

**SOUTHERN ALLEGHENIES  
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD (SAWDB)**

**SAWDB EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING**

**October 11, 2022**

**10:00 AM**

**Southern Alleghenies Planning and Development Commission, also available via Zoom Meeting Platform  
Altoona, PA**

**AGENDA**

<b><u>TOPIC</u></b>	<b><u>NAME</u></b>
<b>Welcome and Introductions</b>	<b>Sharon Clapper, SAWDB Vice Chair</b>
<b>Approval of Minutes from September 13, 2022*</b>	<b>Sharon Clapper</b>
<b>Director's Report</b>	<b>Susan Whisler, SAWDB Director</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Red/Green Report</b></li><li>• <b>Local &amp; Regional Plans Update</b></li><li>• <b>SAWDB Director Transition Plan</b></li></ul>	
<b>Update on State-Wide Initiatives</b>	<b>Keith Baker, BWPO Assistant Regional Director, PA Dept of L &amp; I</b>
<b>One-Stop Operator Report</b>	<b>Bradley Burger, Lead OSO Representative</b>
<b>Other Business</b>	<b>All</b>
<b>Adjournment</b>	

**\*Requires Formal Action**

The Southern Alleghenies Workforce Development Board receives funding through the US Department of Labor and the PA Department of Labor and Industry. All costs associated with this meeting are funded 100% by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act.

**SOUTHERN ALLEGHENIES WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD  
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING  
Tuesday, September 13, 2022  
Southern Alleghenies Planning and Development Commission, also available via Zoom  
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Altoona, Pennsylvania**

**ACTION SUMMARY**

Following are the major actions taken by the SAWDB Executive Committee at its regular meeting held on September 13, 2022, at the Southern Alleghenies Planning & Development Commission office, participation via Zoom as well.

1. Approved the minutes of the SAWDB Executive Committee meeting held on July 12, 2022, as presented. Motion was made by Ms. Sharon Clapper and seconded by Mr. Keith Baker. The motion passed with unanimous approval.
2. Motion to approve the \$500 sponsorship for the Huntingdon Career Fair to be held on October 20, 2022, was made by Mr. Keith Baker and seconded by Ms. Sharon Clapper. The motion passed with unanimous approval.

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**Members Participating**

Dave Mrozowski	Tableland Services
Jesper Nielsen	Croyle-Nielsen Therapeutic Associates
Julia Brulia	Gateway Travel Plaza
Keith Baker	BWPO
Rosalie Danchanko	Highlands Health
Sharon Clapper	Clapper Industries
Wendy Melius	CCA

**Non-Members**

Amy Horwath	Goodwill
Barb Covert	E&T Inc., PA CareerLink® Huntingdon
Brad Burger	Goodwill
Gwen Fisher	PA CareerLink® Blair & Bedford
Jeff Dick	PA CareerLink® Cambria
Lisa Phillips	Tableland Services
Susan Whisler	SAP&DC
Steve Howsare	SAP&DC
Jen Sklodowski	SAP&DC
Jill Reigh	SAP&DC
Jim Walker	SAP&DC
Renee Best	SAP&DC

**Call to Order**

SAWDB Chair, Mr. Jesper Nielsen, called the meeting of the Southern Alleghenies Workforce Development Board Executive Committee to order at 10:00 a.m. and roll call was taken. The meeting was open to the public and also available virtually using Zoom.

**Minutes from July 12, 2022**

Mr. Jesper Nielsen asked for a motion for approval of the minutes from the July 12, 2022, Executive Committee meeting. There were no questions, concerns, or discussion regarding the minutes.

Ms. Sharon Clapper made a motion to approve the July 12, 2022, Executive Committee meeting minutes as presented. Mr. Keith Baker seconded the motion. The motion passed with unanimous approval.

## **Director's Report**

### Review of PY22 Budget

Ms. Susan Whisler referred to the Budget Summary included in the meeting packet and noted that it reflects over \$1.6 million in carryover in addition to the \$100,000 transfer from DW to Adult which was approved by the state. The SAWDB is in the process of drafting new contracts that will be effective October 1<sup>st</sup>. Provider contracts were initially extended to September 30<sup>th</sup>, and additional Adult and DW funding was given to them to see them through the first quarter of this new year. The entire Youth and TANF funding had been awarded to the providers. Beginning October 1<sup>st</sup>, providers will receive new Adult & DW money and they will be permitted to retain any unspent funding from their contract extension. If there is significant unobligated funding, especially for DW, the SAWDB may submit a second request to transfer money. If there is any remaining Youth and TANF money, providers will be permitted to carry this over. All of the required expenditure levels were met, so no funding will be pulled back by the state.

