



Missouri Workforce Development Board

May 26, 2020 2 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Conference Call Meeting Summary

Members Present: Interim Chair Len Toenjes, Garland Barton, LeRoy Stromberg, Director Anna Hui, Commissioner Zora Mulligan, Greta Bax, Dr. John Gaal, Kathy Lambert

MOWBD Staff: Mark Bauer, Director Mardy Leathers, Allyssa Miget

Call to Order and Welcome: Interim Chair Len Toenjes called the meeting to order at 2:01 PM and welcomed everyone. Interim Chair Toenjes acknowledged Catherine Bass Black and her family moved which caused her resignation from the State Workforce Development Board.

Roll Call: Allyssa Miget conducted roll call and declared a quorum was not present.

ReturnStrong Missouri: Director Mardy Leathers provided the board members with updates to the public workforce system since the COVID-19 pandemic. On March 13, 2020 an internal response taskforce was established to take an aggressive approach to the safety and wellbeing of staff. This taskforce resulted in 96% of staff working remote, rapidly setting up virtual services, and serving job seekers and employers in new ways. During this time the Emergency Response Call Center served 300,000 Missourians via phone or online mainly relating to Unemployment Insurance claims. COVID-19 has expedited the public workforce services to quickly transition to online services.

ReturnStrong has two approaches:

1. Helping Missourians Skill-Up and Get Back to Work through training programs, career services, and rapid response
2. Reopening Missouri's Public Workforce System Safely and Responsibly through job center modifications, staffing, and supply management

The guiding principles for ReturnStrong are:

1. Missourians will emerge from the economic disruption with increased skills and productivity
2. Out public workforce system will collaborate seamlessly to serve customers
3. Resources will be reprioritized to mitigate unemployment benefit cliff
4. Missouri's public workforce system will emerge from the economic disruption with more efficient processes for service and delivery
5. Missourians will access services safely in an omni-channel format
6. Our staff will conduct work in a safe, responsible, and customer centric manner

The public workforce system is visualizing 3 recovery phases, very similar to Missouri Economic Research Information Center's Now, Next, Later economic research. Now (June 1-September 30, 2020) more than 12% of unemployment, officially 9.7%. Next (October 1-December 31, 2020) 9% unemployment. And later (January 1-June 30, 2021) less than 9% unemployment. The public workforce system seeks to serve 1 million Missourians.

The Office of Workforce Development is tracking 3 different dashboards to monitor our progress:

1. Skill-Up & Get Back to Work looks at how many Missourians are in training programs as compared to unemployment insurance claims
2. Reopen the Public Workforce System which considers how many job center staff are working remote, staff in the office, and number of centers open to the public
3. WARN & Employment Transition Team response which tracks layoff notifications, number of Missourians called back to work, and number of permanent layoffs

In January of this year, Director Mardy Leathers sought to engage and build relationships with Chief Local Elected Officials. However when COVID-19 impacted Missouri, the CLEOs felt a tremendous amount of pressure to respond to COVID. On June 23rd the Office of Workforce Development will host a virtual update meeting to engage with Chief Local Elected Officials (CLEOs), Local Workforce Development Board Chairs and Local Workforce Development Board Directors on annual agreements, changes to job center service delivery, local performance, and any new federal or state policies. The Office of Workforce Development is still planning to have

the CLEO Summit on September 29, 2020 in person if allowed. However, OWD has contingencies in place to host virtually if need be.

There have been some minor changes to our board meeting schedule. On June 23rd the board will meet via teleconference and then the PY2020 CLEO Update Meeting will take place afterwards. The board will still meet at the Governor's conference on August 26th in Springfield, Missouri. Lastly, the SWD Retreat will now be on October 9th at the Lake of the Ozarks. The National Governor's Association will still be attending to assist with the retreat.

Questions, Comments, Closing Remarks: Interim Chair Toenjes opened the teleconference up to other members.

Dr. John Gaal congratulated Mardy Leathers on completing his doctoral program. And asked how OWD will achieve "Missourians will emerge from the economic disruption with increased skills & productivity"? Director Leathers responded that some Missourians receiving Unemployment Benefits may choose to wait and see. However, OWD is collaborating with the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations to push out information on the UI Interact system. The public workforce system is offering \$4,000 training vouchers for online courses in A+, project management and several others. Additionally, the community colleges provided a list of short term training programs, which this information was provided to the Local Workforce Development Boards to offer to job seekers. The public workforce system is working with companies to design training for their temporarily laid off employees.

Dr. John Gaal asked about OWD's COVID-19 Grant and if the grant could be used for community workers in the mental health industry to skill up. Director Leathers responded, yes we can use this grant for this purpose.

Interim Chair Toenjes asked if the public workforce system's budget was strained. Director Leathers responded that the Office of Workforce Development already anticipated a 10% reduction in federal funds. The federal funding formula is based on unemployment rates and other economic factors from last year. However, the State budget has up to a \$820 million dollar shortfall. The Governor has to make some tough decisions. Commissioner Mulligan continues to work closely with the colleges and universities on the budget.