SEMCA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD
Wednesday, January 15, 2025
SEMCA, 25363 Eureka Road, Taylor, MI 48180
REVISED MINUTES

Members Present
Malin Wagner, Vice-Chair
Bayinnah Robinson
Chris LaJoy
David Lawrence
Connie Carroll
Ashleigh Glass-Cooper
Gerald Hesson-Arrived 2:57pm
Lee Graham
Charlie Mahoney, Chair-Virtual

Alternates Present
Ledgra Johnson
Jamal Robertson
Jeff Morris
Krista McKinney-King

Members Absent
Christina Pizzo/Astacia Hahn
Jay Steffensky
Ann Thompson
Naheed Huq
Donna Moser/Jessica Lake
Hassan Sheikh

Staff Present
Gregory Pitoniak
Tamara Lamper-Norrix
Kate Brady-Medley
Bill Hellar
Colleen Mallory
Dan Martinez
J.V. de la Fuente
Charmarrah Bantom
Deborah Taylor
Tim Johnston

Guests
Rhonda Turner-Wayne RESA (Awaiting SEGA Approval)
Scott Dzurka, R2P-DZ, Virtual
Kelly Stec, R2P-DZ

Call to Order
Malin Wagner, Vice-Chair, called the meeting to order at 2:05 p.m. The Board recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Pitoniak read the memorial located on the SEMCA website for John (Jack) B. O'Reilly, Jr., founder of SEMCA, and the Board honored him with a moment of silence. Jack passed away on January 1, 2025, and a public service is planned at the Dearborn Performing Arts Center on Saturday, February 1, 2025, from 1pm to 4pm.

Roll Call
Roll call was taken, and quorum was present.

Public Comment
No public comment was made.

Approval of Agenda of January 15, 2025

MOTION-CARROLL, SUPPORT-GLASS-COOPER, approve Agenda of January 15, 2025, as presented. All voting aye, motion carried.

Approval of Minutes of November 20, 2024

MOTION-LAJOY, SUPPORT-GRAHAM, approve Minutes of November 20, 2024, as presented. All voting aye, motion carried.

Presentation of SEMCA Strategic Plan Process Update

Pitoniak introduced the consultants from R2P-DZ, Kelly Stec and Scott Dzurka (virtually). They provided a PowerPoint presentation on the 2025-2028 Strategic Plan Update. Stec recapped the process that took place with the staff, board members and partners.

Dzurka discussed the seven main areas identified through this process that have been developed into three goals for the new Plan: increase SEMCA's brand awareness through marketing and outreach; strengthen service delivery with industry and education partners; and optimize operations to increase efficiency and effectiveness. He reviewed the details of each goal. The board was asked if the information received aligns with their expectations. Does this plan bring us closer to SEMCA's mission/vision? Did anything about this plan surprise you? Is there anything missing? Mahoney commented she is comfortable with the goals. Carroll asked if SEMCA is comfortable with these goals. Brady-Medley noted that leadership and the entire staff were part of the information gathering throughout the process. The leaders then met with Stec and Durzka to provide feedback and made some tweaks on wording of some of the objectives. Glass-Cooper noted she would like to see more about what is going to be measured, what are the current state statistics, and how the effort toward these big picture goals will be defined and measured.

Next steps are to look at SEMCA's current dashboard and do an alignment to find common parallels and any gaps needed to identify some new measures. The board went into detail regarding the alignment with education partners including secondary and postsecondary partners. Dzurka noted they are available for any future questions or suggestions you may think of after the meeting.

Presentation of Proposed RFP for Business Services Restructuring

Mallory reviewed the Proposed RFP for the Business Services Restructuring, providing a detailed walk through of the requirements and language changes. The main change is SEMCA will have a two-contractor business delivery system, one for Wayne County and one for Monroe County. The BSRs will be subject matter experts that specialize in various industries and workforce development programs. They will identify employer needs for today and in the future with labor market data. This will involve working on developing talent pipelines, hosting/engaging in virtual and in-person talent recruitment events, outreach to employers for participation in various events and/or initiatives and assisting with connecting employers and training providers. They should have knowledge of and be able to work with diverse populations and community organizations. LaJoy questioned the transition to this model, asking if other MWA's are using this model or is SEMCA blazing a new trail? Each MWA designs their own business services network. Some have all BSRs in-house, some are all contracted or have one-contractor. SEMCA's model has been very decentralized with so many contractors. This is just a

change in practice for us. There is not a single norm. Mallory noted that at her previous employment at MWSE she worked using all three models during her employment. The plan is to send the RFP out in March and then bring the two contractors to the board for approval at the May board meeting. The contract would start July 1, 2025.

