

**Business Employment Skills Team, Inc.
Board of Directors' Meeting Minutes
February 24, 2020**

The Business Employment Skills Team, Inc. Board of Directors' Meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by Co-Chair Kevin Reibel

Name	Present	Absent	Name	Present	Absent
Robert Albrecht			Steven Malavolti	X	
Gary Camarano	X		John Nicholson	X	
Carl Carlson			Kevin Reibel	X	
James Duffy	X		Wayne Reising	X	
Kathy Enbom	X		Jamey Sulser	X	
Randy Freeman	X		Scott Toot		
Kevin Lindeman					

PROXIES: Carl Carlson to Kathy Enbom, Robert Albrecht to James Duffy

OTHERS PRESENT: Pam Furlan & Jo Ann Johnson

Approval of the Meetings Minutes

Randy Freeman motioned to approve the December 16, 2019 Meeting Minutes. Motion was seconded by Wayne Reising and carried.

Public Comments

None

Executive Director Report

BEST Successes

Pam referred members to the BEST Successes that were included with the meeting materials. She said that there are 2 stories with the same first name and similar stories, however, they are 2 separate individuals.

Legislative Update

Pam said that she had nothing to update from her typed report regarding the Legislative Update. She did tell members that we are still waiting on the formula grant applications for July 1, 2020.

State 50% Training Expenditure Requirement

Pam informed members that the expenditure requirements are doing fine.

Update on Current Projects and Grants

Apprenticeship Expansion Grants

Pam reported that she has not heard if BEST, Inc. was awarded the Apprenticeship Expansion Grant. She said that awards were supposed to be announced in January, but has now heard that they will be announced in March or April.

Opioid Grant

Referring to her typed report that was included with the meeting materials, Pam reported that 3 of the 4 Disaster Relief Employees (DRE) have been hired contingent upon the results of the background checks. She said that the nurse for Sinnissippi; the Job Coach for Carroll, Jo Daviess, Lee, Ogle and Whiteside Counties; and the Peer Education Coordinator for Perfectly Flawed are expected to start as soon as the background results are received. Pam told members that Kerri Hicks (Opioid Grant Coordinator) has done an excellent job in networking with various organizations. Pam said that she and Kerri recently had a conference call with Aaqil Khan, Director of Project Open that serves Lee, Ogle and Whiteside Counties. She said that Mr. Khan showed them a draft of an Employer Referral Process flow chart that includes all of the players involved with assisting individuals through the Opioid Crisis. Pam reminded members that the total Opioid Grant is for \$680,000 but only one-third of the funds is available at a time.

Randy asked Pam what else the funding would be used for. Pam responded that totally there will be 5 Disaster Relief Employees hired. She said that there will be 2 nurses at Sinnissippi, 2 Job Coaches for BEST, Inc. and the Education Coordinator at Perfectly Flawed. Pam told members that the 2 Job Coaches will be working with different health care agencies, law enforcement and other organizations/agencies that work with individuals affected by the Opioid Crisis. Pam said that these organizations/agencies will refer the individuals to the Job Coaches once there are ready to either integrate or reintegrate back to the workforce. The grant allows for 30 individuals to be placed at worksites earning minimum wage or entry level wage set by the employer. She told members that the Job Coaches will be working with some second change employers that have been identified. Randy commented that he continues to see that transportation for these individuals will be a problem. He said that he understands that there are transportation options available but they do not necessarily meet the needs of the job seeker. Jim commented that he shared Randy's concern regarding transportation but also is concerned about what will happen to these individuals once the grant is done on June 30, 2021. He asked if there were any guarantees that these individuals would have jobs when the grant is done. Pam responded that if they are enrolled in OJT they would be absorbed by the employer. Jim said that he is concerned about the support that these individuals will receive once they are out of rehab and put back in the same situation without support. Pam said that there is support for these individuals through the networks that are being developed. Referring back to Mr. Khan's Employer Referral Process flow chart, Pam said that she will share that information with the Board so that they can see how the process will flow. Board members expressed their concerns about not tracking these individuals after the grant was completed. Pam reminded members that staff are working closely with the experts that are counseling the individuals that would be appropriate for this grant. Gary asked how success would be measured for this grant. Pam said that there is no performance measures for this grant. After a continued discussion regarding the DRE positions, Pam told members that she would send them a copy of the Work Plan that provides information about the activities, enrollments and budget.

Industry Informational Session

Pam informed members that the Building Trades will be featured for the next Industry Informational Session. She told members that a Building Trades panel will be making a presentation about the industry at the NCI Works Meeting on March 24.

Personnel Issues

Pam reported that she and Carrie will be going to Rockford on Friday to meet with IDES about a new office location in Sterling. She said that they are looking at a new building that will be built out to accommodate IDES and BEST, Inc.

