



Benton-Franklin Workforce Development Council (BFWDC)

Adult & Employer Linkage (AEL) Committee

November 18, 2021, at 8:30 a.m.

Zoom

<u>Present</u>	<u>Excused</u>	<u>Absent</u>	<u>BFWDC Staff Present</u>
Adolfo de León-Chair	Jamie Rasmussen	Lori Mattson	Tiffany Scott
Jennie Weber		Michael Lee	David Chavey-Reynaud
Karl Dye			Diana Hamilton
Todd Samuel-Board Chair			Jamilet Nerell
Jim Smith			Cynthia Garcia
			Jessie Cardwell
			 <u>Presenters</u>
			Crystal Bright

Call to Order

Adolfo started the meeting by welcoming everyone and called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m. Jamilet read through the roll call while everyone responded. She asked guests to put their names and organization in the chat and thanked everyone for joining the meeting.

Approval of Committee Minutes

The Minutes of October 21, 2021, Adult & Employer Linkage Committee Meeting were provided for members to review.

Todd Samuel moved to approve October 21, 2021, Adult & Employer Linkage Committee Meeting Minutes as presented, seconded by Jennie Weber. Motion carried.

PY21 Subrecipient Monitoring Plan Schedule-Jessie

Jessie presented the PY21 Subrecipient Monitoring plan. She shared it is a comprehensive summary of all the contracts that the BFWDC is required to monitor throughout the program year, and it provides details about each contract. In total, the board awarded over \$4.8 million this year to help with the employment and training needs in our community.

Jamilet added she would update the committee when the Washington State Department of Commerce sets a monitoring date for Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), as the date currently says "TBD."

Todd Samuel moved to approve the PY21 Subrecipient Monitoring Plan as presented, seconded by Adolfo de Leon. Motion carried.

BFWDC Highlights

Adult and Dislocated Worker Contract Updates-Diana

This week we received fully executed WIOA adult and dislocated worker contracts and disseminated originals to our subrecipients. The reason it took longer than last year to work through our required signature process is that the County Deputy prosecuting attorneys did not allow us to use DocuSign. We will be working with the Deputy Prosecuting Attorneys next year to find alternatives that will allow us to obtain these signatures more efficiently.

PY21 Department of Labor (DOL) Disaster /Employment Recovery Monitoring Visit - Diana

Diana shared the Disaster Recovery (DR) and Employment Recovery (ER) monitoring schedule. Last month the Department of Labor (DOL) was in the process of selecting the local areas they will monitor for those disaster and employment recovery contracts. The Employment Security Department (ESD) recently informed us that the DOL would not be monitoring our area. The four areas that DOL selected are PAC mountain, Seattle King, North Central, and the Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board. This will provide the BFWDC and our subrecipients additional time to focus on the state monitoring visit scheduled for May.

Disaster and Employment Recovery Updates – Diana

Diana provided an update for the no-cost extension. In September, the state offered all 12 WDCs the opportunity to submit no-cost extension applications to extend the contract end dates from March 31, 2022, for an additional 12 months. Since then, ESD fiscal team determined that they could extend contract end dates to all local areas through May 31, 2022, two additional months, without having to apply for a no-cost extension. There were several discussions between our subrecipient and BFWDC leadership to determine whether or not to participate in the no-cost extension. Upon an extensive review of the remaining budgets, performance deliverables, and community needs, we are confident we can fully expend our remaining funds without participating in the No Cost Extension for both the Disaster and Employment Recovery Grants. In December the WDC will submit a 2nd Disaster Recovery modification request to ESD to shift funds to meet customers needs. This final contract modification will allow the WDC to begin transitioning the temporary disaster relief food support positions at Second Harvest and Pasco Community Services and begin utilizing Community Block Development Grant funds. This contract modification will allow us to continue to provide the humanitarian services our community needs without a disrupting services.

Economic Security for All (EcSA) - Jamilet

Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) monitoring happens every quarter by the BFWDC Program Staff. This quarter, there are three (3) files being reviewed for compliance assurance. Items needed to address will be resolved by the end of the month. She gave Career Path Services (CPS) a shout-out on the great job she is seeing on the participant files. There are minimal items to address, but nothing major at this moment.

In the previous months, Jamilet mentioned the second phase of the EcSA pilot program evaluation is currently happening. She meets with the Social Policy Research (SPR) Associates every quarter to discuss how things are going and evolving (or conversations are inclusive of adaptation, challenges, success- based on quarterly reports sent to state). SPR EcSA Phase Two Evaluation Draft will be available and published in the next calendar year around January or February. She pointed out one specific element of this evaluation, the EcSA Participant Survey, which currently has data collected by CPS. Appreciation for CPS efforts on this phase of the third-party evaluation was stated.

