Workforce Council of Southwest Ohio

BOARD OF DIRECTORS ANNUAL MEETING MINUTES

Cincinnati Museum Center at Union Terminal
1301 Western Avenue, Cincinnati, OH 45203
February 9, 2023
11:30 AM – 1:30 PM

Board of Directors Present: Uche Agomuo, Jackie Alf, Hope Arthur, Michael Beck, Heath Boucher, Paula Brehm-Heeger, Natasha Chesnut, Andrew Crum, Jilson Daniels, Chad Day, Renee Dean, Mark Dierig, Keizayla Fambro, Catherine Fitzgerald, Margaret Fox, Chris Fridel, Shanel Gentry, DeJuan Gossett, Brian Griffin, Jesse Grissom, Myron Hughes, Shawntay Mallory, Rene McPhedran, Nick Milazzo, Matthew Owens, Shwetha Pai, Asha Parker, Commissioner Alicia Reece, Jennifer Roeder, Kelly Schoening Holden, Jesse Simmons, Uma Sivaprasad, Diana Small, Carol Sorenson-Williams, John Thomas, Timothy Thornton, Michael Turner, Jordan Vogel, Amy Waldbillig, Rhonda Whitaker-Hurtt, Bryan Wright

Board of Directors Absent: Markiea Carter, Leo Chan, Regina Gray, Rodney Hardin, Deval Motka, Denisha Porter, Michael Prus, Eric Rademacher, Krista Rinehart, Trisha Rogers-Lowey, Harry Snyder, Dani Watkins

Workforce Council Team: Jason Ashbrook, Pat Bready, Pamela Massey, Karen Saterfield

Deskey Branding: Debbie Happe, Becky Hyde

Resource Team Members: Kathleen Busemeyer, Tim Dingler, Melissa Graves, Teri Jones-Morris, Brandy Porter, Lynne Riehle, Bonita Wood

Guests: Kevin Abt, Doug Adams, Garrett Arnold, Mercedes Bello, Christina Black, Patrice Borders, Tom Burton, Marion Byndon, Kelly Carr, Derek Chancellor, Randy Chenault, Shaun Davidson, Abijita Debata, Steven Easley, Joyce Frazier-Powdrill, Philip Graham, James Harris, Michael Hill, Crystal Jackson, Jeffrey Johnson, Jude Johnson, Laurence Jones III, John Juech, Greg Kesterman, Tonya Key, Nicki Knox, Kalyn Lee, Christine Marallen, Todd Marallen, Tyler Meenach, Abigail Melampy, Jay Mendoza, Maya Middlebrook, Quentin Monroe, HA Musser, Ken Muth, Bianca Owens, Walter Petit, Coretta Pettway, Tricia Roddy, Monica Royal-Fischer, Chad Shaffer, Hammad Siddiqi, Jon Simons, Kristen Smitherman-Voltaire, Shannon Starkey Taylor, Nathan Strange, Ashley Thomas, Amy Thompson, Drew Tilow, Melissa Velez, Nicci Weber, Leta White, Leah Winkler, Tony Winstead, Julie Wirt

I. Opening – Welcome and Introductions

With a quorum present at 11:57 AM, Chair Sorenson-Williams welcomed everyone. Due to time and the size of attendance, Chair Sorenson-Williams waved the introductions and reminded everyone to remember to sign in for our records. Chair Sorenson-Williams thanked our generous sponsor Duke Energy and then introduced and welcomed Rhonda Whitaker-Hurtt of Duke Energy to the podium to give remarks.

II. Sponsor Remarks by Rhonda Whitaker Hurtt

The work of this organization is so critical, not only to employers in our region, but to many, many job seekers. And supporting the workforce needs of our region's has, as we all know, never been more challenging. Duke Energy is striving to do our part here in the region by

investing in a number of Workforce Initiatives, whether it's through our corporate foundation, and my good colleague, John Shoop is here today too. Of course, all of you know, John was with the City of Cincinnati, we're honored and so blessed to have John on our team and running our foundation and our stakeholder engagement efforts locally. But our foundation certainly is where Duke puts a lot of our investment here in the community. Through sponsorships just like today, whereby connecting our employees to all the various workforce organizations here in the region, to serve on board, serve on committees, help to drive a lot of the work that all of you are doing here in the region. And when I think about the work that is underway, and the work that is still needed, the one thing that is apparent and certain is the unwavering dedication of those attending today. Along with the collective of creative minds, which I think places our Cincinnati USA above most regions, in collaborating to develop solutions for our workforce challenges. On behalf of my fellow board members who are here today, many of you and other workforce partners, let's thank Jason and his incredible team for their amazing dedication day in and day out, and to the many workforce partners who likewise are helping our region to thrive.