Rapid Response Activities

Pam informed members that the Rapid Response Activities are provided in the typed report. She said that out of 500+ affected employees at DelMonte, only 53 attended the Job Search Workshops. Pam said that a lot of the DelMonte employees are seasonal and probably will not be coming back from Texas and Mexico.

Pam said that Compliance Signs has set up Job Search workshops for March 31. She said that there are 10 affected employees in the Sterling location and 52 in the Chadwick office.

Pam said that Mendota Lutheran Home will be closing and laying off 90 people. She said that a Job Search workshop was conducted on February 20 with 30 attending.

Carter Motoring, Pam said, will be moving their operation from Illinois to Wisconsin and they are taking their workforce with them.

In regards to John Deere, Pam said that we are waiting to hear if any of the affected employees reside in LWIA #4.

Contact List

Pam reported that she did attend the February 20 meeting with IVCC staff to explore the idea of agriculture-sector apprenticeships and the February 21 meeting, which turned into a conference call, with Kerri Hicks and Aaqul Khan.

Finance Director Report

Pam provided the Finance Director Report in the absence of Annette Pace and Jessica Green.

Trade Grant

We received notice from DCEO that we received an additional \$4,200 for Payment Processing. Pam told members that the State provides funding twice a year for processing the Trade grant.

1E Supplemental Dislocated Worker Funding

Pam said that we received \$430,880 for the 1E Supplemental Dislocated Worker Funding grant. She told members that they included an additional \$7,000 of Trade Case Management funding with the 1E Supplemental Dislocated Worker Grant. Although the funding is together, they are 2 separate grants.

Approval of the Fiscal Reports

Pam reported that as of December 2019 the combined Direct Training Expenditure for Adult and Dislocated Worker was at 61.5% and the Youth Work Based Learning percentage ratio was 28%. Pam stated that staff do not feel they will not have any difficulty meeting the 50% Direct Training Expenditure by the end of June. She said that staff feel they can meet the 20% Youth Work Based Learning percentage ratio by the end of June, but would like to get it about 25%. Pam noted that in her Personnel Report that some duties for Paige Fritz was switched to help with the Youth program. Pam also reported that as of December 2019 Report only 38.5% of funds were expended, but based on projections 82% of the funds are obligated. Pam stated that staff feel that that will not be a problem meeting the 80% expenditure required by the State. Motion to approve the November & December 2019 Monthly Financial Reports was made by Kathy Enbom. Motion was seconded by Wayne Reising and carried.

Other Business

Employee Handbook Review Update

Jo Ann informed members that she received a red-line version of the revised Employee Handbook from SmithAmundsen recently. She said that they were the firm that received the bid to review our Employee Handbook and Job Descriptions. Jo Ann told members that most of the "red line" clarifies the document and brings the document in compliance with state and federal laws that went into effect during the last 18 months. As an example, she said, the VESSA law was not included in the handbook, so they inserted it. She told members that they did recommend that our Drug Policy be revised specifically to include testing for at least suspicion. Jo Ann said that they stated that if the agency wanted to include post-accident testing that could be included but not necessary. The other recommendation/suggestion they had was to include the policies that are listed as "addendums" into the handbook instead of keeping them separate.

Jo Ann told members that she is planning to thoroughly review this document within the next few weeks and go over the revisions with the attorney. Jo Ann asked members how they would like to proceed. After discussion, Jo Ann was asked to email the redline version to the HR Committee for their review. Jo Ann stated that there will be a policy change that will need to be addressed by the HR Committee and BEST Board at the April meeting.

Next Meeting: April 27, 2020

Kevin announced that the next Board Meeting will be on Monday, April 27, 2020.

December Meeting Schedule: December 21 or December 28

Members discussed having the BEST Board meeting on either December 21 or December 28. It was agreed to wait on the final meeting date until the October Board meeting.

Other Business

Pam disseminated a copy of her letter of resignation to the Board effective May 1. Pam told members that after 46 years she has decided to retire. Members congratulated Pam.

Members then discussed the hiring process. Pam said that there are a couple of National Associations that posts job openings. Pam also told members that workforce development is not like any other business. She said that it is not like economic development or business. Pam encouraged members to consider someone that has the experience in workforce development. She said that the Chief Elected Officials have a lot of liability to bring in someone that does not have the experience. Members also talked about the possibility of internal applications.

Members then formed a Search Committee and the following members volunteered: Kathy Enbom, Gary Camarano, Jamey Sulser, Kevin Reibel, Jim Duffy. Pam suggested that Linda Burt and Cary Robbins, NCI Works Board Co-Chairs be asked to serve on the Search Committee due to the connection between BEST, Inc. and NCI Works. Wayne Reising said that he would serve if either Linda or Cary did not want to be on the Committee.

Adjournment

With there being no further business, Scott Toot motioned to adjourn. Motion was seconded by Jayme Sulser and carried. Meeting adjourned at 7:40 p.m.

Jo Ann Johnson

Approved by:

James C. Duffy
Secretary