

GEORGIA MOUNTAINS REGIONAL COMMISSION
WORKSOURCE GEORGIA MOUNTAINS
1856 THOMPSON BRIDGE RD., SUITE 3 ♦ GAINESVILLE, GEORGIA 30501
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May 27, 2020

Minutes

The Georgia Mountains Regional Commission Workforce Development Board (GMWDB) met on May 27, 2020 at 2:00 PM. The meeting was a virtual Zoom meeting. A roll call was done, and the following were present.

Members Present

Vicki Boling
Tim Bala
Bill Chafin
Shannon Cole
Pat Freeman
Mitch Griggs
Deborah Mack
Mike McGraw
Rhonda McLean
Betsy McGriff
Juergen Moller
Shelby Ward
Beth Williams
Jon Williams

Staff

Heather Feldman
John Phillips
Diane Jackson
Whitney Williams
Nona Turk
Jessica Williams

Guest

Benjie Hopkins, Hopkins Associates
Marsha Hopkins, Hopkins Associates
Kate Russell
JoAnne Taylor
Shelley Davis
Greg Vitek

Members Absent

David Cagle, Thomas Bridges, Chris Dockery, Tony Hoyle, Robert Long, Ricky Carter, Mary Overholt, Will Wade, Andrea Gibby, and Mark Winters were absent.

Call to Order/Welcome

Rhonda McLean, Board Chair, called the meeting to order and welcomed the attendees. A roll call was completed, and a quorum was established.

Consideration of Minutes

Chair McLean asked for consideration of the April 9, 2020 Workforce Development Board meeting minutes. Motion to approve the minutes was made by Mitch Griggs. Bill Chafin seconded, and motion carried unanimously.

Old Business

None

New Business

One-Stop Certification Process

Chair McLean announced that Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDBs) must complete one-stop certification for each location under consideration for status as a comprehensive or affiliate one-stop site. Sites must be certified by the LWDB to utilize their locally negotiated infrastructure cost agreement.

WorkSource Georgia Mountains (WSGM) received the Affiliate One- Stop certification criteria back from all the affiliate sites; Georgia Department of Labor (DOL) Gainesville Career Center, Habersham Career Center, and Toccoa Career Center, North GA Technical College, Lanier Technical College, Athens Technical College and the Mobile Training Units. WSGM staff completed the criteria for the Comprehensive One-Stop location, located at 1856 Thompson Bridge Rd. WSGM reviewed the criteria and recommends approval of the above-mentioned affiliate and comprehensive sites. Deborah Mack made a motion to approve the certification of the One-Stop affiliate sites and the Comprehensive One-Stop. Pat Freeman seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

WorkSource Georgia Mountains Plan

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) requires each Local Workforce Development Board to draft a local strategic plan every four years. The Technical College System of Georgia's Office of Workforce Development (TCSG-OWD) has issued guidance on what must be included in the plan. The Plan is due before the end of Fiscal Year 2020. WorkSource GA Mountains emailed the completed plan to the Board for review prior to the meeting. Betsey McGriff made a motion to approve the WorkSource Georgia Mountains Plan. Beth Williams seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

One-Stop Partner Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)

WorkSource GA Mountains has conducted negotiation meetings with its required partners and has updated the Partner MOU as needed. The updated MOU was emailed to the Board for review. There was an additional revision to the MOU yesterday afternoon. The Open Record Act information was added to the document. The MOU was re-sent to the partners and to the Board. Tim Bala made a motion to approve the One-Stop Partner MOU. Bill Chafin seconded, and the motion carried.

One-Stop Operator Request for Proposal (RFP)

A request for proposal for the One-Stop Operator was advertised and posted on the Website as required. WorkSource received one Proposal. The proposal was received on April 9th at 10:00 am. This proposal was from Hopkins Associates. WorkSource Georgia Mountains reviewed the proposal and emailed the results of the review to the Board prior to the meeting. Benjie and Marsha Hopkins, Hopkins Associates excused themselves from the meeting prior to the discussion of the One-Stop RFP. After Board discussion, Vicky Boling made a motion to approve Hopkins Associates as the One- Stop Operator. Pat Freeman seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Adult/Dislocated Worker Policy Changes

Whitney Williams, Adult/Dislocated Worker Program Supervisor, explained that WorkSource Georgia Mountains (WSGM) would like to revise the One-the-Job Training Policy. Current policy states that the employer would be reimbursed at the end of the participants training. WorkSource would like the policy to state (Employers will be reimbursed according to current WorkSource Georgia Mountains procedure). WorkSource would like to start reimbursing the employer monthly. After some discussion, Mitch Griggs made a motion to approve the revision to the On-the-Job Training Policy. Bill Chafin seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Youth Program Update

Jessica Williams, Youth Program Supervisor, gave an update to the Board on the Youth Program. Since the Youth Center opened, WorkSource has had fifteen students obtain their GED. The Youth Department has continued to work with the students virtually. Prior to COVID-19 the Youth Department had Twenty-eight Internships and work experiences, WorkSource had placed a hold on these programs and are hoping to start back in the middle of June. The Youth Department is working with an agency called Girls Unlimited. Girls Unlimited is a program that helps young women that have a criminal background. The Youth Department currently works with North Georgia Technical College, Lanier Technical College and Athens Technical College for GED Career Pathways. WorkSource is pleased with the performance and outcomes. However, WorkSource renewed Athens Technical College for six months and hopes to be able to renew for another six months. The Youth Department works with all of the high schools throughout the WSGM area and has conducted seventy workshops with high school students.

