

SYSTEMS PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE MEETING

November 15, 2019

Camden County Workforce Development Board Office

ATTENDANCE:

Members		16-Nov-18	15-Feb-19	17-May-19	23-Aug-19	15-Nov-19
Abusi, Pat, CHAIR	RailRoad Construction of South Jersey	X	X	X		X
Bryant, Janice	CCOS, Fiscal Manager	X	X	X		
Cirii, Frank	Local Area Operations Director, CCOSCC	X	X	X	X	X
Doran, Ryan	IBEW Local 351		X			
Maguire, Laurie	CCOS, Manager, Information Systems	X	X	X	X	X
Pape, Barbara	CCOS, Senior Accountant	X	X	X	X	X
Sinclair, Nidia	CCOS, Director, Career Center					
Weil, Robert	Conner Strong & Buckelew Companies Inc.					
Swartz, Jeffrey S., Exec. Director	WDB, Execitve Director	X	X	X	X	X
Primas, Theo	WDB, Program Evaluator	X	X	X	X	X
Varallo, Kathleen	WDB, Administrative Assistant	X	X	X	X	X
Williams, Leslie J	WDB, Comptroller	X	X	X	X	X

WELCOME:

Pat Abusi, Chair, Systems Performance Committee welcomed attendees. He thanked them for attending and extended happy Thanksgiving wishes.

The Committee reviewed the minutes dated August 23, 2019. Jeff asked for clarification that the State was going to rely on the local area calculation regarding common areas in the pending Infrastructure Funding Agreement. (IFA) (Page two, third paragraph, last sentence) Barbara Pape, Senior Account, One-Stop Career Center, said the State has not given clear direction. She said they may rely on the local area. Leslie Williams, Comptroller, WDB, further clarified the information will come from the County Improvement Authority. They negotiated the sub-lease with American Water. Barbara said the County will likely calculate the square footage and allocations of common areas. Laurie Maguire, Manager, Information Management Systems, said she attended a Webinar on November 14th regarding the structuring of the IFA. The Webinar gave very general information about how to calculate the costs and cost sharing in the IFA. She said there will be another call or Webinar scheduled on November 21st, 1pm, to provide further technical support for compiling the required information. Laurie said she would forward the information for the call to Barbara and Leslie. She also said that questions can be submitted via email, prior to the call. Jeff said the GSETA Executive team will be meeting with the Commissioner of Labor on December 9th and will get more direction about extending the submission date from December 31, 2019 to March 31, 2020. The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) must be reviewed, approved and signed by the partners. This action will take more than one month since most agencies will need to schedule board approval. Laurie said the State will be providing one signature for all state partners.

Pat Abusi asked for a motion to approve the minutes dated August 23, 2019 pending minor changes. The first motion was made by Frank Cirii, Local Area Operation Director, One-Stop Career Center. Pat Abusi made the second motion. By unanimous vote to the affirmative the motion was carried and the minutes were approved.

FISCAL REPORTS REVIEW

Barbara Pape, One-Stop, Senior Accountant, presented the revised Master Budget for program year 2019-2020 adjusted as of September 30, 2019. She also presented the Fund Balance Report through September 30, 2019 and the Contract Analysis Summary through September 30, 2019.

Barbara reported that all expected funding has been received except the Smart Steps funding. Funding for the Learning Link has also been increased. This increase will affect the entire budget because it will increase the allocation to Learning Link. It will also decrease the allocation to other grants. Primarily it will increase salaries and fringe because the One-Stop will now be able to allocate more staff time to the Learning Link as well. The increase will go from 30-45%. Leslie said that Barbara will make the changes post this meeting and have it ready for approval at the next Quarterly Board of Trustee Meeting on December 18, 2019. Barbara said she will add the Smart Steps adjustment. She may not have the allocations reflected in the IFA until she receives the information and that may not be until January or February 2020. She said it may take one-two weeks of work to apply those allocations to the master budget or template provided for the IFA.

Leslie asked about certain admin funds noted in the budget regarding the learning link. Barbara directed Leslie's attention to the correct line item on the master budget. She said it reflects about 12% of the funds.

The Committee finished reviewing adjustments to the Master Budget for the 2019-2020 program year and recommended it be presented to the full Board of Trustees for approval at the quarterly meeting scheduled on December 18, 2019 at Camden County College. This action is pending minor changes discussed by the committee as well as Learning Link and Smart Steps funds. Barbara said she would make the changes and forward the finalized budget to the WDB Office for distribution to the full board.