Every quarter, the BFWDC and ESD have a one-on-one meeting where performance is discussed. We need to know what our funding source has questions on and how to implement changes locally to increase performance. The second round of EcSA funding conversations is happening (\$280,489.24), and Jamilet will provide details in the upcoming months on how we plan to utilize the additional funding.

As part of being an initiative across WA State, the EcSA programs attend and present to the Technical Advisory Group on a rotation basis – all WDCs will have to present. Benton-Franklin will be presenting in January. Usually, we focus on the program model, adaptation, challenges, and success strategies.

Community Development Block Grant-Jamilet

Jamilet shared she is hoping to have placements by December, which outcomes will be reported in January and February.

Working with Commerce to ensure the two sites, Second Harvest and the Pasco Community Services, are approved by Commerce and align with the grant's requirements and hoping to place 3-6 participants.

Continued outreach food banks located in Benton City and North Franklin County

Monitoring- Commerce will monitor us sometime next year, after at least three (3) months of direct participant expenditures. They will give us notice of when monitoring will occur. We were allowed to provide feedback on the monitoring checklist used by Commerce to conduct monitoring.

Liaison Report – David

Davis shared we have seen small shifts at the WorkSource Center. We have lost some numbers in our month over month for total staff-assisted job seekers, and unique number of businesses served but we are doing better than last year and the year before.

There is one change. Previous TC futures reports had a total number for youth who attained GEDs, and that has been changed to total out-of-school youth who attained GEDs, to hone in specifically on the Out of School Youth (OSY) program providing that service.

David praised our case management programs. We are sitting at 99.8% for total participants served, 447, out of the monthly-to-date target of 448. In comparison to last year, we were just at 74% of our monthly-to-date target. For total employed exits, we are at 87% of our monthly-to-date target, which is great, compared to the 60% that we were in the year before, and in 2019, before the pandemic, we were sitting at 49% at the same time this year.

We will not see numbers in the CDBG program for a while. Those should be coming on in the next couple of months, especially as disaster recovery positions are winding down, and some of those participants will be transferred to the CDBG program.

Our unemployment rate is sitting pretty low. This month, we are at 3.7% for Benton County and 4.2% for Franklin County, a full percentage point down from the previous month and a full percentage point from pre-pandemic levels.

There has not been much of a shift for COVID-19 job recovery. All industries that were severely affected by the pandemic have recovered. David will stop using the COVID-19 job recovery as a measure against pre-pandemic levels because of the way the job market is contracting. In the industries that are being affected, it is no longer an accurate representation of our actual COVID-19 recovery.

David pulled the number of businesses in Benton and Franklin counties from quarter one of 2020, which was pre-pandemic to compare to quarter one of 2021. In our MSA, we are up 33 companies but still down in employment. More businesses are beginning to open. As a result, we have a net positive number of companies open, but we are still at a net loss of positions being served. That figure will continue to develop, and it is almost a year behind. It is not the most up-to-date information. However, there was a request at the last board meeting to look into the number of businesses that closed and opened during the pandemic.

Todd asked if this report was on our website and Facebook page and David stated it would be once presented at the Executive Committee meeting.

WorkSource Columbia Basin (WSCB) Update – Crystal

Crystal shared some of the highlights from WorkSource, Columbia Basin (WSCB). She compared quarter one for PY20 and quarter one for PY21, which is our current year, and found that we have seen an increase overall in jobseekers, businesses served, and services provided. It's the difference between 686 jobseekers in the quarter one of PY20 and 1481 this year's quarter, an increase of approximately 53%. In terms of businesses, we jumped from

126 businesses served during quarter one last year to a whopping 399. The work being done by staff to provide outreach to the community and let them know WSCB is here to help is paying off.

Crystal also shared some of the ways that the team has been innovative during the pandemic. Jarius Rice, the ESD Employment Connections Director, and Nona Malicoat, who is the Assistant Deputy Director came out to hear from the team and leadership about the great work that is happening at WSCB. During the pandemic, there were concerns around moving towards virtual technology and services and how to meet the needs of those who don't have access or maybe aren't tech-savvy. It was nice to hear their thoughts and how well that went.

Crystal highlighted local businesses are urgently seeking to hire. The Business Services Team has been working around the clock to develop new and creative ways to serve these businesses.

Next Meeting: The next Adult & Employer Linkage Committee meeting is scheduled for Thursday, January 20, 2022, at 8:30 a.m. on Zoom. **There will be no December meeting.**

Adjournment

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 9:03 a.m.

Adolfo de León, Committee Chair

Date

Jessie Cardwell, Programs Coordinator

Date