

SEMCA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD
Wednesday, July 20, 2022
SEMCA, 25363 Eureka Road, Taylor, MI 48180
MINUTES

Members Present

Charlie Mahoney-Chair
Chris LaJoy
Connie Carroll
Malin Wagner
Jason Evers
Donna Moser
Lee Graham
Jay Steffensky

Alternates Present

Kamal Alsawafy
Krista McKinney King
Ledgra Johnson
Marla Fons
Collin Keehn
Eugenia Thompson

Members Absent

Laura Dickerson/Jeff Morris
Tupac Hunter
Naheed Huq
David Lawrence
Molly Luempert-Coy/Jamal Robertson
Christina Pizzo/Astacia Hahn

Staff Present

Gregory Pitoniak
Tamara Lamper-Norrix
Bill Hellar
Kate Brady-Medley
Daniel Martinez
Colleen Mallory
Judy Lukitsh
Sameh Elhady

Guests

Jessica Lake, Gerdau Steel
Hernando Flowers, Barton Malow

Call to Order

Meeting was called to order at 2:09 pm. Board recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call

Roll call was taken and quorum was present. Mahoney noted that we lost two great supporters of the Michigan Works system. A moment of silence was held for Sean Sims from the State of Michigan representing our veteran services, and Frank Lopez, the first SEMCA Chair of the Workforce Development Board and Chair Emeritus, remaining active until the age of 92. Both will be deeply missed.

Public Comment

No public comment was made.

Charlie welcomed Marla Fons to her first meeting as alternate to Andy Bianco of Ford Motor Company. Fons provided a brief bio about herself. Charlie also welcomed Jessica Lake from Gerdau Steel. Lake provided a brief bio about herself. Her nomination as Alternate for Donna Moser is on the agenda and will be forwarded to the SEG board for appointment at their next meeting.

Approval of Revised Agenda of July 20, 2022

MOVED by Wagner to approve the Revised Agenda of July 20, 2022, as presented, supported by Graham. All voting aye, motion carried.

Approval of Minutes of May 18, 2022

MOVED by Carroll to approve the Minutes of May 18, 2022, as presented, supported by Keehn. All voting aye, motion carried.

Approval of New WDB Board Alternate for Donna Moser-Gerdau Steel

Donna Mosher has nominated as her alternate, Jessica Lake of Gerdau Steel. Lake provided her bio earlier.

MOVED by Carroll to approve the nomination of Jessica Lake of Gerdau Steel as Alternate for Donna Mosher and asks the SEGA Board to approve and appoint her to the Workforce Development Board at their September meeting, supported by LaJoy. All voting aye, motion carried.

Mahoney congratulated Carroll on her retirement and thanked United Way for keeping her as their SEMCA Workforce Development Board representative.

Approval of WIOA Mid-Cycle Local Plan

Brady-Medley noted that this is the mid-cycle for both the Local and Regional Plans. Both Plans received updates with the current labor market data to reflect the current economic conditions. Both plans were created in the beginning of the Covid pandemic and Covid protocols were updated. The Local Plan reflects Out-Wayne and Monroe counties only and the Regional Plan reflects all of Wayne, Oakland, and Macomb counties. These plans are produced every four years with a mid-cycle refresh.

For the Local Plan, there has been updates to the high demand industry sectors since there has been a shift in some occupations that are more in demand today than two years ago. Updates were provided to the barriers to workforce such as transportation. The plan also talks about our coordination between MWA's, their boards and required partners such as economic development, school districts, post-secondary, and adult education. Other areas that were updated were the 2021-22 performance measures, visitors to the AJC's and our newly implemented Strategic Plan. Brady-Medley thanked Mallory and her team, as well as WIN for their work to refresh the data elements on both Plans. The Local Plan was posted on July 7 for 30 days for public comment. The Regional Plan has also been posted as well.

The Plan is open for comment until August 7. If there are changes needed after the public comment period, we have until the filing deadline of August 31 to make those changes. SEMCA is asking you to approve the Plan, and if there are any significant changes requested during the public comment period, then we will bring the Plan back to the board for final review and approval.

