

GEORGIA MOUNTAINS REGIONAL COMMISSION
WORKSOURCE GEORGIA MOUNTAINS
1856 THOMPSON BRIDGE RD., SUITE 3 ♦ GAINESVILLE, GEORGIA 30501
PHONE (770) 538-2727 FAX (770) 538-2729
January 26, 2023

Minutes

The Georgia Mountains Regional Commission, Workforce Development Board (GMWDB) met on January 26, 2023, at 4:00 p.m. The meeting was held at the Brenau Downtown Center located at 301 Main Street, SW Gainesville, GA 30501. The following were present:

Members Present

Vicki Boling
David Cagle
Ricky Carter
Shannon Cole
Chris Dockery
Timothy McDonald
Mitch Griggs
Deborah Mack
Mike McGraw
William Chafin
Christine Osasu
Juergen Moller
Arlene Brock
Tonya Powers
Shelby Ward
Kevin Hankinson
Amanda Edmondson
Beth Truelove

Staff

Whitney Blair
Danielle Avelar
Heather Feldman
Diane Jackson
Dawn Bruce
Niki McPherson
Alicia Page
Ebony Tucker
Nona Turk
Stephanie Underwood
Judy Reynolds
Ginger Little
Gina Kessler

Guest

Benjie Hopkins, Hopkins Associates
Marsha Hopkins, Hopkins Associates
Shelley Logan, Workforce Strategies Group

Members Absent

Jennifer Fleming, Terry Merck, Mary Overholt, Brooke Stall, Jon Williams, and Sandra Williams.

Call to Order/Welcome

Tonya Powers, Board Chair, called the meeting to order and introduced new board members. Amanda Edmondson, Director of Downtown Development for Dawsonville; Beth Truelove,

President of White County Chamber of Commerce; and Christine Osasu, Senior Community Service Employment Program Director with Legacy Link. A quorum was established.

Consideration of Minutes

Chair Powers informed the board that they needed to vote on the minutes from October 27, 2022, and asked for consideration of the minutes. The minutes were emailed to the board prior to the meeting. Juergen Moller motioned to approve the October 27, 2022, meeting minutes. Shelby Ward seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Old Business

None

New Business

Adult Program Update

Danielle Avelar, Adult/Dislocated Worker (DW) Program Supervisor, explained that WorkSource Georgia Mountains (WSGM) would like to change the Supportive Service Policy language for both the Youth and the Adult program to provide flexibility in updating the supportive service amounts. The old language did not contain the process of providing supportive services and contained set amounts for daily and maximum weekly per diems. The current per diems are \$5.00 per day for gas with special consideration of \$15.00 for any travel over eighty miles and \$15.00 a day per child for childcare with a maximum of \$200.00 per week. WSGM requested to update the policy to remove the set amounts and add them to our procedures. Staff will now meet yearly to evaluate support amounts and, if needed, revise them based on current funding levels and economic conditions.

New language:

Process of Providing Supportive Services

WSGM will reimburse participants for transportation, dependent, and childcare costs to the participant at specified limits through check issuance bi-weekly. The participant must submit proper authorization and documentation to the Case Manager. All other support costs will be paid by check to the vendor providing the support service. The vendor must provide proper documentation before the issuance of checks. Extenuating circumstances may necessitate payment to the participant. This will be done upon recommendation by the case manager. The amount of support provided for transportation, dependent, and childcare costs will be reviewed yearly by WSGM and adjusted based on funding levels and economic conditions.

Dependent Care:

If dependent care is unavailable from the Department of Family and Children Services (DFCS), or other funding sources, WSGM may reimburse the cost of care for dependent children up to a

maximum amount per week per family, excluding late fees, as noted in the WSGM Procedure guidelines.

Reimbursement will be per child for licensed and unlicensed childcare providers per the WSGM Procedure guidelines, reviewed yearly.

Transportation

Eligible participants will receive reimbursement not to exceed the daily amount noted in the WSGM Procedure Guidelines to ensure mobility between home and the location of training or practicum/clinical site. Those traveling over eighty miles round trip may be eligible to receive a higher reimbursement, as noted in the WSGM Procedure Guidelines once the case manager documents a need. Transportation assistance from WSGM will not be available if provided by another agency.

Juergen Moller motioned to approve the Supportive Services Policy change. Shelby Ward seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Business Services Update

Niki McPherson, On-the-Job-Training (OJT) Program Coordinator, informed the Board that WSGM would like to change the Internship Policy. The first change would be the length of the internship from one semester to one year since interns work between 15 – 25 hours per week, allowing the internship to utilize the total 480 hours available. After some discussion, Vicki Boling motioned to approve the change to the length of the internships to one year. Deborah Mack seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

The second change was to increase the internship wage to \$15.00 per hour, which would be in line with the State's recommendation for hourly wages for temporary work experiences. Chris Dockery motioned to approve the internship wage to \$15.00 per hour. Ricky Carter seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

WorkSource Georgia Mountains Report

Whitney Blair, WSGM Director informed the Board that the One-Stop Memorandum of Understanding and the One-Stop Operator Request for Proposal (RFP) are required to be renewed every three years, and it was last completed in 2020. These are both required for WIOA under federal regulations. WSGM will post the Request for Proposal in the next few weeks and hopefully bring a recommendation before the Board for the One-Stop Operator at the April meeting.

Mrs. Blair also informed the Board that WSGM would use Youth Work Experience dollars to create a Sole Source RFP for five virtual reality headsets through TRANSFR VR. The headsets will be used at Youth Events for Career Exploration and Skills training. The headsets come loaded with two hundred modules from manufacturing to healthcare to changing the oil in a car. It has a virtual trainer as you are doing the modules and lets us track student performance. WSGM is planning to purchase five fully loaded headsets for a total cost of \$25,000. We are required to

spend 20% of our Youth funding on work experience. This year, that number is around \$135,000, so this purchase will help meet that requirement.

