

**East Central Georgia Consortium
Workforce Investment Board
Workforce Development Center One Stop – Thomson, GA
Tuesday, July 24, 2012 – 5:30 p.m.**

Meeting Minutes

WIB Attendees

LaTunya Goodwin, Chairperson
Janie Craven
Jessie Mitchell
Wanda Jordan
William Irwin
Ted Dezenski
Lauri Tuten for Ava Scarce
Ginger Carrington
Lloyd Horadan
Bobby Culpepper
Carolyn Reynolds
Van Langham
Titta Usry-Bland For
Ken Williams

ECGC Staff

Leon Fields, Director
Carrie Edwards
Pecola Wiley
Sue Richards
Mary Stein
Sondra Randall
Lagaile Jones
Vivian Stewart
Carrie Lokey

Guests

Wanda Davis – Glascock Action Partners

Welcome/Opening

LaTunya Goodwin, Chairperson of the Workforce Investment Board (WIB) called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone. Ms. Goodwin also asked for everyone to introduce themselves.

INVOCATION

Leon Fields, Director

Review/Approval of Minutes

Chairperson Goodwin presented the minutes from April 24, 2012 for approval.

Ken Williams made a motion to approve the minutes as presented and Jessie Mitchell seconded the motion. There being no discussion, the motion passed.

Offender Workforce Development Program and Project M-PACT Report:

Carrie Edwards provided the following update on the Offender Workforce Development program and Project M-PACT for January – July 2012:

- Since the April 24th meeting only two clients were entered into the offender program, this was to end program year 2011. Both clients completed the program and were exited successfully. They are still employed.
- Beginning July 1st, which starts our new program year, two clients have been entered in to the offender program. Currently, both clients are still in the program and they reside in Jefferson County.
- We are working on a new Work Experience Policy Manual because we are the only WIA that continues to provide Adult Work Experience. With the state's approval we are working on a policy that will fit our area.
- In the upcoming week, we will be going on our 2nd Annual Camp for Project M-PACT. We will be taking 13 – 15 youth to Dahlonega, Georgia. These are high risk youth ranging from 13 -15 years of age.
- On June 15th we attended the Adult WIB Committee, they requested for us to do a presentation on our OWD (Offender Workforce Development) Program. We are currently the only area that has an OWD Program and with the criminal justice reform Governor Dill is focusing on offenders. Our presentation described how our program is designed. Hopefully, the next step will be meeting with them again in order to see in which direction they would like this program to function.
- We have been asked to host TOPSTEP (Offender Probation Parolee) and present, on August 9th.

National Emergency Grant (NEG) Report

Pecola Wiley provided the following updates on the NEG Program:

- The ARRA OJT NEG grant has been extended from June 30, 2012 thru September 30, 2012. The number of participants didn't change drastically because the original end date for this grant was June 30th. Therefore, we were not enrolling as many participants. On June 4th, we learned that the grant would be extended.
- There are 27 employers that we are currently working with, in various counties. As we move forward we are asking for help with referring employers to our agency, in order for us to put clients back to work.
- GDOL conducted another review on May 24th and 25th. The purpose of this review was to provide technical assistance. GDOL made recommendations in regards to the Customer Service Plan and Training Outline.
- The budget as of June 30, 2012 is \$124,002.00.

Leon Fields stated that he was standing in support of Ms. Wiley because he requested that she step in and take over in the middle of NEG/OJT due to some personnel issues. Mr. Fields also stated that the personnel issues have been resolved and Ms. Wiley and Ms. Lokey are doing a wonderful job. Mr. Fields further explained that he stands with Ms. Wiley because there have been some difficult times with the NEG/OJT audits. Auditors are asking questions about things that have happened in the past, which are difficult to answers. We are doing our best to deal with the situation.

One Stop Report

Carrie Edwards (standing in for Karen Abron) provided the following updates for the One Stop:

- Total visits per location – Augusta Technical College (354), Oconee Fall Line Technical College (145), Screven County WIA One Stop (1087), and Thomson One Stop (2622) helping with Job Search Assistance, Resumes and Cover Letters, Assessments and Referrals to other agencies.

Ms. Edwards stated if anyone had any further questions that they could email Mrs. Abron and she will be glad to answer any question. Ms. Edwards continued by saying that Mrs. Abron is also working on a CNA and Incumbent Worker Program.

