



Mission: “To passionately connect talent with employment opportunities”

Meeting Minutes

September 15, 2021 – Wyandot County Department of Job & Family Services

Attendance:

Greg Moon – Wyandot County Economic Development
Jason Eibling – Freedom Caregivers / Mid-American Therapy
Heather Oesch - Wyandot County Dept. of Job and Family Services
Diana Jacoby - Wyandot County Dept. of Job and Family Services
Dave Courtad – Wyandot County Commissioners
Frank Gibson – North Central Ohio Industry Manufacturers Workforce Alliance
Lu Cooke – Ohio Lt. Governor’s Office
Tami Galloway – Marion Technical College
Mike Augenstein – Marion Technical College
Scott Emerick - Upper Sandusky Schools
Laurie Vent – Retired (Upper Sandusky Schools)

Call to Order:

Jason Eibling called the meeting to order at 8:15 a.m.

Partner Updates & Action Recap:

Attendees provided roundtable updates covering workforce related activities since the previous WETF meeting:

- Federal COVID Mandates
 - Lu Cooke noted that it appears the State of Ohio is not looking to act while the new mandates are under discussion at the federal level.
 - Likely this will be tied up in federal court for some time.
 - Jason – private vs. public sector has seen past tension due to benefit offerings vs. wages. Where most public policy effected public sector employees, it is now starting to have a greater and negative effect on private sector employees.
 - Some companies in our area are offering stipends or lotteries to employees for getting or being vaccinated.
- Dave Courtad – Held a mayor’s breakfast meeting yesterday that brings all the county’s municipalities together along with leadership from the state level.
 - ARPA funding was a topic of discussion. The County was allocated \$4.2 million, and the municipalities and townships also received allocations. The County is compiling a list of project proposals received and will be ranking them on their effectiveness vs. cost.
 - ARPA funds have until the end of 2024 to be allocated, and the end of 2026 to be spent.
- Scott Emerick – USHS has roughly 35 seniors this year for their work release (work-based learning) program. About 6 of them entered the program without having a job, and Scott helped to connect them with an employer. Freedom Caregivers, Kalmbach Feeds, retail stores, restaurants, and other employers are included in the various locations where students work.

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- All of the students who have moved through the work-based learning program have received the job readiness seal. While it may make a difference to some employers, Scott feels that in the current environment where everyone needs help, its meaning may not have as much impact.
- USHS is beginning to implement a pilot program for a manufacturing certification offered by ToolingU / SME.
 - Two of the students who are not lined up with local employers will be entering into the manufacturing certification program, which is virtual based.
 - The pilot program may be something that could be included into next year’s schedule. This year’s school schedules were built before the program was offered.
- Scott noted he is hearing discouragement from his students who have worked for an employer for a year or two, and then a new employee is hired and starts at an equal wage with no experience. It has seemed to create a lack of devotion between students and their employers.
- Diana & Heather – the Wyandot DJFS receives emails almost daily from employers seeking employees.
 - The CCMEP program (for individuals 14-24 years old) is very short of the number of individuals that DJFS could handle.
 - In general, their activity among different programs offered seems to just have slowed down.
 - JFS is having dialogue with Vanguard-Sentinel JVS to offer its students paid internships with local employers.
 - The Pandemic Unemployment Assistance funds were also very large for many individuals and overpayments were not required to be paid back. There is a good chance that many are still living off these funds, which should eventually run out.
 - A continuation of the enhanced Child Tax Credit could also have a negative impact on encouraging a return to the workforce.
- Lu – although it has not been announced, it is likely the OH TechCred program will be offered again in October.
 - The teacher summer bootcamp, a 1-week program that offers CLE credits to teachers, is likely to be certified under the Tech Cred program, which could offer it almost free to school districts.
 - The bootcamp takes teachers through local manufacturing operations each day, and requires they develop a lesson plan based on information gleaned.
 - Tami, MTC, is looking at offering the teacher bootcamp in the Marion area.
 - Lu mentioned that this could be a good way to get schools to begin using the Tech Cred program for other types of training as well.
- Greg – The countywide branding project has wrapped up its initial phase, and the hope is the remaining phases will be complete within the next few months.
 - The project will result in individual, but somehow connected, logos for the County of Wyandot, City of Upper Sandusky, Village of Carey, and Village of Sycamore.

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- Frank – Custom Glass Solutions recently held a ceremony for its new job and task mastery program, which was a huge undertaking for the company and a financial lift that was supported by many. 150 of its employees received some type of certificate, which is aimed at providing clear career pathing and assisting with employee retention.
 - The Industry Sector Partnership Grant is also available again, and Frank noted that Marion has contacted him regarding partnership with his area manufacturing alliance. There may be some opportunity to engage with other counties falling under the alliance as well.
 - Frank’s Industry Manufacturing Workforce Group is also rebranding and creating a new website resource tool that Wyandot County will be the pilot for (www.ManufacturingCareerConnections.com). The website will include several tools and resources.
 - They are also looking for about 5 companies to be a part of a new Industry “Channel” that will feature videos and interviews from local companies.
- Laurie – Everyone she speaks with is looking for new employees. Even companies that have been known for compensating employees very well are having to look at restructuring their benefits because some employees have left for other companies offering things like better paid time off.
 - She has also heard that supplying vaccinated workers to customers that make it a requirement is another new difficulty local employers face.
- Tami – Has returned to work for the America’s Workforce Development Capital initiative, which is an effort to bring all the Marion area educational partners together to help with workforce efforts as well as enhance business service and attraction efforts.
 - The new position is focused on continued growth in Marion. A new website will be one of Tami’s primary efforts in bringing together these resources for businesses looking to expand or locate in the Marion area.
- Mike – The Made in Marion Expo will be held on October 19th at the Marion County Fairgrounds. The Expo involves 7th-9th grade students engaging with area manufacturers to learn about all the opportunities they offer.
 - Students are provided challenges in an effort to visit all of the booths and exhibits.
- Jason – There are a few big-ticket items in the healthcare arena that are poised to have a large negative impact very soon.
 - Federal supplemental pay for an individual because they or a family member has COVID and receives paid time-off is ending by October, and there has been no discussion on extending that relief. If companies must continue paying that to employees on their own, it is going to be a big problem.
 - If there is a Medicare requirement that everyone in the healthcare field be vaccinated, this will be a massive challenge as well.

Theme Teams Discussion:

Jason and Greg brought up the idea of the group continuing focus on individual theme areas, but also the WETF collectively going after one needed, high-impact effort. With all that is taking place under the rocky

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COVID and related benefit landscape, where can the WETF shine a positive light for our local business community?

- After some discussion, the group considered the most immediate need was to for employees across all sectors. With manufacturing, healthcare, and construction being the largest employment sectors in Wyandot, focusing on these industries’ needs and increasing awareness of the opportunities and programs they offer to youth could be one direction to move in.
 - Lu mentioned one company that had recently developed “baseball cards” highlighting each position / job found within the organization.
- The group was tasked with coming up with further ideas for the next meeting.

Meeting Adjourned:

The next regular meeting will be October 20th (3rd Wednesday) in-person, possibly at the Dept. of Job & Family Services meeting room.

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