Ms. Whisler noted that although the SAWDB saw a cut in the PY22 budget, approximately \$500,000, there is still ample funding to provide services with a solid amount in reserve.

### Request for Huntingdon Career Fair Support

Ms. Susan Whisler reported that the SAWDB received a request from the PA CareerLink® Huntingdon in the amount of \$500 to support the Huntingdon Career Fair scheduled for October 20<sup>th</sup> at the Smithfield Fire Hall, Huntingdon. They are anticipating strong attendance from over 50 employers and a large attendance by job seekers.

Mr. Keith Baker entered a motion to provide a \$500 sponsorship to support the Huntingdon Career Fair to be held on October 20, 2022. Ms. Sharon Clapper seconded the motion. The motion was carried.

### Modification of Local & Regional Plans

Ms. Susan Whisler referred to the modification of the Local & Regional Plans and noted that every four years the workforce boards must prepare extensive local and regional plans. These plans are intended to lay out the framework to identify the way services will be provided, the types of services, the partnerships, and the stakeholders to reflect what happens in the Southern Alleghenies region. Every two years these plans must go through a formal review and modification process. When the current plans were prepared, we were in the depths of the pandemic. The labor market information reflected very high unemployment, and services were provided largely via technology. Consequently, there will be significant updates to make to reflect the current economic and workforce development climate. Information has been shared with the SAWDB's partners and stakeholders, and the SAWDB staff has begun to update the documents. The SAWDB will keep to the established planning process that includes giving individuals the chance to comment on draft documents prior to public release. The goal is to have everything completed prior to the end of the year, including the required 30-day public comment period. The plans will need to be officially approved and submitted at a full SAWDB board meeting, but no later than the February board meeting. If anyone has thoughts or concerns about information included within the plan, please reach out to Ms. Whisler.

Mr. Nielsen asked if there are any findings of concern that is causing us to have to consider some unexpected modifications. Ms. Whisler stated that nothing has been found; she discussed how success is currently measured regarding the scorecards and the way in which

services are provided. Taking the PA CareerLinks® on the road put the Southern Alleghenies region in a stronger position than other areas. The SAWDB is now looking at how services are being provided in terms of in-person services and the continuation of virtual service delivery. Mr. Nielsen noted that if we want to get people who have significant barriers, we have to be flexible, inventive, and meet them where they are.

Mr. Nielsen asked the One-Stop Operators some of the things being seen that are creating the additional connection with hard-to-reach people and if there is anything that has not worked well that can be rethought:

- Mr. Brad Burger shared that the PA CareerLinks® are seeing people at both ends of the spectrum. At one end of the spectrum there are folks who have significant barriers to digital literacy. The state recognizes this and has been working with an outside consultant to work on a plan to move forward. Some people have a lack of access or lack of knowledge or both. There are traditional folks who come into the centers for help, and then on the other end of the spectrum are folks who are digital and mobile first. Mr. Nielsen questioned how the board can better support the development of digital technology in addition to a system that allows us to move ahead without losing those other people. Mr. Burger stated that the board has already been doing everything to help; digital outreach is needed to continue to follow some state initiatives. The PA CareerLinks® are trying to do their own outreach because of knowing their population well; they want to be the human element to help with the digital platforms. Eventually mobile apps will be needed.
- Ms. Rosalie Danchanko spoke of the outreach event held at Oakhurst Homes and gave kudos to the providers for organizing the event. Regarding technology, it is good to have a support person close by if help is needed.
- Mr. Keith Baker stated that this is a statewide issue, and everyone is doing different forms of outreach. Rapid Response has made modifications to the CWDS system, and they can now target the participants who are eligible for benefits but have not taken advantage of them yet.

### **One-Stop Operator Report**

Mr. Brad Burger reported that the One-Stop Operators have been receiving consistent recognition for their efforts, dedication, and individualized attention that clients are receiving from staff. The summer youth program just wrapped up with closing ceremonies. The OSOs are receiving positive feedback about job fairs, outreach efforts, and other employer programs. Employers are doing on-site job fairs at PA CareerLink® facilities and are finding them beneficial.