Youth Council Report

Ginger Carrington provided the following update for the youth council:

- Since the last WIB meeting an issue has arrived with one of the RFP's. This situation will require a vote from the board. Jefferson County has encountered an issue this situation is causing cancellation of their contract. When Jefferson County submitted their proposal, the Board of Education had agreed to be their fiscal agent. The Board of Education has withdrawn their support as Jefferson County's fiscal agent. Recently, Jefferson County Board of Commissioners has agreed to be the fiscal agent. This would be a major change to the contract which would require Jefferson County to submit a new proposal. The deadline to submit proposals has passed. Due to procurement policies on the federal level, we are required to cancel this contract. The youth council is recommending that the proposal from Jefferson County not be accepted, due to procurement procedures.

Ken Williams asked if Jefferson County understood why we could not accept their proposal. Mrs. Carrington responded by saying yes they understood. Mr. Williams also asked if Jefferson County could resubmit next year after everything was back on track. Mrs. Carrington stated that next year is a renewal year therefore they would have to wait for a period of two years. Ms. Carrington stated that we have had some problems with this Service Provider in the past and were hoping that we could service them this year. William Irwin asked who the particular Service Provider is. Sue Richards responded by saying Jefferson County Family Connection is the provider and the Board of Education was the fiscal agent. Mr. Irwin asked what caused Jefferson County to withdraw. Mary Stein responded by saying that at this time we are not at liberty to discuss what caused this situation to happen. Jefferson County Board of Education has asked for this information not to be discussed. We had a phone conversation with Ms. Molly Howard, the superintendant, and she requested that we give no further information, other than they had to withdraw their support, as the fiscal agent. Ms. Stein further stated that we could not open to process for proposals due to the fact that the deadline has passed therefore the proposal for Jefferson County has to be pulled out. The contract was not yet initiated but we were in the process when the letter of withdrawal was received from Jefferson County Board of Education. Mrs. Carrington stated that the contracts are reimbursable therefore each service providers has to have a stable financial status in order to get their program started. Mrs. Carrington further stated with Jefferson County not having a fiscal agent in place we could not guarantee their success with the program.

Ken Williams made a motion to pull the proposal from Jefferson County and William Irwin seconded the motion based on the recommendation from the youth council. Lloyd Horadan asked, without revealing too much information, are there any moralities, legalities or ethics regarding this particular service provider's past or present issues that the board should have any concerns about. Mrs. Stein replied by saying no there is no reason for concern and we currently do not have a contract with this service provider. Mrs. Carrington stated that there is no liability to WIA. Lauri Tuten asked what would be done with the additional money that was allocated to Jefferson County. Mrs. Richards stated that eleven proposals were approved and now we are down to nine. Mrs. Carrington confirmed that Goodwill withdraw their proposal. Ms. Richards continued by saying in January each service provider will be evaluated to ensure that they are meeting performance. If performance is being met a modification to the contract will be completed to award additional funding to those service providers. There being no further discussion, the motion carried.

Ms. Richards mentioned that the new service providers had their very first meeting on this day. Two consultants from GDOL came and provided training.

Education Department Report

Vivian Stewart provided the following update on the WorkKeys assessments and the GED Tutors:

- In our Learning Center we had 424 visits. We serve youth and adults from ages 18 and up. Since the last meeting five clients have received their GED. We assessed five youth with TABE and on August 1st we will be testing our WIA clients in Warren County. We also assessed the youth that attended the Youth Challenge Academy with TABE.
- 87 clients took the WorkKeys assessment. These individuals were testing for positions with Georgia Forestry Commission, Georgia Iron Works, Georgia State Patrol, City of Thomson, GLIT and Workforce Capital Solutions.
- We have seven students enrolled in the Medical Bridge Program. The students reside in the following counties: Columbia, Jefferson, Lincoln, Washington and Warren. We are still seeking participants hoping to serve someone in each of our twelve counties.
- The Governor's Office has ended Georgia WorkReady and will not be reimbursing Technical Colleges for testing. The WorkKeys assessment is no longer free. Some employers do not require their applicants to take the assessment anymore but there are other employers that still require this as part of the application process. We are still providing the assessment once a week unless it is needed at other times. The WorkReady Connect site is still available.
- We recently started a CNA Pilot Program. About twenty-five applicants attended our in-house orientation and thirteen of the applicants qualified for the program, pending a background check. Classes will begin August 1st.

Lloyd Horadan asked if any employers were using the WorkKeys assessment as an exclusive determination for employment. Ms. Stewart stated that no employer should use the assessment as a basis to determine employment. Mr. Horadan asked if we have told employers about the recent court case that found the assessment to be discriminatory. Mr. Horadan also stated that African Americans, Asians and Hispanics challenged the validity of the assessment and the court ruled in their favor. He stated that he

would forward a copy of the article to Mr. Fields. Carolyn Reynolds asked in which state did this case take place. Mr. Horadan replied that he couldn't recall but it wasn't Georgia. Ms. Carrington replied that some companies require for their applicants to have a minimum score on the WorkKeys assessment. Chairperson Goodwin stated that Mr. Fields will forward the article to each board member for review to see how this case affects our area.

