

**SEMCA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD**  
**Wednesday, March 17, 2021**  
**SEMCA Michigan Works! WebEx Meeting**  
**MINUTES**

**Members Present**

Charlie Mahoney-Chair  
Chris LaJoy  
Connie Carroll  
Malin Wagner  
Bayyinah Robinson  
Patrick Lambrix  
Lee Graham  
Pat Chatman  
Naheed Huq  
Molly Luempert-Coy  
Andy Bianco  
Jason Evers  
Khalil Rahal  
Charles Browning

**Alternates Present**

Mike Smith

**Members Absent**

Sean Sims  
Tupac Hunter  
Frank Lopez  
Wanra Pearson  
Beth VanSteenkiste

**Staff Present**

Gregory Pitoniak  
Tamara Lamper-Norrix  
Daniel Martinez  
Deborah Taylor  
Bill Hellar  
Rana Al-Igoe  
Kate Brady-Medley  
Tim Johnston  
Traci Sassak

**Guests**

Tirria Kendred – Wayne RESA

**Call to Order**

Chair Mahoney called the meeting to order at 2:05 p.m. The virtual meeting took place via WebEx due to Covid-19. Video and telephone options were used by board members. Instructions were provided on SEMCA's website for public participation. She advised that everyone has the ability to unmute themselves to ask questions and to vote. Chat feature was also available for questions and voting.

**Roll Call**

Roll call was taken and a quorum was present.

**Public Comment**

Public comment was requested three times and no comments were made.

**Board recited the Pledge of Allegiance.**

### **Approval of Agenda**

**MOVED by Wagner to approve the Agenda of March 17, 2021 as presented, supported by Luempert-Coy. All voting aye, motion carried.**

### **Approval of Minutes**

**MOVED by Carroll to approve the Minutes of November 18, 2020 as presented, supported by LaJoy. All voting aye, motion carried.**

### **Approval of New Career & Educational Advisory Council Member**

Dr. James Robinson of Wayne County Community College District, and Representative of Postsecondary Institutions on the Career & Educational Advisory Council (CEAC), has retired. The CEAC is requesting that nominee Glenda Wapegan-Magarrell, District Dean of Career Programs at Wayne County Community College District, be appointed to replace Dr. Robinson.

**MOTION by Wagner to approve Glenda Wapegan-Magarrell of Wayne County Community College District to replace Dr. James Robinson as Representative for Postsecondary Institutions on the Career & Educational Advisory Council (CEAC), supported by Rahal. All voting aye, motion carried.**

### **Receive & File 2020 Strategic Plan - Quarter 4**

Hellar provided an overview of the 2020 Fourth Quarter Strategic Plan results. Even with the pandemic, SEMCA was able to meet or exceed all of their goals for 2020.

### **PY 2021 Strategic Plan**

Hellar provided an overview of the 2021 Strategic Plan Goals. This will be the last year of this five-year plan. Bianco asked if there is a line item for Advanced Skill Sets particularly for Manufacturing. Hellar noted it was not a specific target in the old plan but it could be in the new plan.

**MOTION by Wagner to receive and file the Fourth Quarter Strategic Plan and the PY 2021 Strategic Plan Goals as presented, supported by Evers. All voting aye, motion carried.**

### **2021 Strategic Plan Consultant RFP Results**

Pitoniak and Brady-Medley advised that the SEGA Board approved Thomas P. Miller & Associates as SEMCA's strategic plan consultant for the next three-year Plan beginning January 1, 2022. SEMCA received 11 proposals that were reviewed and scored by the SEMCA officers. The winning bid has a lot of experience with workforce boards across the country including Lucas County in Ohio and Michigan Works Southeast. Pitoniak reached out to MWSE Director Shamar Herron to learn more about their strategic plan experience. Herron gave his approval and noted that we will receive a solid product in the end. This will be a three-year plan as recommended by COA. We are currently looking at dates for two board retreats and a kick-off meeting. Pitoniak noted that we value the board's opinions and encouraged them to participate as often as they can. The winning proposal was provided in the board packet for review and is on file.

Chatman asked that we send out notice of the dates as soon as possible because her calendar is already filling up for the summer. Huq noted that the proposal was well done. Public Policy Associates was a close contender as well. Rehman & Associates, the consultant for the current plan, did not apply.

### **Presentation "Involvement is Key – Ways to Support SEMCA Programs"**

SEMCA's program managers presented on ways our board members can support SEMCA's programs away from the boardroom. There are several leadership roles in the Youth space with Manufacturing Day and Wayne County College Access Network. Pitoniak noted that Youth 18-24 are struggling in this environment and highlighted and encouraged the board to share the information with colleagues and youth or consider hosting

a Paid Work Experience (PWE) opportunity. Wagner asked if we can assist high school seniors in the CNA program find jobs. Al-Igoe noted that there are eligibility requirements for WIOA Adult or Youth programs to consider, but we may be able to connect them with employers. Wagner and Al-Igoe will connect to discuss this opportunity. Apprenticeship funding is available and does not have to be on a large scale. The Business Resource Network was discussed. Sharing the information about this program with colleagues or if you think your business would benefit from this program, please let us set up a meeting with Jim or Jenn to discuss it further. SEMCA thanked the board for all they do and asked them to share their knowledge and expertise and to spread the word about the work we do here at SEMCA. As we go through the strategic plan process over the next few months, make suggestions or help us define processes that better connects us to business. The PowerPoint presentation is on file.