An item of interest is that Governor Kemp did move Wagner-Peyser Employment Services from the Georgia Department of Labor (GDOL) to the Technical College System of Georgia (TCSG). EmployGA will now be under TCSG and is being rebranded. The Business Services Department has also transitioned to be under TCSG. This move was enacted on January 1, 2023. TCSG is still trying to hire and figure out where everyone fits. Rapid Response was previously contracted to GDOL, and with it returning to WIOA, WSGM received a small piece of the funding, around 75,000 for this year. WSGM will have a Rapid Response representative housed at our One-Stop office, allowing WSGM better access to the businesses and individuals who might be going through or facing a layoff and be better able to assist them.

WSGM will host a Career Exploration Meet & Greet at the Hall County DOL on February 13th. WorkSource is funding the event, and the cost of Be Pro Be Proud to attend. DOL is pushing individuals coming to them for services to attend, along with students from Lanier Career Academy. Participants will have access to Be Pro, Be Proud. Training providers and employers will be onsite. Several employers, such as Mars, FedEx, and Wahoo Docks, confirmed to attend. Spots are still available. Mrs. Blair asked that anyone interested contact WSGM, and staff will follow up with details. WSGM is looking for a lunch sponsor for the employers attending since TCSG does not allow this expense. If your company or organization might be willing to participate in that way and provide a box lunch, WSGM would greatly appreciate it. WSGM had posters and flyers available for this event and would appreciate help getting the word out.

Reports / Announcements:

Budget

Nona Turk, Senior Financial Assistant, informed the Board that they should have received the budget report in their agenda packet. The report was for the period ending December 31, 2022.

As of December 31st, the available funds for Adult/DW programs were \$474,376.69 and were fully obligated. WSGM received the FY23 Adult funds of \$501,709.00 and Dislocated Worker (DW) funds of \$846,343.00. WSGM has requested that 90% of the FY23 Dislocated Worker funds be transferred to use as Adult funds. The transfer will allow WSGM \$761,709.00 to use for the Adult Program and leave \$84,634.00 as Dislocated Worker funds. The Youth Program had \$638,816.60 available, with \$78,775.40 obligated. The National Dislocated Worker Grant had a balance of \$45,030.68 and is fully obligated. This award has been extended until March 2023. The HDCI grant had a balance of \$202,152.67.

One-Stop Update

Benjie Hopkins, One-Stop Operator, gave a brief update on the One-Stop office. The last One-Stop Partner meeting was held on November 29, 2022, at the One-Stop Office. The core partners

in attendance were, WorkSource, LTC, NGTC, and Georgia Department of Labor. Other community partners attending were Avita Community Partners, Department of Community Supervision, Gainesville City Schools, My Sisters Place, Good News at Noon, Boys and Girls Club, and United Way. The focus topic was Good News at Noon's new facility for forty men and twenty women. In addition, each partner gave an update on their organization.

The next meeting will be on January 31, 2023. The focus program will be The Place. The Place supports people in Dawson and Forsyth counties with resources to meet basic needs and achieve self-sufficiency. The number of customers coming into the One-Stop from October through December was 269. Workforce Board members are welcome to participate. The minutes are posted on the One-Stop website at <http://onestopworkgamtns.org/>. Mr. Hopkins thanked board member Ricky Carter for helping them to contact the Hart County Habitat for Humanity.

Board member Ricky Carter thanked Hopkins and Associates and asked if this could also benefit the Hart County Domestic Violence Shelter. Mr. Hopkins requested their contact information and stated that they would be happy to contact them.

Workforce Strategies Group LLC Report

Shelley Logan with Workforce Strategies Group (WSG) gave an overview of their activities. They recently attended the North Georgia Technical College Economic Development Summit and the Apprenticeship Summit held in Macon. Shelley explained that a lot was going on with apprenticeships, funding, and participation. WSG shared their annual calendar that showed their activity. Most recently, they came out with the manufacturing sector's top ten occupational priorities. The number one occupation priority was Industrial Maintenance Tech. Workforce Strategy Group has been doing community meetings in the high schools. Most recently was Forsyth County and White County.

The Workforce Strategy website is in progress. The Works Post page from their website was shared with the board. This page allows employers to post the apprenticeships they have open and any work-based learning and job postings. The website should be up by February. Workforce Strategies also has a Facebook page titled Georgia Mountains Works.

The Quality Control Apprenticeship third cohort will be starting in Spring 2023 at Lanier Technical College and North Georgia Technical College.

Supervisory and Leadership Training will start at Lanier Technical College in February and at North Georgia Technical College in March. The program is 48 hours of training at four hours per week. This occupation is also one of the top ten priority occupations.

Performance

Danielle Avelar, Adult/Dislocated Worker Program Supervisor, explained the most recent performance numbers for PY22. WorkSource is exceeding the performance measures for adult employment in quarter two, DW is meeting, and Youth is exceeding the measure.

The second column showed the measure for Employment in the Fourth Quarter after exit. The Adult Program is exceeding, DW is exceeding, and Youth is not meeting.

The third was the credential attainment measure. The Adult Program is meeting, and DW and Youth are not meeting performance.


The fourth column shows the Measurable Skills Gain measure. The Adult and DW program is meeting the measure, and the Youth Program is not meeting.

Adjournment

Chair Powers requested a motion to adjourn. Bill Chafin made a motion to adjourn. Juergen Moller seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:40 p.m.


Board Chair, Tonya Powers


Secretary, Deborah Mack