



Andy Beshear
Governor

Jaime Link
Education and Labor Cabinet Secretary

Employment First Full Council Quarterly Meeting **Minutes**

January 12th, 2024
01:00pm – 03:00pm
Zoom
Meeting ID: 822 8422 1610

Members Present: Chair, Katie Wolf Whaley, Vice-Chair, Morgan Turner, Legislative Liaison, Diana Merzweiler, David Allgood, Bill Bates, Johnny Callebs, Todd Coffey, Tal Curry, Jeff Edwards, Amanda Friend, Jason Wheatley on behalf of Gretta Hylton, Annette Jett, Andrew Johnson, Cora McNabb, Jeff White, Rebecca Wilson, Lori Norton and Merry Reid Sheffer

Members Absent: Jessica Beaven, Staci Cain, Amanda Owen, Amy Luttrell, Dawn Gardner, Frank Huffman, Leslie Hoffman, Larry Taylor, Tom Hamilton and Zach Morgan

Staff Present: Kentucky Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (KYOVR) Administrator, Nanci Howard, KYOVR Administrative Specialist, Pepper Caudill, KYOVR Assistant Director, Kristen Beach, KYOVR Manager, Deana Wilson-Kimble, KYOVR Manager, Michelle Cobb, KYOVR Manager, Ron O'Hair, KYOVR Staff Assistant, Betty Whittaker, KYOVR Manager, KYOVR Division Director, Holly Hendricks, KYOVR Assistant Director, Jonathan White, KYOVR Manager, Veronica Dale

Guest(s) Present: Karen Lee, Melanie Tyner-Wilson, Kimberly Wickert, Makenzie McCormick, Susie Edwards, Melissa Marvel, Lisa Amstutz, Tara Eversole, Audra Shutt, Cathy Anderson, Dondra Meredith, Heather Wood and Johnny Collett

Welcome, Introductions and Agenda Review:

(Due to inclement weather, all state buildings were closed, and the meeting was held virtually from the Zoom platform.) Chair, Katie Wolf Whaley called the meeting to order and Administrator, Nanci Howard welcomed all attendees to the meeting. A roll call was taken, and a quorum was established.

Staff Report:

Administrator, Nanci Howard provided a brief staff report for the council. She stated that the Annual Report had been submitted prior to December 1st, 2023, and explained that this report was still pending review at the Governor's Office. Nanci encouraged member participation in the upcoming committee meetings. Lastly, she gave a recap of the 2024 National Expansion of Employment Opportunities Network (Project NEON) award and reminded everyone that its focus is to be on Provider Capacity for this period. Nanci reintroduced Karen Lee to the group and turned the meeting over to Chair, Katie Wolf Whaley.

Minutes Approval:

Chair, Katie Wolf Whaley called for a motion to be brought forth to approve the October 13th, 2023, Quarterly Meeting Minutes. **Member, David Allgood made the motion to approve the December 13th, 2023, Quarterly Meeting Minutes and a second was provided by Vice Chair, Morgan Turner. A vote was taken, and Chair, Katie Wolf Whaley, Vice-Chair, Morgan Turner, Legislative Liaison, Diana Merzweiler, David Allgood, Bill Bates, Johnny Callebs, Todd Coffey, Tal Curry, Jeff Edwards, Amanda Friend, Jason Wheatley on behalf of Gretta Hylton, Annette Jett, Andrew Johnson and Rebecca Wilson were in favor. There was no opposition and the motion passed.**

Chair Report:

Chair, Katie Wolf Whaley began by explaining the importance of collaboration amongst council members and people outside of the council to spread information regarding Employment First. She gave examples of these types of collaborations which included Member, Amanda Owen's non-profit and the Commonwealth Council on Developmental Disabilities. Katie went on to give additional examples of collaborations, presentations, or shared information regarding Employment First and the positive impact it is creating. There was brief discussion amongst the group regarding this information. There was further discussion concerning where the shared resources could be accessed, and it was stated that the information could be accessed through the Employment First page on the KYOVR website. It was also stated that any additional information needing to be added to the website should be sent to Administrator, Nanci Howard or Administrative Specialist, Pepper Caudill, so that it may be uploaded to the website. It was realized that the KYOVR website had not been updated to include the 2024 Council and Committee meeting dates and Nanci ensured that those would be updated soon.

National Expansion of Employment Opportunities Network (NEON) Presentation:

Subject Matter Expert, Karen Lee presented the 2024 Project NEON utilizing a Power Point Presentation that was presented to all members in attendance of the meeting. The presentation explained the NEON project, past accomplishments and what the state of Kentucky can expect to gain through the 2024 award. There was a brief discussion held amongst the council regarding this matter.

Committee Presentation(s)/Discussion(s):

Advocacy & Education Committee: Chair, Amanda Owen was not present at the meeting, therefore no update or presentation was given. Chair, Katie Wolf Whaley reminded the council that all the committee's prior meeting minutes were included in the First Quarter Meeting Materials so the council could review the committee's work utilizing that resource.

Employer Education & Engagement Committee: Chair, Merry Reid Sheffer explained that the committee had been working with Kimberly Wickert from RETAIN Kentucky on partnering together to launch the Lunch & Learn Series. She provided a brief summary of that work and gave examples of three topics that the partnership will develop together. (i.e. 1. Employment First and CIE definition. 2. Intro to Etiquette, Myths, and Range of Disability Experience. 3. Demystifying Regulatory Issues around Disability- "How Accessibility Measures in the Hiring Process can Increase your Candidate Pool and Fill Jobs.")

Provider Capacity Committee: Chair, Jeff White explained that the committee has been working on determining what areas of the state have supported employment services issues and discussing how

the council could address those issues.

Transition Committee: Chair, Jessica Beaven and Co-Chair, Frank Huffman were not present at the meeting, therefore no update or presentation was given. Chair, Karie Wolf Whaley reminded the council that all the committee's prior meeting minutes were included in the First Quarter Meeting Materials so the council could review the committee's work utilizing that resource.

Public Policy Committee: Chair, Diana Merzweiler explained that the committee has been working on identifying and aligning state policies with federal policies to ensure integrated employment.

Public Comment: None

Action Items:

- **Member, David Allgood made the motion to approve the December 13th, 2023, Quarterly Meeting Minutes and a second was provided by Vice Chair, Morgan Turner. A vote was taken, and Chair, Katie Wolf Whaley, Vice-Chair, Morgan Turner, Legislative Liaison, Diana Merzweiler, David Allgood, Bill Bates, Johnny Callebs, Todd Coffey, Tal Curry, Jeff Edwards, Amanda Friend, Jason Wheatley on behalf of Gretta Hylton, Annette Jett, Andrew Johnson and Rebecca Wilson were in favor. There was no opposition and the motion passed.**

Adjournment:

Chair, Katie Wolf Whaley called for a motion to adjourn the meeting. **Member, David Allgood made the motion to adjourn. Member, Cora McNabb provided a second to the motion A vote was taken, and Chair, Katie Wolf Whaley, Vice-Chair, Morgan Turner, Legislative Liaison, Diana Merzweiler, David Allgood, Bill Bates, Johnny Callebs, Todd Coffey, Tal Curry, Jeff Edwards, Amanda Friend, Jason Wheatley on behalf of Gretta Hylton, Annette Jett, Andrew Johnson and Rebecca Wilson were in favor. There was no opposition and the motion passed.**

Next Meeting Date:

Friday, April 12th, 2024
1:00pm – 3:00pm
Hybrid Format
Location: TBD

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