Barbara referred the committee to the Fund Balance Report. She said the report reflects the last two years of grant funding, the current year and the entire last year. She said there is still a lot of WIOA Adult funding left that has not been spent. Some salaries are charged in that account. The only way these funds are spent is through Individual Training Accounts (ITA). The current year shows Adult 32% and Dislocated Worker 42% obligated. Customers must come in and request training. While customer traffic has picked up, the adult is still way behind. We have to concentrate on getting adults in and recommending training opportunities. Youth is taking care of itself with contracts and youth vendors. She also said lack of referrals is affecting the Workfirst program. In the past few years, TANF funds have only been spent at a rate of 60%. We are on track to spend only 60% this year. There is a lot of money sitting that has not been obligated. These funds will have to be sent back to the State. Jeff said we are not the only local area facing this concern. There may be additional grants offered by the state if these funds can be reallocated to other programs such as the Summer Youth Employment Program. Theo Primas, Program Evaluator, WDB, suggested that one way to spend the money is to allocate more funds to raise the maximum per unit cost for ITA's. Laurie said the State is considering averaging the cost per unit at a higher level, however the increase may be tied to performance. The Committee discussed concerns about counting services to customers who have little barriers to employment. The One-Stop is serving customers who come in to use the computers, maybe see a counselor, but usually do not need training. Leslie asked if other counties are spending more per unit or customer. Laurie said the

information systems do not allow her to see other county's costs. The Committee also discussed raising the cost per unit or customer based on meeting the four benchmarks required under the WIOA law. There could be an incentive built into the training that would encourage more employment placement. Barbara said the current contracts say the county will never reimburse the vendor for more than they spend. Some vendors are not getting paid for certain benchmarks because they did not spend enough money. Leslie suggested doing some analytics on performance before changing the cost per unit. Let the vendors provide their estimate of additional expenditure to get to the entered employment phase and see if it achieves the goal. Then measure the actions to see if it's worth changing the policy to offer the extra incentive. Laurie said the benchmark of entered employment can only be counted after the second quarter of employment. That requirement is going to be enforced under the WIOA law. The incentive needs to be based on that requirement of second quarter employment. It not enough that a participant gets employment, they are achieving the benchmark only after they are retained in employment for two quarters. Barbara warned that the fiscal department cannot pay funds it has not received. Jeff said the incentive can be based on employment placement during the program year or current contract year. Leslie said she would still prefer doing a cost benefit analysis to make sure the process is clear and can support the change in policy. Frank said the follow up and tracking of the participant should be on the vendor. Laurie said the vendor does need to do more follow up. Laurie said the money will have to follow the participant because they may move from one vendor to another or from contract to contract. That makes the incentive idea a bit more complicated.

Theo said another concern that has been a factor in the last five years has been referral flow. The Board of Social Services referring enough TANF & Workfirst customers to vendors to meet the level of service. Lack of referrals from the Board has been a concern for quite some time. This funding stream is dependent on referrals from this partner agency.

Jeff said as long as an incentive program is established within the letter of the law, and we can use the funds as a bonus for retained employment, it's a creative way to spend down funding we would otherwise have to send back to the state. Pat asked if state approval is needed to establish an incentive program. Jeff said the State does not need to approve it. If there is documentation supporting the policy, it can be established with the approval of the WDB.

Theo said the incentive program can be discussed at the next "think tank" meetings. He usually runs these meetings prior to the procurement process. The purpose of the meetings is to review the current contracts along with best practices and make improvements to the process wherever possible. Laurie said there should be ways to get more money to the providers that is legitimate and still holds them accountable for performance. Theo said for Youth and Workfirst, this could be a year that we really look at ways to add benefit to the providers. We can talk about what is working and look at something new. Jeff said the challenge is the County is very protective of how the contracts are written. Theo said the contract includes the RFP by reference. He sends the RFP to the county for formal approval. They still depend on the WDB to make sure all performance concerns are covered so we can be innovative. Jeff said there can be new language discussed for the RFP that provides more incentives for the providers pending a cost benefit analysis. Laurie said that more money can be given to the provider upfront for assessment and career planning. Currently, there is no assessment or career plan being done for Workfirst customers. The participant is not being seen in the One-Stop and it is really kind of detrimental to them to not give them a comprehensive assessment. Jeff said that completion of an Individual Service Plan (ISS)

could meet a benchmark requirement. Laurie agreed that it could be a simple work plan. Nothing is being entered in the AOSOS information system. Theo said the provider usually has their own version of this type of plan. Laurie said it is not ending up in our system. Jeff said a form for assessment and ISS can be created so that it can be entered into the system. Laurie said this function would cost the provider more staff time, but they can be compensated for this administrative function and it benefits the participant. Leslie said if this function could be inserted into the RFP, it could attract more providers because now they will get more for these types of administrative functions. Jeff said that the One-Stop can require an assessment form and ISS developed for specific entry into AOSOS. It can be completed for each participant. The vendor can receive a fee for this administrative process. The committee discussed and all agreed that providing an assessment and work plan for the participant is a very important benchmark. This can be achieved by the vendor at a reimbursable cost. It will be further discussed at the next think tank meetings prior to releasing the 2020-21 procurement RFP. The cost per unit will be based on an average and may be increased to include the cost of the administrative process of providing the participant with a comprehensive assessment and work plan. Laurie said the guidance provided for the MOU and IFA gives an average of costs for a counselor. The guidance can be a tool for estimating the unit cost. Barbara said the unit cost will have to be raised now to include the assessment and placement provision. It must be based on a solid number and completed within the contract period and cannot exceed the allowable cost of \$3,500. The initial process will provide the completion of two benchmarks that will give the vendor a chance to pull down the 50% cost reimbursement spelled out in the contract. Jeff said it is a win-win for the customer as well as the vendor. Leslie said that the Systems Performance Committee will have to approve the increase at the next meeting in February. Theo said the RFP is approved by the Committee.