### **SEGA Board Update**

At their meeting on March 12, 2021, the SEGA Board received and filed SEMCA's Performance and Quality Improvement 2020 Annual Report. Hellar provided a review of the report, noting that SEMCA met all of its goals in spite of Covid and the shut-down except for in the area of enrollments. We are increasing social media marketing efforts encouraging the public that it is time begin looking for work or taking advantage of the training dollars that are available. Pitoniak noted that in the context of under-performance, he is meeting with contractors to work with them in looking for creative ways to improve these numbers. The American Job Centers are currently open to the public virtually, by telephone and by appointment only.

### **Federal/State Updates**

Pitoniak provided a brief update on what is happening at both the state and federal levels. The American Rescue Plan has no funding for workforce development, however there is training for childcare, behavior health and veterans. Congressman Andy Levin is on the committee relaunching the America's Workforce Act and they are asking for \$14 billion for all core programming. TANF WIOA is set to expire and it is believed to be extended if not reauthorized. MWA 2021 Federal and State Legislative Priorities documents were reviewed. Pitoniak noted the concern for customers receiving TANF/cash assistance who must participate in work participation activities to receive the cash assistance. Obtaining a GED and certain types of training do not meet the requirements even though a diploma or GED are often required to obtain employment. We would like to see those activities count towards their work participation requirements.

At the state, Going Pro Talent Fund (GPTF) funding is being recommended in the legislative and governor's budgets. This program has bipartisan support and provides training for employers.

There is still concern on whether UIA will reinstate the work registration requirement at Michigan Works after Covid. The lower participation numbers show our need to connect to the workforce, and the Michigan Works! Association is seeking legislation on the matter. Hellar made a suggestion six months ago regarding a virtual work registration, and UIA just started to send a communication to those UIA customers that have completed the confidential information page urging them to go to Michigan Works for reemployment assistance. We have learned in the first three weeks of implementation that Employment Services registrations, also known as Wagner Peyser, have increased 500% over the three weeks prior to the communication efforts. Hellar also discussed the recent surprise shut-off of MWA's in assisting UIA customers and the reinstatement of those services. Pitoniak noted that the MWA directors are discussing a coordinated, orderly phase-out plan. Michigan Works primary mission is reemployment and training, and the directors all agree that we need to move forward in that direction.

### **COVID 19 – Impact Statistic and UIA Project Update**

Hellar provided a summary of the Impact Statistic data. There is a significant decline in enrollments due to the AJC's not receiving walk-in traffic. They are supplying virtual and scheduled appointments and we are starting to see a slight increase in the numbers. The UIA Problem Resolutions offices remain closed. The recent surge in

Covid numbers is not helping us move closer to opening the centers to walk-in services. There is still fear of Covid and family situations such as childcare and remote learning for school-age children that is stopping the customers from searching for employment. The data is on file.

### **Program Updates**

#### **New Marketing Efforts and Videos**

Johnston reviewed the Youth landing page and interest form on the SEMCA website, as well as the new marketing ads and videos. He is also working on a landing page for adults. The Board viewed the videos and were asked to provide feedback.

Chatman noted that she was confused by the ad with the man spinning on the beach. Mahoney loved them all and asked that Tim forward this information to NAWB. She sits on their board and workforce development is struggling all over the country. She always shares the positive and creative ways SEMCA is reaching out to their customers. Huq was impressed with the videos but inquired how the public knows what programs we have available. Johnston explained that each video will affect people differently, which is why they went with some fast energetic videos as well as ones with an emotional connection. The highest rated Super Bowl ads are the ones with a lot of empathy that pull on your heart strings. All of the videos have the website information where they can learn more about our programs. Bianco asked that when the customer fills out the interest form, is it mapped to the right people for follow-up with the customer. Because of the urgency of the Youth program, we will begin sharing those videos first. Staff has met with Youth contractors, who will provide the initial contact. We are asking for a 24-hour turn-around time in the method the customer prefers, of which texting is the most requested format with this age group. Basic data will be collected.

This is all new to us. We have modeled these ideas from other MWA's that have had success with social media. We will be using Snap Chat and Instagram for Youth and Facebook for mom and dad. We are also researching ways to reach our immigrant population. Wagner suggested reaching out to counseling staff or CTE at the schools. Evers noted that Adult Education and CTE Directors have their own Twitter feeds.

#### **Program Statistical Summary**

Heller noted that the statistical summary was provided in the packet. He asked if there were any questions or areas the board would like him to cover. No questions were asked. The report is on file.

#### **WIOA, ES, TAA, OJT, IWT, Talent Fund, Apprenticeship/Work-based Learning, Adult Ed Updates**

Al-Igoe referred the board to her report in the board packet. She highlighted the substantial changes to Adult WIOA eligibility, which was expanded to allow for more individuals to participate in the program. SEMCA received supplemental funding under two National Dislocated Worker Grants. One grant is specifically targeted towards individuals that were laid off in occupations in the manufacturing, retail trade, and financial industries. The other grant is focused on providing funding to create temporary employment opportunities to assist with clean up and recovery efforts, which in this case are the result of the Covid pandemic.