Mr. Burger noted that regarding outreach, they continue to work with anyone who interacts with the CWDS system but does not go into a PA CareerLink® facility; direct follow up with these people is being done in addition to following up with them months later. Currently they are trying to determine how to manage the growing list of follow ups that are needed.

The agreement at the Somerset PA CareerLink® site has been extended. There are three PA CareerLink® locations either co-located inside a library or are in a facility that is shared with a library. There is a big push for digital literacy which is within the wheelhouse of a library. Ms. Whisler shared that the Southern Alleghenies region was the first workforce development area in the country to co-locate a comprehensive site within a library.

Ms. Sharon Clapper spoke of the Industry Partnership meeting she attended at Penn Highlands and shared that a number of the partners there stated how successful and well planned the Oakhurst Homes event was. The individuals who attended the event were very interested in the services and resources available.

Discussion centered on the benefit of holding workshops to help parents navigate through the college application process and have a better understanding since it is now digital. Ms. Whisler shared that one of the latest professional development opportunities through the state is to provide training to PA CareerLink® staff on helping around the FAFSA and financial aid information.

Ms. Clapper shared that she and Ms. Deb Hoover met with the HR director at Lockheed Martin to discuss the importance of employment opportunities in that field, and it would be wonderful to have a curriculum that has been developed that deals with positions that support Lockheed Martin. Mr. Nielsen noted that Penn Highlands has been willing to do different certificate programs based on the needs of employers; this is an important conversation to have. There is sometimes a lack of connection to some of the different educational resources in the area. Ms. Whisler stated that every Career & Technology Center has advisory councils for each of their programs which are made up of local employers; this would be a good first step to communicate employer needs directly to CTC administrators.

#### **Other Business**

Ms. Gwen Fisher shared an appreciation and thank you letter from a student who participated in the summer program and worked at the Altoona Library.

Ms. Clapper spoke of attending the celebration of the Somerset summer program. She thanked the program operators for the excellent job they did and for all of their hard work.

Mr. Nielsen shared that he attended the Community Health Summit at UPJ. He noted that there are interesting correlations between public health and employment. The main health issues being seen a lot of are lifestyle driven; this affects job attainment/retaining employment.

Discussion centered on the skills mismatch and there not being good communication between some of the employers and individuals. There is still a general misunderstanding that the jobs that are worth having are elsewhere. There is progress being made, but some disconnect still exists. What can the SAWDB do to bring down some of those information barriers and continue to combat that skills mismatch that are leaving people out of the workforce.

Mr. Nielsen stated that the Health and Wellness Council of Cambria County is looking at some of the things surrounding employment in planning for their improvement of overall county health. There is a need to better connect the employment job seeker piece to the public health piece. Discussion on how the health system talks to the workforce system; we need to improve our community health assessments/overall community health and also drive more people to employment while being inventive. Ms. Whisler shared that in the current plan, the SAWDB was recognized for the workforce systems connection to Highlands Health. Not only did they serve as a worksite, but they have also helped with costs associated with health-related needs for job seekers.

Discussion focused on how to partner with more mainstream hospitals and urgent care clinics and how to use our workforce system to have a positive effect on overall health which could also have a positive effect on employment. Items of discussion included:

- Hyndman Area Health Center has a mobile clinic: they might be a good contact.
- People are sidelined because of health issues that could be potentially mitigated or prevented by creating connections; we need to be innovative in this space and think of ideas and how the board can provide support. Ms. Danchanko stated that Highlands Health can visit work locations or PA CareerLinks® to provide vaccinations.
- Mr. Burger noted that these are good ideas, but the core challenge in the six-county region is doing outreach efficiently as the population continues to decline year after year. It is challenging to develop services efficiently.
- Mr. Nielsen spoke of how the board should continue to look at how to overcome and be effective as much as possible within those larger external constraints that the board cannot control. The board needs to be smart about what is done to take advantage of the population in the region to make it as effective and efficient and to drive up participation numbers. It is important to continue to try to innovate and try new methods.

#### **Adjournment**

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 11:20 a.m.

The next meeting of the Southern Alleghenies Workforce Development Board Executive Committee will be held on **Tuesday, October 11, 2022, 10:00 a.m.**