trying to figure out whether we can

find job opportunities for software developers to do that kind of work in eastern Kentucky. From a big picture perspective, Mr. Gritton reminded the committee that with a new mayor coming in in a year and a half, a person in Mr. Gritton's position may not be in that same position in two years; thus, the Committee had to have trust in the structure, not the individuals running it.

Tech Louisville was funded by a grant from the JP Morgan Chase Advancing Cities initiative. The basic setup was similar to Code Louisville: online training and national certification, with employers committed to hire graduates. Their first graduation was scheduled for March 2020, when the world's economy stopped for the pandemic. Staff have worked to get things back on track, and there were now more participants than ever before. Mr. Luerman described the barriers faced by participants; for example, transportation obstacles to certain employers, people did not realize what they had signed up for, etc. Still, there was a lot of momentum in terms of participants, job fairs, and so forth. Mr. Gritton reminded the Committee that Code Louisville was open to anyone in the seven-county area, whereas Tech Louisville was limited to specific, targeted low-income zip codes. There would be more conversation about it in coming months.

Mr. Gritton was recommending to the Committee that they approve a staffing arrangement for Code Louisville / Kentucky and Tech Louisville staff to be employed by KentuckianaWorks and Ahead HR, rather than through a contractor. A motion to approve the recommendation was made by Ms. Lampton and seconded by Ms. Thompson. The motion passed without opposition.

Director's Report – Michael Gritton

Mr. Gritton said regarding Code Kentucky funding, he had been crystal clear with the state to not give money for just one year. He was under the impression they would fund it multiple years to make it work across the commonwealth. One subtlety here: we would be in charge of a program delivered in other workforce board areas, which had never been done before. This would not be easy to do! Staff were trying to figure out the key things to do as a "corporate headquarters" compared to the roles for "franchisees" across the state. If it works, KentuckianaWorks would help folks throughout Kentucky adjust to the new tech economy and upskill to not be left behind.

KentuckianaWorks was bringing a budget to the Board on Thursday and to the CLEO on Friday. The budget would include the smallest percentage of WIOA funding in a total budget in Mr. Gritton's two decades. Next year's budget was ~\$12m; WIOA funds were only ~\$5m of it.

Mr. Gritton told the Committee there were two staffing things he wanted them to know about:

1. After making its way through the city's HR department for eight weeks, it was now official that Aleece Smith had been named the Director of Inclusion & Sector Strategies.
2. Marsha Berry would be retiring from Goodwill at the end of this month, and Mr. Gritton offered his kudos and thanks to her. Ms. Berry thanked everyone, and said it had been an honor to work with them. Ms. Sharpe let everyone know Ms. Berry was taking on a consultant role with Goodwill through the end of the year, so she would still be around.

Mr. Hesketh said he had the pleasure of touring Goodwill's resource center with Ms. Berry and that he was blown away. He asked to get an update from Goodwill on how things were going with their new contracts. Ms. Berry said they had been interviewing for positions, working on getting folks hired, building a training plan, and getting everything ready to go by July 1. Mr.

Hesketh then asked about Equus. Mr. Gritton let everyone know Ms. Wells-Vereb would be thanked at the Board meeting on Thursday. Ms. Wells-Vereb gave notice about six weeks ago she would be moving on after 11 years with KentuckianaWorks/ResCare/Equus. She had decided to take a long break before deciding on next steps. The good news was Equus had three very strong operations managers: 11-year employee Zakiyyah Raymore (NIA Center), 6-year employee Charlotte Kerns (Mobile Services & Business Solutions), and ~20-year employee Monica Collins (Manufacturing Career Center). The staff and programs would be taken care of very well throughout this transition period. Ms. Read added that Goodwill had been working hard to fill positions, and JCPS had been very collegial in their wrap-up of the existing contract. They had been doing a great job, and she thanked them for their service over the past 18 years.

Adjourn

Mr. Hesketh thanked everyone for joining and for contributing to the meeting. July would be an off month for the Committee; the next meeting was scheduled to be held in August.