MOVED by Graham to approve the WIOA Mid-Cycle Local Plan as presented barring any significant changes after the public comment period, supported by Carroll. All voting, motion carried.

Approval of WIOA Mid-Cycle Regional Plan

The Regional Plan includes four different workforce boards. Mallory of SEMCA was our primary point of contact to collaborate with those partners that represent the city of Detroit, Macomb St. Clair, and Oakland County Michigan Works Agencies. The difference between Plans is the Regional Plan will discuss where there are regional projects or collaborations happening with our state user groups and SEMWAC as well as through the leadership with WIN. Like the Local Plan there were changes made to update the collaborations from those of 2019/2020 that are no longer relevant. Updates have been

made to the data of the much larger area. Barriers to employment in the Regional Plan also includes transportation issues and data updates to programs like GPTF and Clean Slate as well as new WIN grants were provided in this Plan.

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MOVED by Evers to approve the WIOA Mid-Cycle Regional Plan as presented, barring any significant changes after the public comment period, supported by LaJoy. All voting, motion carried.

Receive and File SEMCA Strategic Plan Second Quarter Report

Hellar reported on the Second Quarter Strategic Plan Report, which began April 1, 2022 and ended June 30, 2022. One improvement has been made since the last report. The Status Legend has been added to the bottom of the report which provides the definition that each color represents under Current Status. Hellar reviewed the four goals. Service Quality is a little behind schedule but will continue moving forward. Diversification is on track. The biggest issue is the unexpected departure of SEMCA's CFO, who was lead on this goal. Though the SP calls for the development of a formal funding diversification plan, SEMCA has successfully greatly diversified our funding this year without a formal strategy.

MOVED by Graham to receive and file the SEMCA Strategic Plan Second Quarter Report as presented, supported by Keehn. All voting aye, motion carried.

Refugee Navigator Program Presentation

Martinez provided a brief background on the Refugee and Immigrant Navigator Program and introduced Program Coordinator Sameh Elhady. Recently, the Department of Labor identified the states most active in immigrant and refugee assistance and Michigan and Utah are the top two in the nation. Elhady and a representative from Utah were asked to participate in a national webinar for the US Department of Labor to discuss how to develop such a program and to share our best practices with other states.

Elhady gave a brief background about himself and his role as the coordinator, as well as his team member Adel Dalou who provides direct services to our immigrant and refugee customers in Wayne County. The program is designed to make the integration of this population into their local communities run smoothly and help them to become self-sufficient and productive, especially in the workforce system. They provide the resources that will help them identify any barriers and how to overcome cultural and language barriers. They assist with education, training, employment, civil rights, legal housing and more. He noted that this population does not always seek help and his responsibility is to reach out to them in locations such as faith-based organization, schools, grocery stores and shopping malls, cultural centers, any way he can to connect them. Elhady discussed the importance of participating in local events and being in constant communication with community leaders. Resources are provided in several different languages.

He also noted that we cannot do it alone and discussed the huge network of partners and community service organization, federal government agencies and legislators that support him in serving this

population. SEMCA provided a unique job fair for refugees and immigrants on June 15. Customers were provided a translator to assist in meeting with employers and understanding the job descriptions and qualifications and to answer any question from the employer. Both the employers and participants felt it was a successful event and other Michigan Works Agencies have asked for assistance from Elhady in recreating events for their agencies.

He thanked the board members and management for allowing the flexibility in his need to be creative and thinking outside the box to engage the participants. Pitoniak thanked Elhady and Dalou for the great job they are both doing. We are lucky to have their passion and expertise recognized not only by our state but also nationally.

Nominations for Workforce Development Board Officers

Pitoniak noted it is time for our annual cycle of electing officers for the Workforce Development Board. Our incumbents Mahoney, Wagner and Carroll have agreed to run again for FY 2022-2023. There is a form in your packet calling out for nominations. If you are interested or would like to nominate someone for one of the three positions, Chair, Vice-Chair (who also serves as Chair of the Career & Educational Advisory Council) and Secretary, please write in the name on the form and return to Tamara Norrix at tamara.norrix@semca.org by August 31, or hand it in today before you leave. The election will take place on September 21, at the next Workforce Development Board meeting.

