

**PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY  
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD (WDB)**

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**February 21, 2024, Meeting Minutes**

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|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. Alexander Austin     | 9. Gloria Brown Burnett |
| 2. Brad Frome           | 10. Joshua Harold       |
| 3. Brian Courtien       | 11. Kari Pompilli       |
| 4. David Diaz           | 12. Margaret Shrager    |
| 5. Dawn Carter^         | 13. Stacey Butler^      |
| 6. Deborah Topcik       |                         |
| 7. Dr. Jean Paul-Cadet^ |                         |
| 8. Erica LeMon          |                         |

^ Designee

\*Elected Official

**Board Staff & Guest of the Board**

Amanda Wagner

Ardy Kamali

Jeffrey Swilley

Khadijah Allen

Rebecca Webster

Walter Simmons

**Welcome & Introductions**

The meeting opened at 9:09 a.m. by Walter Simmons.

## **Approval of Minutes**

**Brad Frome**

Brad Frome presented minutes for the December 6, 2023, meeting.

**Motion to approve minutes made by; seconded by and carried unanimously.**

## **Apprenticeship Policy**

**Amanda Wagner**

- The policy aims to support apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship activities to expand them in Prince George's County. It establishes the allowable use of funds to incentivize businesses to use apprenticeships in their hiring strategy. The policy covers pre-apprenticeship programs, registered apprenticeship programs, and high school apprenticeships. Eligible use of funds includes training costs, development of apprenticeships, operating costs, staff time, and more. However, no capital expenditures are allowed under this policy.

**With a motion approved by the Business Services Committee to approve the Apprenticeship Contract. Jackie Bryan seconded the motion, and there were no objections from the attendees and no abstentions.**

## **Youth Career Connections/Blueprint for Milena Kornyl Maryland's Future Update**

**Walter Simmons**

- An MOU has been established between Prince George's Community College, Prince George's County Public Schools, and Employ Prince George's, to support in-school youth programming through the Youth Career Connections Program, which has been funded for approximately five years. The program has secured funding for 60 staff, including an assistant director and two managers, to engage with students in middle and high schools across approximately 80 schools, with an estimated enrollment of 69,000 students. The recruitment and onboarding of staff is currently underway, with biweekly leadership calls held to ensure that the program remains on track. The primary focus is onboarding staff and integrating them with the schools' data systems. The team is considering organizing career fairs for individual schools, as well as larger career fairs for the school system. The objective is to onboard all 50 career coaches within the next few months and have them assigned to specific schools by the end of the year.

## **Request for Proposal: Summer Youth Connections Overview**

**Amanda Wagner**

- The Request for Proposals for the PY24 Summer Youth Connections Employment Program. The RFP Release date was January 31, 2024, and the proposal is due on March 4, 2024. The objective of the Summer Youth Connections program is to provide job opportunities to young people and expose them to various public and private sector industries. The program aims to provide short-term job placement opportunities, training, and increase self-efficacy, work experience, and skills required to succeed in today's

workforce. The program's contract term will commence on May 1, 2024, and will last until September 30, 2024, with total funding of up to \$200,000.

### **Labor Force Recovery Strategy**

**Walter Simmons**

- The unemployment rate is not a reliable indicator of the workforce as many individuals have dropped out of the labor force. In Maryland, the number of workers has decreased by 161,747 since pre-COVID times, with 9,597 fewer people being employed. Out of the total job losses, 30,000 are from Prince George's County. Many businesses are struggling to fill vacancies, and as a result, the local plan is to create a Labor Force Recovery Strategy. The first step of the strategy would involve targeting incumbent workers. Employers would need to agree to promote individuals who are residents of Prince George's County to fill the vacancies left by promoted employees. This approach aims to address the labor shortage in the county. Employers would have to agree to every person that we promoted to that position, and that vacancy would have to be filled by Prince George's County residents.
- The Labor Force Recovery Strategy is currently focused on the incumbent workers who are already employed with the employer to fill the open vacancies. The next target group is the in-school youth, with a specific focus on high school juniors and seniors. The objective is to engage this group in the workforce earlier through the Blueprint program. During conversations with the Business Advisory Council, several employees emphasized that they might consider hiring younger people but are unaware of the labor laws. The council also inquired about the possibility of reintroducing Innovate, a professional development series where speakers connected with businesses and shared their expertise.
- The strategy aims to target young adults by venturing into the public school system. The plan is to then approach the traditional talent pool and collaborate with different partners. Lastly, the strategy will aim to serve the 7,968 individuals by partnering with Employ Prince George's and the Labor. The two entities will work together to capture and engage these individuals with the program.

### **Adjournment**

**Brad Frome**

Brain Courtien made a motion to conclude the meeting, which was seconded by Jacqueline Bole.

- The next meeting will be held on April 17, 2024, at 9:00 a.m.