National Dislocated Worker Grant

Whitney Williams explained that WorkSource Georgia Mountains received the National Dislocated Worker Grant in the amount of \$550,000. The purpose of the Grant is to assist individuals that have been affected by COVID-19 with employment and training. WorkSource expects the amount of the grant to increase. The State received \$12,000,000 in funds from the grant. WorkSource is currently working on a budget to submit to the State to provide work experience to assist the affected dislocated workers. WorkSource is also working to develop worksites with employers throughout the region.

Reports / Announcements:

Staff Retirement

John Phillips, WSGM Director, informed the Board of Wanda Payne's, Senior Adult/Dislocated Worker Case Manager, retirement on May 28, 2020. Wanda had been with GMRC since they took over the program in October 2011. Prior to that Wanda worked as a contract worker for the program through the Department of Labor since November 2009. Wanda will be greatly missed. John stated that he is proud of all the WorkSource Staff for their hard work and dedication.

Budget

Nona Turk, Financial Assistant, explained the totals listed on the budget were through April 30, 2020. The total remaining for the transferred grant was \$557,682 and WSGM was \$130,000 away from meeting the required 80% obligated by the end of the first year. WSGM had expensed all of the PY19 Youth funds and had to request additional funds. WorkSource received \$200,000 additional Youth funds and have \$118,000 left to spend by June 30, 2020. Nona stated she did not see an issue with WorkSource spending the balance.

One-Stop Update

Benjie Hopkins, One-Stop Operator, explained the role of the One-Stop Operator and gave a brief update on the One-Stop. The role of the One-Stop Operator is to assure electronic linkage of One-Stop Partners, improve communication among Partners, facilitate bi-monthly meetings of Partners, provide reports regarding One-Stop activities, implement an effective referral system, and maintain the One-Stop website.

The partnership continues to develop. In addition to the Partners who are required to be a part of the Memorandum of Understanding for the One-Stop; WorkSource Georgia Mountains, Athens Technical College, Lanier Technical College, North Georgia Technical College, Georgia Department of Labor, Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Agency, and Legacy Link, Inc. WorkSource also has regular participation at our bi-monthly meetings from representatives of other organizations, including: Goodwill Industries, United Way of Hall County, Gateway Domestic Abuse, Ninth District Opportunity, City of Gainesville Housing Authority, Child Support Recovery, and the Hall County Court System. The collaboration has been an effective way to increase referrals and communication between individuals and the organizations they represent.

The most recent bi-monthly Partners Meeting was held on April 30, 2020 by conference call. At the meetings, each Partner provides updates. Discussion includes referrals, current challenges, and upcoming events. The most recent trend is to have virtual job fairs. Information shared with Partners from USDOL and from LinkedIn surveys:

Most In-Demand Skills for 2022

1. Analytical Thinking and Innovation
2. Active Learning and Learning Strategies
3. Creativity, Originality, and Initiative

The next One-Stop Partners Meeting is tentatively scheduled for Tuesday June 30th at 11:00 a.m. Details will be posted on the One-Stop website - <http://onestopworkgamtns.org> Workforce Board members are always welcome to participate in the Partners Meetings.

Business Services Update

Marsha Hopkins, Hopkins Associates, gave an update on WorkSource Georgia Mountains Business Services. Hopkins Associates contacted employers in nine counties to share Georgia Mountains Business Services information. Several employers have expressed interest in learning more about what is available that may address their needs. Hopkins Associates have been focusing on businesses with products or services related to needs prompted by the current COVID-19 crisis. Many are currently in a period of uncertainty regarding workforce and material supplies. The types of companies contacted were hospitals, food production, metal fabrication, utilities, medical transport, IT, cyber security, robotics, and cleaning products and services. Hopkins Associates have continued participation with the Dawson Workforce Committee. Many of their planned events involving students and employers are temporarily on hold. They participated in a USDOL webinar on Regional Apprenticeship certification, attended three Chamber sponsored Zoom meetings on the topics of: communication for small businesses during a crisis period, guidelines for reopening businesses, and effective use of social media for business promotion. They participated in Chamber online meetings and shared information about Business Services. They also attended the University of Georgia (UGA) Small Business Development Center webinar concerning effective business strategies during the current crisis.

Workforce Strategies Group LLC Report

Shelley Davis and Greg Vitek with Workforce Strategies Group gave an update on their activities. Shelley stated they have had two meetings with the Steering Committee and the Employer Committee. There were twenty-six participants at the last employer meeting. Topics of discussion were the top occupational needs. Industrial Maintenance was number one, followed by Front Line Supervisors, Quality Tech Technicians, Fabricators and Machinist. They also addressed the short term COVID-19 issues.

Greg Vitek stated that TCSG requested that they look at the next 90 days to see if there are changes or adjustments that may need to be made to their planning due to COVID-19. They have found a mix of issues from the employers. Some having to lay off and others needing employees to work overtime. One of the main things they have realized is that they should be careful to listen to employers. The Strategic objectives would remain the same. They will be focused on the existing employers that have existing plans for apprenticeships. WorkSource Strategies Group role is to listen, support and help employers realize their plans and to guide and support them. They are also working hard to advance the apprenticeship and technical training development. Working on the next round of employer meetings and Steering Committee meetings. Workforce Strategies would be determining the work groups within the Committees. Other projects are developing a website where people would have access to information on apprenticeships.

Chair McLean informed the Board that the PY-19 Quarter 3 performance was also emailed for their review.

Adjournment

Move to adjourn meeting was made by Bill Chafin. Beth Williams seconded, and the motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 2:45 P.M.

Board Chair, Rhonda McLean

Secretary, Deborah Mack