Al-Igoe noted the certification of US Steel in Ecorse has brought in hundreds of newly eligible individuals that we have been enrolling in the Trade Adjustment Act program over the past several months. We recently received a WARN for Eastman Chemical Company in Trenton. Closure with a layoff date of January 20, 2021 has impacted 75 workers. Our Business Services staff and Job/Career Services staff are working with the employer and other local partners to offer services to help those dislocated workers under our Rapids Response program. There is a virtual job fair scheduled for March 30, 2021 with a focus on agriculture and restaurant jobs.

#### **WIOA Youth, Young Professionals, Foster Care, JMG, WCCAN, Manufacturing Day, MiCareer Quest Updates**

Taylor referred the board to her report in the board packet. She highlighted the BUILDing Skills Bootcamp, which plans are in the works for a second summer program. A Monroe county focused camp will also be

operating this year thanks to the leadership of SEMCA WD Board member Mike Smith. The camp is planned in partnership with SEMCA, AFL-CIO Community Services, United Way, The Youth Opportunity Program in Monroe County Intermediate School District and 13 trade unions from the Monroe area. Both of these programs provide youth with training in carpentry, construction, pipefitting and other skilled trades. JMG students participated in the Virtual Careers in Public Service Month, which replaced the annual JMG Legislative Day trip to Lansing due to the Covid pandemic. Youth from around the state had the opportunity to participate in virtual civic engagement events and meet directly with their state Senators and Representatives. The SEMCA Young Professionals Program received a \$125,000 grant for a second year.

Two action teams have launched to support WCCAN goals. The Stackable Credentials Action Team will focus on creating strategies and tactics that increase dual enrollment and early middle college completion through attainment of post-secondary/stackable credentials. The Sustainability Action Team was established to address fundraising and budgetary needs necessary for WCCAN to achieve its goals. WCCAN is still actively recruiting members to its Sustainability Action Team. WCCAN hosted its first ever Virtual College and Career Fair. Students registered for free online and selected which post-secondary institutions interested them based on their career aspirations. They then virtually visited each school's online booth, downloaded various materials such as course offerings, tuition costs, etc., and saved this content in their own personal virtual backpack for future use. They could also obtain valuable information on financial aid, FAFSA and other assistance. There were 28 exhibitors, which is lower than a traditional career fair but it went well. Taylor will obtain the number of students that attended. Lastly, there is an upcoming kick-off meeting for Manufacturing Day where they will be discussing a virtual/hybrid approach to the event this year.

Graham discussed the upcoming Michigan Construction Career Days being held virtually on May 6, 2021. You can find out more information and register at [www.MichiganCCD.vFairs.com](http://www.MichiganCCD.vFairs.com).

#### **PATH, FAE&T, BRN and RAIN Updates**

Martinez referred the board to his report in the board packet. SEMCA is proud to have had the highest Work Participation Rate (WPR) in the state that is tied to contacts with customers during the period October 1, 2019 to September 30, 2020. The 42.9% WPR is a strong outcome, considering customers did not have to participate for much of that time. The Mobile App TuaPath is now in full training and beta testing. The coaching staff is excited to use the tool. This app will allow customers to communicate with coaches, download information, sign documents and avoid having to meet their coach in person. We will provide a demonstration at a future meeting. While many programs were eliminated or reduced due to the decline in refugees coming to the U.S. during the last administration, including the RAIN program at the state level, SEMCA used PATH funds to maintain two RAIN staff to assist both refugees who did enter the U.S. and come to Michigan as well as immigrants who were already here. Having kept RAIN as a SEMCA service puts us in a strong position once those refugee/immigrant numbers increase as is anticipated with our new administration. Lastly, SEMCA has hired an attorney with 20-years' experience for the Clean Slate Expungement program. She will be critical in screening potential applicants and assisting in creating the tool for this program. We are currently looking at applicants for the coordinator position. We will be creating an info-sheet that Tamara will share with all of you if someone asks about the program. This program will also provide a connection to other services we have to offer. If you know of anyone that may need this service, please let us know.

#### **WIN Updates**

Pitoniak noted that three more partners will join the WIN team; Capital Area Michigan Works, Lansing Community College and Jackson Community College.

**New/Old Business**

Randy Liepa will be retiring on June 30, 2021, and Wayne RESA will be looking for a new Superintendent. SEMCA received their formal COA Recertification plaque and are officially reaccredited. SEMCA is celebrating their 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. Stay tuned for more information. The 2020 Annual Report is in the works and will focus on what we accomplished in spite of Covid.

**Adjourn**

**MOTION by Smith to adjourn the meeting, supported by Evers. All voting aye, motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 3:55 p.m. Next scheduled meeting is Wednesday, May 19, 2021 at 2pm.**

**Respectfully submitted,**

**Adopted 5/19/21**

**Tamara Lamper-Norrix  
Executive Assistant**