Receive and File the Final 2022-2024 Quarterly Strategic Plan Report

Pitoniak reviewed the final report of the 2022-2024 Strategic Plan. This report ended December 31, 2024. SEMCA achieved their goals, and the objectives associated in each of the four goals. We will put a similar report together for the new Strategic Plan.

MOTION-HESSON, SUPPORT-GLASS-COOPER to receive and file the Final 2022-2024 Quarterly Strategic Plan Report, as presented. All voting aye, motion carried.

Presentation of WayneLINC Program

Martinez provided some history of the $20 million workforce program, which is part of the ARPA funding from Wayne County. Customers must be Wayne county residents that were impacted by COVID-19, are 18 years of age or older and are unemployed or underemployed. Martinez discussed the RFP process; the ten contractors for the four program scopes, the enrollment process and services provided. These programs help with barriers such as childcare, housing, personal safety and help develop a career plan through a Career Navigator. He discussed the Justice Involved Programs for expungement and driver's license restoration and provided the stats to date. He provided the targets for each scope and the stats to date. The top demographic for this program age is 25-34. We have met the targets for trainings and have 722 interested in the waitlist. The average household income for the participants makes less than $10,000 a year. SEMCA is serving all of Wayne County for this program including Detroit. He showed seven success stories from the program. There has been little marketing for the program, but we are working on that piece when the numbers start slowing down. A postcard flyer was distributed. Marketing to date has come from social media through SEMCA with one post in October generating 183 new applications submitted on that day. The PSA filmed with our customers was shown to the board.

Hesson asked if we find out how many job openings the employers have available. Pitoniak noted it is a two-way street but that is the responsibility of the BSRs. Wagner asked if the expungement and drivers license restoration is still available and yes, they are still accepting applications and completing cases.

CEO Report

- SEMCA is having difficulty navigating the Wayne County fiscal and compliance systems. We were expecting a process similar to our other federal contracts, but the county is requiring expense documentation equivalent to what would be required for an audit, *prior* to authorizing payment. Their process is causing major delays and cashflow problems for payment to training providers and contractors, which may cause layoffs and slowdowns/stops of enrollments of new customers. We are in conversations with them regarding cash advances to keep this successful program running.
- WIOA Reauthorization was not achieved in the lame duck session before January. We continue to have concerns regarding the three areas of the proposed bi-partisan reauthorization bill created under Senator Sanders. Senator Cassidy is the new Republican Chair for the Senate

Committee, and he does not view it as a priority. Congressman Tim Walberg of Monroe County is expected to chair the House Committee responsible for national workforce policymaking in the next session of Congress and is aware of Michigan Works and the importance of reauthorization for us. We are confident that our Michigan House and Senate delegation are listening to us and aware of our needs. MWA, NAWB, and other national groups are tracking this subject. We will keep you posted.

- We are still under a continuing resolution with the WIOA budget at our current funding level of October 1, 2024, until March 31, 2025. It is expected that any WIOA budget modification will begin October 1, 2025, however the Republican position is to cut domestic spending and WIOA is a domestic program. DOGE is looking at funding that has not been reauthorized, so we are at risk. We are monitoring the situation and will keep you posted on any changes.
- These two issues are Pitoniak's highest priority, and this may cause a realignment of the workforce development board system. We are hoping that SEMCA will be a winner of any restructuring due to our reputation as a go-to organization.
- The US Department of Labor issued their preliminary state allocation amounts to the 50 states. All three of the major WIOA programs were cut 10% due to the economic condition. Michigan has been doing better economically than other states. In turn, the SEMCA region has done better economically than other parts of the state, and in the past two years received cuts. For this program year starting July 1, 2025, SEMCA is fearing a 10% cut or higher. As part of the strategic plan there may be a need for scenario plans due to funding cuts that may cause the shut-down of American Job Centers. We will keep you posted when we know more.
- For the state budget, a supplemental budget was not reached in lame duck before January. Labor Market Information for November, the US Unemployment rate is up to 4.2% from 4.1%; Michigan is up to 4.8% from 4.6%; SEMCA Region: Wayne County went up to 6.2% from 5.2% and Monroe County went down to 5.3% from 5.5%. Michigan's total workforce rose by .2% over the year and the national growth was .1% during that same time. The November statewide labor force participation rate was unchanged over the month at 62.2% and statewide payroll jobs have risen for the third consecutive month in November with employment increasing by 18,000 or .4% since August even with unemployment rising in our region.
- There was an increase in the AJCs of 900 customers in one day over the holidays, which doubled since the prior year.