Financial Report

Sondra Randall provided the following update on actual expenses through March 2012. Percentages spent: for Adults 59%, Displaced Worker 83%, Youth 72%, Admin 70%, NEG 48%, NEG Admin 43%, and 21% of all other grants that includes: Bi-Lo After School, WorkReady Recertification (McDuffie County), Project M-PACT & WorkReady Region Grants.

Carolyn Reynolds asked if a 100% of the budget is not spent does it always carry forward to the next year. Ms. Randall responded by saying we have until June 2013 to spend the remaining funding. Ms. Reynolds continued by asking if a youth service provider has money remaining at the end of their contract, is the money put back and reallocated. Ms. Randall stated that the funding does go back and it is reallocated to the new contracts.

Director's Report

Leon Fields, Director stated that we are continuing to find ways to reduce cost. Mr. Fields further stated there is an Incumbent Worker Training that we are interested in doing with Thomson Plastic. They are wanted eight of their employees to receive specialized training injection molding. The cost will be \$19,900.00. The Governor's Office took over effective July 1st. They are asking for information sometimes on a daily basis in order to figure out how the program works. We are interested in starting some welding classes, trying to focus on some of the high demand occupations to get some of our citizens employed. Ms. Ava Scarce has retired and she asked for Ms. Lauri Tuten to be considered for her replacement as a board member. This will be discussed with the CEO board and we will give a recommendation and this will be brought back to the WIB. We are in the process of modifying our OJT manual. This is a difficult process but we are trying to be more uniform with the state of Georgia, realizing that all areas are different.

Old Business

Chairperson Goodwin asked if there was any old business that needed to be discussed. There was no old business.

New Business

Chairperson Goodwin stated there are four items that require a vote from the board. Mr. Fields presented to the board our interest completing an Incumbent Worker Training with Thomson Plastics. If this training is approved by the board it also has to be taken to the Governor's office for approval. Mr. Fields stated that he has been working with Mr. Larry Collins. Mr. Collins needs eight of his Molding/Injection Operators to receive specialized training with injection molding. Mr. Collins informed Mr. Fields that if the employees do not receive the training the company would not be operating sufficiently and the end

result would not be good. In an effort to keep a local company operating Mr. Fields asked the board to approve this training. Mr. Fields ensured the board that we do have to funding to provide this service. The total cost will be \$19,910.00. If the eight employees receive this training they will be highly skilled. Ted Dezenski asked where the training would take place. Mr. Fields stated that the training will have two phases. A portion of the training will take place in classroom and the other portion will be done on the job. Some training will be here at the One Stop and also in Michigan with RJG Injection Molding. The training will take place three days at the end of July and three more days starting Sept. 25th. Mrs. Carrington asked if the company had new equipment. Carrie Lokey replied that the company doesn't have new equipment. Mr. Dezenski asked if these were current employees and equipment that is already installed. Mr. Fields answered by saying yes it is current employees and equipment. It is new technology that will make them more efficient. Ms. Lokey stated that yes it is the same equipment and employees but it is a different procedure that will allow them to have less waste and more output. The company will be able operate in a more timely manner which will create more output. Lloyd Horadan asked if the company had spoken with Augusta Technical about providing the training that is needed without having to use an out of state provider. Ms. Lokey replied that the training provider is out of state but they will be coming here to provide the training. Two of the employees will be traveling out of state for a two week period but WIA will not cover that cost. Ms. Carrington asked if the new technology is QuickStart eligible. Ms. Lokey stated that it's not a new technology but a new procedure. Mr. Dezenski stated if the company paid for the training themselves they could receive a tax credit. Mr. Horadan asked for the total number of contact hours for the training. Ms. Lokey stated that the total number of contact hours is a little over 2500. Mr. Fields further explained that the cost for each person is \$2,488.75. Ms. Lokey further explained that the training provider will come and complete classroom and equipment training to put the new procedure in place. After the first three days of training is complete the employee will have homework to complete before the last three days of training is done. Pecola Wiley stated that the employees will receive a pay increase after the training is complete. Ms. Lokey also shared further information concerning Thomson Plastics in Sandersville. Ms. Lokey asked Mr. Collins if the training had been provided in that particular location would it have caused that location not to close. Mr. Collins informed us that it would have played a major part in keeping the plant operating but couldn't ensure that it would have stayed open. Lauri Tuten asked if the eight employees would receive certification that would be marketable to other companies. Mr. Fields replied that the employees will receive certification. Ms. Lokey clarified with this new procedures the company will be able to take new contract without delay. Janie Craven asked when we provide this type of program how do we evaluate the success of the program to ensure that it was a good investment. Mr. Fields explained to the board that the Governor's office has to give the final approval on this program. After they have approved it, we track the individuals in this program to ensure that they are still working. Ms. Craven commented that seniority longevity or turnover would be a part of the evaluation. Mr. Fields ensured that her statement was correct. Ms. Tuten had concern about whether the Governor's office would have enough time to approve this training since it is taking place at the end of July. Mr. Fields informed the board that he had discussed this situation with the Governor's office and made it clear that we only had a couple of days for this training to be approved. The Governor's asked for the information to be sent after the board's approval.