Barbara summarized discussions about the Fund Balance Report and reviewed the deficiencies in obligated funds in Youth, Workfirst-Adult and Dislocated Worker. She also reviewed the same ongoing concerns such as enrollments and youth expenditures which are required to be 70% expended by June 30, 2019. The WIOA Youth funds have a Work Experience mandate equal to 20% of program funding. Our staff must be doing certain things when it comes to youth work experience. They do not actually have to have youth in a work experience, they must be introducing youth to a work experience. This function needs to be documented and it has to be entered into the AOSOS. The Committee agreed and recommended the One-Stop Fiscal Department complete a cost analysis to determine the probability of raising the unit cost for ITA contracts by including certain additional functions such as assessment, ISS, job placement and retention. Jeff asked if Barbara anticipated sending funds back to the State. Barbara said that Workfirst and TANF money will most likely be sent back. She confirmed that 25% will likely be returned. Jeff said this may be the time to look at ways or speak to the vendors about making sure the funds are used. There is still six months left in the program year. Laurie said that Smart Steps Customers who are attending school could be processed for eligibility and entered in the system for some tuition reimbursement. They are required to check in with a counselor. It can be coordinated before their spring semester. This process can be charged to the Work First funding. Frank said he would meet with Nidia to coordinate the process.

PROGRAM EVALUATOR REPORT

Theo Primas, WDB Program Evaluator, reported there are currently 45 Individual Training Account (ITA) Vendors eligible to receive program year (PY) 2019-2020 Career Center Referrals. He said 64 contract packages have been sent out. Those packages are still being processed.

WORKFIRST & WIOA

Theo reported that he is preparing for a series of monitoring site visits. He said he completed site monitoring and reports for the Summer Youth Employment Pilot Program. Laurie asked Theo to contact JEVS because there have been no enrollments. Theo said that this is normal for a new provider. Theo said he will get in touch with the contact from the RFP.

Theo reported in response to the NJDOL Office of Youth Programs' monitoring letter, the CCOS conducted a mandatory Youth Provider Operations Training on Wednesday, October 30th at 9 AM at the CCOS. The training included an overview of the NJDOL's letter including their recommendations, as well as, CCOS's corrected actions as proposed.

MONITORING

Theo reported he has been in discussions with management at the South Jersey Transportation Authority (SJTA) about their ability to maintain and submit the names, case numbers, and ridership, all of which are required by the SSA. This was brought to the attention of the WDB by the State. He said SJTA states that the problem they have been experiencing over the past several years is that passengers do not want to release their personal information. Consequently, SJTA has a plan to perform a survey that only asks passengers if they receive TANF or post TANF benefits. The SJTA's JARC Camden program transports about 140,000-150,000 one-way passengers' trips per year. SJTA's position is that, due to the volume of passengers and commutation times on certain shuttles, it is impossible to have the passengers complete a sign in sheet. Conversely, One-Stop MIS emphasizes the importance of resolving the issue of identifying TANF participants. The One-Stop is responsible for entering supportive services into AOSOS for WFNJ participants. If identity is not collected, then MIS will be unable to enter any funded services for the SJTA participants. It is important that AOSOS reflects all the services, including supportive services, provided by the One-Stop. Therefore, it is imperative that a method be devised to gather the identity of the ridership.

Theo said that since the meetings with the SJTA, they have implemented a ridership survey which has resulted in a spreadsheet of about 350 names. SJTA has requested that someone from the Board run the names to confirm their TANF status. He spoke to Salama MacFarland, Case Management Administrator, CCBSS, who agreed to screen the list with the expectation that a better plan will be developed for ongoing determination of eligibility. He also stated that of the 350 names provided by SJTA, it was determined by CCBSS that only two (2) were TANF. Theo also reported that a handshake agreement between County and SJTA to run a 3-month pilot (mid-September through mid-December). The objective is to get a better sense of ridership, ease of access for customers to the One-Stop and to ensure that Federal funds are being used for the prescribed purpose.

Pat thanked the committee for their time and efforts. The next quarterly meeting of the System Performance Committee is scheduled Friday, February 28, 2020 @9:00am.

Submitted by,

Kathleen Varallo

WDB Administrative Assistant