



# Northern Middle Tennessee Workforce Board Inc.

Northern Middle TN Workforce Board Meeting

August 14, 2019 12:30PM-1:30PM

Goodwill Industries 937 Herman Street, Nashville, TN

**Present Members:**

John Zobl, Chair  
Greg Jones  
Dan Caldwell  
John Alexander  
Mark Peed  
Jon Hunter  
Tylesha McCray  
Howard Bradley  
Seth Thurman  
G.C. Hixson  
Christopher West  
Adam Sones  
Carol Puryear  
Kristi Spurgeon

**Members Absent:**

Adam Adkisson  
Keith Carnahan  
Gealita Greenhill  
Amanda Russell  
Brian Sims  
Charles Story  
David Dunlap  
Dan Ryan  
George Callis  
David Rutledge

**Guest and Staff:**

Mayor Jessie Wallace  
Ginger Fussell  
Renee Hollis  
Andrea Dillard  
Marla Rye  
John Watz  
Erin Lilly  
Logan LaFever  
Ryan Pruitt  
Joseph Johnson  
Melissa Counts  
Mark Stiles  
Ginger Hausser  
George Phillips  
Jimmy Johnston  
Susan Cowden  
Lyndi Berrone  
Patrick Combs

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The Northern Middle Tennessee Workforce Development Board met on Thursday August 14, 2019 at 12:00PM at Goodwill Industries, Inc.

The meeting was called to order and opening remarks were made by Chairman John Zobl. He introduced the two new members of the board: Dan Caldwell from Nissan and Tylesha McCray from Vocational Rehabilitation. Zobl recognized other guests that were in attendance, including Humphreys County Executive Jessie Wallace and Lyndi Berrone from the Tennessee Department of Economic Development.

Marla Rye recognized the board members who have been working on GIVE initiatives. She also recognized the members that met in Clarksville for the Operations Committee meeting.

**Strategic Priorities:**

Joseph Johnson introduced staff from MCHRA who were in attendance. He provided an update on the Career Service Provider and One-Stop-Operator contracts to include staffing plans per location. He

stated that he is still working to fill positions in the field. He explained that the focus during the quarter had been on staff training and development to include both online and face-to-face training. Enrollment goals and youth program details were also presented.

Andrea Dillard discussed the fact that our workforce area is continuing through a state of transition and she expects the enrollment numbers to increase over the next few months. She reviewed the enrollment goals that were established by the State. John Zobl asked about the dislocated workers in the region. Andrea noted that when the economy is good, dislocated workers are difficult to find because of the low unemployment rates. Andrea also reviewed the GIVE (Governor's Investment in Vocational Education) grants. She stated that each county in the Northern Middle region submitted a grant or partnered in the submission of a grant. Marla shared that GIVE grant awards will be announced in November and she hopes to provide an update at the November 13 board meeting.

#### **Train Workforce to Fill Employer Needs:**

Carol Puryear spoke about the Tennessee Board of Regents' initiative to increase the number of apprenticeship opportunities in Tennessee. She shared that the TN Department of Labor had recently been awarded a \$1.4 million apprenticeship grant. She described TCAT Nashville's apprentice program with Empower Electric which has 27 electrician apprentices. TBR's goal is to work with companies and simplify the apprenticeship process; Carol expressed appreciation to the Workforce Board for supporting businesses through apprenticeships.

#### **Manage Board funds to support Career Pathways:**

Ginger Fussell presented the budget report. She thanked the Operations Committee for being so responsive and giving feedback on the budget recommendations. Ginger reviewed each of the grants and how the money was spent over the past year and provided a monitoring update. She stated contractors are fiscally monitored on an ongoing basis.

Marla Rye provided a brief report from the Operation Committee's July 30<sup>th</sup> meeting and their recommendations for the 19-20 budget. The Committee recommended transferring \$2.5 million from dislocated workers to adult funding to allow the CSP staff to serve more participants in the American Job Centers. Marla also reviewed the other recommendations from the committee, including designating \$100,000 for AJC outreach and recruitment and \$50,000 for AJC signage. In addition, the Operations Committee recommended a \$300,000 budget for Apprenticeship and offender programs, as well as \$100,000 in start-up funds for the proposed Trousdale County American Job Center.

John Zobl asked for a motion to approve the budget and recommendations from the work of the Budget Committee. Mark Peed motioned and Christopher West seconded. The vote was unanimous.

Marla presented new programs for the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL). The Operations Committee suggested that new providers receive a site visit and detailed program review prior to ETPL action. Chairman Zobl asked for a motion to approve the programs presented in the meeting materials for inclusion on the ETPL. GC Hixon made the motion, Mark Peed made the second. The vote was unanimous.

#### **Improved Efficiency & Effectiveness of Training Programs:**

John Alexander reviewed the Ernst & Young assessment which was commissioned by the Tennessee Department of Labor. He highlighted the best practices and discussed the challenges that Northern Middle overcame due to realignment. Northern Middle TN Workforce Board's competitive RFP process was described as a leading practice. John explained that there are also areas for improvement. He provided the website for the full report. John Zobl stated that the audit was very extensive and that as a board most of the findings they mentioned were topics that had been discussed as changes that need to be made.

**Old Business:**

Marla mentioned that the search for a new location for an AJC in Trousdale as well as new locations for Davidson County are ongoing. She stated that she is pursuing a location in the Hickory Hollow Mall area. The goal for Trousdale County is to have a specialized AJC by January 1, 2020.

**New Business:**

John Zobl introduced Nancy Eisenbrandt, who requested funding from the Northern Middle Board to conduct a regional labor market study. Nancy spoke about the value of understanding the workforce challenges that we will face in the future. Rupa DeLoach explained in detail the approach and scope of the study. DeLoach stated that the total cost of the study was around \$75,000.

She went on to say that she was only going to request \$25,000 but decided to be bold and ask for the full cost remaining to complete the study which is \$52,300. John Zobl commented that a lot of detail goes into the study and the data that comes with it. Howard Bradley asked for clarification on the amount of time the study would take; DeLoach answered approximately six months. Mark Peed questioned why businesses were not paying for the study since it is a Chamber of Commerce study. He also commented that the request should have been reviewed by the Operations Committee. Nancy replied that this was the first opportunity to come to a meeting to present the study. Marla commented that previous workforce studies have been conducted in the Middle Tennessee region and the costs have been shared between the areas. Howard Bradley added that he thinks the study will provide important data for the region.

John Zobl commented that he believes the Board sees value in the study but the question comes back to the requested amount; the original request was for \$25,000 and that is the amount that should be considered. Mark Peed asked if the Board didn't fund the full amount, what other options are available for funding. Nancy answered if they do not get the funding they will have to go to corporations to ask for funding. G.C. Hixson stated that if we have the money, then we should go ahead and fund the full amount.

Marla pointed out that the Board has some funding set aside for contingency and whatever amount the Board approves will come out of that line item. Hixson made a motion to approve the full funding request and Bradley seconded the motion. John Zobl then opened the floor for discussion, stating that he thinks the study is a great idea, but as a point of process for future requests before the board, he prefers to know the request amount in advance. John called for a vote. All voted to approve the \$53,000 funding request except for Chairman Zobl, who voted no.

John Zobl stated the next meeting is November 13, 2019 in Springfield at 11:30 a.m. With no other business, the meeting was adjourned.