Janie Craven made a motion to approve the Incumbent Worker Training with Thomson Plastics based on the fact that it would bring \$19,000 in the community. Bobby Culpepper seconded the motion. Chairperson Goodwin clarified that WIA would be spending the \$19,000 therefore it would be coming into the community. Ms. Lokey stated that the employee who would be benefiting from the training would continue to work in our community. Mrs. Craven stood with her motion. Lloyd Horadan opposed and Ted Dezenski abstained, the motion carried.

Mr. Fields stated that he will keep the board informed on the progress of this training. Mr. Horadan explained the reason for his negative vote by saying he believes all companies should seek help from their local technical colleges for this type of training. Mr. Horadan stated that the employer could have contacted their local technical college and had the training completed at a lower cost. Mr. Dezenski further explained that Mr. Collins should have contacted Lisa Palmer at Augusta Tech to verify if this training through QuickStart because it would not have been any cost. In further discussion it was stated that Lisa Palmer or Odella Kelly should be contacted to verify if this training can be done through QuickStart. Chairperson Goodwin suggested in the future when we have potential employers and clients that we asked if they have contacted their state Economic Developer Project Manager before moving forward with these types of projects.

Carrie Lokey is asking for the board to approve a change in the policy regarding ES registration. Ms. Lokey explained that currently the policy states that an employee has to have an active ES registration before he or she can be eligible to receive services. An ES registration shows that the individual has been to their local DOL office within the last ninety days. Ms. Lokey is asking for the board to remove ES registration as a requirement. Lagaile Jones commented that ES registration is not required by the state this is a local decision. William Irwin made a motion for the ES registration be removed as a requirement and Jesse Mitchell seconded the motion. There was no further discussion and the motion carried.

Ms. Lokey needs the board's approval to complete an agreement with Milliken Corporation in McCormick, South Carolina. Ms. Lokey stated we have a client who resides in Lincoln County that has applied for a position at the South Carolina location. Milliken would like to register this individual but because the company is located in another state we are asking for approval to complete an agreement with this company. Lloyd Horadan asked if there was a board policy regarding out of state considerations. Ms. Lokey replied by saying there is currently no policy in place but we asked for clarification from the state and we didn't receive an answer. Ms. Lokey clarified that the participant would continue living in our service area. Bobby Culpepper made a motion to approval an agreement with Milliken Corporation in McCormick, South Carolina and Lauri Tuten seconded the motion. There was no further discussion and the motion carried.

Ms. Lokey is also asking for approval on a new OJT payment method and schedule. Ms. Lokey stated that we are currently working on revising the OJT manual. We are hoping that it will govern OJT, Work Experience, Incumbent Worker and Customized Training. We are trying to make OJT more uniform with the state. Ms. Lokey asked the board to approve a one-time payment at the end of training to larger companies. For smaller companies there will be two payments, one at mid-point and the other at the end of training. This new payment method will reduce the amount of paperwork that has to be completed.

Lloyd Horadan asked wouldn't this process affect the company's cash flow. Ms. Lokey stated that it does but most of the employers prefer to have a one or two payment system because it would be less time consuming. Ted Dezenski asked what is the time frame for an OJT participant. Ms. Lokey replied by saying from eight to twelve weeks. Mr. Horadan asked how many employers are we currently working with. Ms. Lokey stated that with NEG we have twenty-seven employers. Mr. Horadan had a concern with smaller companies being reimbursed on a one or two time basis because this could cause a cash flow problem. Kenneth Williams made a motion to approve the new OJT payment method and Bobby Culpepper seconded the motion. There was no further discussion. Lloyd Horadan opposed the motion. The motion carried.

Adjournment

Chairperson Goodwin adjourned the meeting.