



APPROVED  
November 3, 2022

Northern Middle Tennessee Workforce Board  
Innovation Committee  
Meeting Minutes  
August 4, 2022, via Zoom 8:30 AM

Members Attending	Members Absent	Staff & Guests Attending
Seth Thurman	Richie Brandon	Marla Rye
Anne Fugate		Andrea Dillard
Tony Adams		Freda Herndon
Tylesha McCray		John Watz
Jessica Largen		Sherry Maynard
John Alexander		Meagan Dobbins
Greg Jones		Ginger Fussell

The Northern Middle Tennessee Workforce Innovation Committee met via Zoom on August 4, 2022. Attendance was taken, and a quorum was declared. Seth Thurman, committee chair, called the meeting to order.

Seth called for review and approval of the minutes. John Alexander motioned, and Tylesha McCray seconded. With no other discussion, the minutes were approved unanimously. He turned the meeting over to Marla Rye.

#### Welcome

Marla Rye began the meeting by introducing Jessica Largen, a new member of the NM Board and the Innovation Committee. Jessica introduced herself to the committee and gave a brief history. She is the Vice-President of Human Resources at Manchester Tank in Cool Springs.

#### New Youth Provider Update

Andrea Dillard updated the committee on the new youth providers. She stated that an RFP was sent out, and three contractors had been brought on board. All of them have signed the contracts and provided the necessary documentation. JTG is working with high school seniors, Monroe Harding is focusing on In-School and Out-of-School Youth who are foster children and justice-involved, and Liberty Station is working with Out-of-School Youth with disabilities. They are all making progress.

#### Certified Nursing Assistant Training

Andrea reviewed information on the CNA training that was recently conducted. NHC in Murfreesboro partnered with the AJC in Rutherford County and The American Red Cross to provide training to individuals interested in pursuing a career as a CNA. It was a two-week program where they did online training, then a week and a half of skill labs. Ten individuals graduated from the program, will soon take their state exams, and have had job offers.

Marla informed the committee that the Williamson County TCAT has a lack of LPN students and won't be able to hold their fall classes. After making some calls to Ascension Health and NHC, an arrangement is in the works where employers will sponsor their current CNAs so they may attend the LPN class and upgrade their skills.

#### Eligible Training Provider Requests

Freda Herndon presented the ETPL and updated the committee regarding changes to the list. Freda is recommending the new programs be approved for one year. Freda did mention that the cosmetology courses are harder to track after

completion if the clients go into business for themselves. Three former programs have requested to be reinstated and have pending enrollments. It is also recommended they get approved for one year.

Marla mentioned a cap of \$6,000 for the courses offered under WIOA. She stated career counselors should provide financial guidance to clients if they choose to go to schools where additional funding or loans may be required.

Seth Thurman asked for a motion to recommend the programs to the Board. Tony Adams made the motion. John Alexander seconded the motion. With no further discussion, the committee unanimously approved.

### **Innovation-Programs and Grants**

Then Andrea updated the committee regarding programs and grants. The AJC formed a partnership with Nashville State Community College to provide Industrial Readiness Training to justice-involved individuals who are close to being released from the Montgomery County Jail. Three of the four released have been placed in jobs in Montgomery County. As the others get released, they will also receive job placement assistance.

Andrea went on to talk about American Prison Data Systems. They are conducting pilot programs around the country where they provide secure tablets with preloaded programs to provide education and job training to current inmates. Within the next couple of weeks, these tablets will be provided to Rutherford County inmates after finding out what workforce positions are available and what education is needed. Having tablets in all 95 counties across Tennessee is a goal. Andrea reported that our Adult Education program is also working on a reentry program with justice-involved individuals in jails in each of our 13 counties.

Next, Freda Herndon gave the committee a summary of apprenticeship training grants. A large state apprenticeship grant of \$221,000 was received, and all but \$1,200 was expended. Freda stated that there were more requests this year than last year and feels that the public is becoming more aware of the availability of apprenticeship programs.

Andrea talked about the COVID-National Emergency Grant. She stated there is approximately \$800,000 left to be spent by June 30, 2023. At this time, a plan is being developed to use the money for transitioning soldiers at Ft. Campbell and provide more training opportunities.

Finally, Andrea updated the committee about the Youth Career Exploration Grant received. She stated they elected to purchase 25 TransFr Virtual Reality Headsets. The headsets have programs that provide virtual career exploration and training exercises. These were used with students from the Houston County School System successfully. In the future, there are plans to partner with other school systems and other programs that work with youth who need to have some career exploration opportunities.

Marla expressed to the committee that helping refugees is becoming a need. She stated that the One-Stop-Operator is arranging for training through the Nashville International Center for Empowerment for AJC staff.

### **Adjourn**

With no other questions, Seth Thurman adjourned the meeting.