CEO Report

Pitoniak shared his memories about Sean Sims and the legendary Frank Lopez.

He announced the unexpected vacancy of our CFO position. Sassak has been hired away by the DESC. Judy Lukitsh, who has been with SEMCA for 22 years and served as SEMCA's CFO for a period of time before voluntarily stepping down from the position, has agreed to serve as Interim CFO. Two consultants have been hired to assist with problem solving and guidance for SEMCA's solid Fiscal Team. CFO recruitment is going well, and HR has vetted three possible candidates. We hope to fill the position soon.

The cycle of new contractors was approved at our May meeting and Brady-Medley and Lukitsh have been finalizing the contract allocations beginning July 1. SEMCA, however, did not receive the final allocation from the state until June 30. In communicating this with the contractors, they have been very patient and cooperative. WIOA state funds overall were cut by 10%, but SEMCA still received a slight increase for WIOA Adult and Youth. The American Job Centers are fully open but prefer appointments which can be in person or virtual. With our economy, they are assisting less with helping customers find jobs and more with training requests, which our goal is to always help customers pursue a career path. They continue to engage employers and we are doing as much outreach with social media as we can to attract more customers to our centers and website. SEMCA and the AJCs are not immune to the labor market shortage. SEMCA has 15 open positions with good pay and benefits and encouraged the board to let friends and family know to check out our website. For the RESEA program, UIA had announced in May that they would be referring 100% of those receiving UI benefits to Michigan Works that has not occurred yet.

Michigan Works Association continues to meet with legislators regarding the Wagner Peyser Employment Services USDOL Labor Rule. Board received a letter written by Congresswoman Dingell,

who organized the Michigan congressional delegation to send letters opposing the new rule and is helping to organize a visit with Secretary of Labor Marty Walsh to discuss Michigan's unique one-stop model. One strategy is to persuade the Secretary that even if they adopt the rule nationwide that they continue to allow a waiver for Michigan. Our system is backed by stats that continually show our model works as the best performing state in the country.

Pitoniak again thanked Kamal Alsawafy, Khalil Rahal, and Commissioner Al Haidous for their support in advocating for SEMCA to be selected as the program administrator of the \$50 million, three-year Wayne County ARPA project.

We continue waiting to hear if Detroit Regional Partnership (DRP) will be a finalist for the Global Epicenter of Mobility (GEM) project. SEMCA was involved in developing the talent pillar of the seven-pillar system, and if chosen, will administer the program in the 11-county region. The announcement is expected in September.

The Ballmer Group, which awarded SEMCA \$1.5 million has asked if they can help the organization in other ways. We are still in the process of hiring for the original award, which has proceeded slowly with the labor shortage, but are honored that they continue to think of us. The Community Project Funding of \$850,000 with the help from Congresswoman Rashida Tlaib is progressing slowly due more to administrative process of the USDOL but we have scheduled an implementation planning meeting with Wayne Westland Schools.

Going Pro Talent Funds (GPTF) have been increased to \$55 million. Also, the Barrier Removal Employment Services (BRES) temporary funding will be continued with \$10 million. There is still between \$5 and \$7 billion in funds the state expects to appropriate in the next couple of months.

New fiscal year starts October 1, and the federal budget has not been approved and probably will not be approved until after the mid-term elections. There may be a continuing budget resolution, but it has not yet been announced.

Program Updates

Program Statistical Summary

Heller noted that the statistical summary of the last 12 months is provided at each board meeting for review. Again, our biggest challenge is the labor shortage.