Program Updates

Dashboard & Program Statistical Summary

Hesson asked for examples under PATH Training Types of other professional workers, and under Nursing, other healthcare professionals. Hellar noted that these categories are created by the state under OSMIS. He has asked his team for help and once he has that information he will share it with the board.

Pitoniak also noted the new look of the dashboard. Bill provided a tutorial of the report and did take the suggestion of showing progression and they started with walk-ins since it is the initial contact with the system and a small slice of services. Pitoniak asked for the breakdown of training which was carried forward for the major programs. Truck drivers and healthcare are the largest needs

Hesson discussed the immigrant population and the skills they come to our nation with especially in the trades and the positives he is hearing from his colleagues. He congratulated SEMCA and staff with their program success in WayneLINC and PATH

GEM

J.V. noted his team is recruiting companies for the Mobility Talent Resource Network. They have 36 companies to date and had their first online information session as well as an in-person meeting with employers in Flint today. If you or anyone you know are interested in learning more, please reach out J.V. at jv.delafuente@semca.org or 734.229.3513.

WIOA Youth, JMG, WCCAN, SYPP, YSBA, Manufacturing Day

Taylor highlighted the Pathways to Workforce celebration dinner and the 141 students who completed the program. They along with their families and community employers joined the project leaders from SEMCA, Wayne Westland Community School District and ETDI staff to celebrate the students and their amazing success. Over 300 were in attendance and they received their certificate of completion from Congresswoman Rashida Tlaib, the project's congressional sponsor and our own local program dignitaries. This program provided driver's education and having access to pathways and worksite experience. Pitoniak was there and the students were excited and energized, thanking everyone for the opportunity.

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

Mallory highlighted the Going Pro Talent Fund and for FY25 Cycle I, the SEMCA region had 57 employers receiving awards in the amount of $3.9 million, which was a 40% increase in the amount that was awarded the previous year.

National Apprenticeship Day for 2025 is on April 30, 2025. We will have an event with an employer to recognize their work with apprenticeships. In 2026, it will become National Apprenticeship Week. Pitoniak noted that in GPTF, the total number to be trained is 2,057, with 324 of those to be apprentices.

PATH, FAE&T, FAE&T Plus, New Americans

Bantom noted they received their allocations from the state which have been distributed to all contractors for PY24-25. She also highlighted the New American's SIIP Program, which begins it second year, which supports underemployed, college-educated refugees and new immigrants in overcoming barriers to meaningful employment that provides self-efficiency and a livable wage.

WayneLINC, Justice Involved Workforce, Connections

Martinez highlighted their recent two-year funding grant received for Justice Involved in Monroe County in the amount of $400,000 entitled the Fresh Start Workforce Initiative. The partnership with Monroe Opportunity Center, Monroe AJC and the Monroe courts will assist justice involved individuals within the Monroe County jail. The court will identify individuals being released and refer them for employment

assistance at our AJC and help with housing needs, if necessary, like the state's Offender Success program.

WIN
Pitoniak referred the board to page 38 for a summary of WIN grants. They are submitting a $20 million grant with the US Environmental Protection Agency, which will train workers in green industry occupations.

New/Old Business

The Board was provided with the updated 2025 WDB Meeting Schedule. The next SEMCA Board meeting is scheduled for March 26, 2025, at 2:00pm. Pitoniak will be out-of-town, and Kate Brady-Medley will be covering for him.

Annual Conflict of Interest Statements are signed each year. The following members submitted their signed statements: WD Board Members Connie Carroll, Ashleigh Glass-Cooper, Gerald Hesson, Chris LaJoy, David Lawrence and Malin Wagner and WD Board Alternates Jeff Morris and Jamal Robertson.

Adjourn
MOTION-HESSON, SUPPORT-GLASS-COOPER meeting adjourned at 4:17pm. All voting aye, motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

WDB Revised Meeting Minutes Adopted 4/16/2025

Tamara Lamper-Norrix
Executive Assistant