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

Mallory referred the board to her report. As has been previously noted, we are lacking in Dislocated Worker participants, which means there are fewer layoffs. We are looking for ways to better identify/find DW participants. Our training numbers are up, especially for CDL certifications and in healthcare. The Trade Adjustment Act program ended on June 30 this year and it has not been reauthorized. It is in committee negotiations to finalize terms. The customers that were authorized prior to July 1 are still eligible for the lifelong benefits, however, this past year we did not have one TAA layoff in our region. This does not mean it will not be needed in the future. We will post our TAA Program RFP since we still have services to be delivered. The results of the RFP will be on the September Agenda. We continue with our virtual job fairs to assist employers with their labor shortages. We continue to look for apprenticeship and incumbent worker training opportunities. Mallory noted that the GPTF announced they are simplifying the application process and the

application period will be pushed back. We normally have our employer information sessions in August but will wait for further information from the state. If you know of any employers that were disappointed with the system in the past, please let them know to revisit the opportunity probably later in October.

PATH, FAE&T, BRN and RAIN Updates

Martinez referred the board to his report. Michelle Matney, PATH Coach at the Southgate AJC has been awarded the Shining Star Award, which she will receive at the Michigan Works Association Annual Conference. Martinez provided numbers from the RAIN Job Fair discussed earlier. There were 23 employers and over 90 participants served. Martinez gave a summary of the Connections BRN Program. Rashed Amine will be joining the team to recruit employers and we have a new full-time coach that will begin August 1. Coordinator Jim Weidman has been doing all three jobs since February. With these additions to staff, we can begin to expand the BRN program again. Clean Slate Expungement Program still has 100% approval of approximately 60 expungement court hearings. There are 367 cases somewhere in the process. Saturday the SEMCA CS Team will help at an all-day event with the Wayne County Sheriff's Department. Pitoniak encouraged board members to participate in the virtual job fairs if they are looking to hire. Information can be found at the SEMCA website.

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

Brady-Medley referred the board to Taylor's report. She highlighted the Youth Skills Trade Boot Camps. Monroe currently has 20 participants for its four-week camp. The eight-week Southeast Michigan camp is held at the new Michigan Regional Carpenter and Millwright Training Center and has 33 participants. Board was encouraged to visit the new state-of-the-art facility. Some of these students receive apprenticeship opportunities through these programs. She noted for Manufacturing Day there was a strong desire to return to an in-person event in Wayne, and Monroe will be hosting their own in-person event. With the bus driver shortage, Wayne may have to provide a hybrid version. The focus is on high school participation. Unfortunately, there are limited options for middle school participation. These events will take place the first week of October. Brady-Medley is excited to announce that SEMCA has hired for the Ballmer project the community engagement position. This will really help to strengthen the outreach in our targeted communities so we can identify young people eligible for school or for work but are not in either one. Mahoney discussed the Police Service Aid Job in Livonia. A question was asked if we have a list of Paid Work Experiences. We will provide the board with that list.

Graham discussed the recent American Cancer Society's 4th Annual Big Dig Event in Howell. Attending were 436 cancer survivors ages 4 to 14 that enjoyed the day experiencing the large equipment. Parents said it was better than Cedar Point or going up north. They raised \$115,000 for pediatric cancer research. He also talked about a career day in Frankenmuth that Operating Engineers participate in for kindergarten through 5th grade and a recent National STEM Conference in Bay City, all of which have data that show you must reach the students by the 5th grade.

WIN Updates

Pitoniak gave a brief description of WIN for the new members. He discussed the EV Academy project. He noted that WIN has been successful in obtaining over \$160 million in funding for the region. Partnerships in the philanthropic and governmental grant sector are well received, and it is because

of this region with its 7 Michigan Work Agencies, 10 community colleges and community partners working together on these grants that we continue to receive these opportunities. There are 40 to 50 partners on the EV Academy project alone.

New/Old Business

Next WDB meeting is September 21, 2022 at 2pm.

Adjourn

**MOTION by Graham to adjourn the meeting, supported by Wagner. All voting aye, motion carried.
Meeting adjourned at 3:50 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted,

Adopted at 9/21/2022 Meeting

**Tamara Lamper-Norrix
Executive Assistant**