Chair Sorenson-Williams introduced Mayor Aftab Pureval via video. Mayor Pureval delivering the following, remarks (pre-recorded due to a schedule conflict): “I’m extremely grateful for the leadership of the Workforce Council of Southwest Ohio and OhioMeansJobs in creating meaningful capacity and connections in our workforce ecosystem. The Workforce Council, the largest and most diverse workforce development board in the state, has been a viable partner for Talent Development and Youth Programming. In our region, work and employer needs are changing at an unprecedented rate, with critical resources needed to support our workers and break down barriers like childcare, transportation, and systemic bias. Our public-private collaboration with the Workforce Council and regional partners will be critical to continual improvement. I’m so encouraged by past success and looking forward to the successes to come. I want to take this opportunity to offer my congratulations to the new Workforce Council board members being inducted today and wish you all the best as you begin your terms on the board. This is also a special time to recognize the Workforce Champion Award winners, I'm pleased to shine a spotlight on their achievements. Again, I'm so inspired by the progress made by the Workforce Council over this past year and send my support and encouragement to you all to continue the work you do in the year ahead.”

Chair Sorenson-Williams welcomed our new board members for 2023. We have four (4) new members for 2023, bringing our board membership total to 53! Three of these new members are here with us today to be recognized. She then introduced Commissioner Alicia Reece, President of the Hamilton County Board of Commissioners.

III. Induction of New Board Members by Commissioner Alicia Reece

President of the Hamilton County Commission, Alicia Reece, performed the induction ceremony for **Catherine Fitzgerald,** with the Hamilton County Economic Development Office, Powered by Alloy, **Uma Sivaprasad,** with Cincinnati Children’s Hospital Medical Center, **Michael Turner,** with Cincinnati Public Schools, and, our fourth new board member, **Krista Rinehart**, with The Summit Hotel, who was out of town for today’s meeting.

IV. Review and Approve Agenda *(Action)*

Chair Sorenson-Williams asked for any additions or changes to the published agenda. R. McPhedran moved to accept the agenda as previously distributed, M. Hughes seconded the motion; the motion was unanimously approved by the Board of Directors.

V. Review and Approve Consent Agenda *(Action)*

Chair Sorenson-Williams asked for any additions or changes to the published agenda. B. Griffin moved to accept the agenda as previously distributed, C. Fridel seconded the motion; the motion was unanimously approved by the Board of Directors.

Chair Sorenson-Williams invited Shawntay Mallory, Co-Vice Chair of the Board, to come up and present this year's Workforce Champion Award Winners.

VI. Presentation: Workforce Champion Awards

Shawntay Mallory - It is my distinct honor to present this year's workforce Champion Awards. The workforce Champion Awards were formerly known as the Super awards. It is exciting because these awards provide an opportunity to recognize individuals and organizations for outstanding Workforce Development achievements in Cincinnati and Hamilton County throughout the year. I'm going to be up here for a while, guys, as we have a lot of people to recognize! The nominations were received for individuals, organizations, workforce partners, employees, board members, and OhioMeansJobs partners- all of whom made a significant impact in the area's public workforce system, as demonstrated by excellence in the category of collaboration, employer, innovation, one-stop certification, workforce Employee of the Year and leadership.

COLLABORATION - This category recognizes individuals or organizations who have demonstrated outstanding workforce collaboration, enhancing the Cincinnati Hamilton County public workforce system for individual and/or employer customers, as well as the community at large. Four awards were presented to the following individuals/entities: Hamilton County Public Health, Hope Arthur, Learning Grove, & Rhonda Whitaker Hurtt.

EMPLOYER - The outstanding employer category recognizes successful employer partnerships as demonstrated by hiring, training and or advancing customers in the public workforce system, including but not limited to, dislocated workers, adults, youth or young adults, veterans, individuals with disabilities and returning citizens. Ideal employers for this award also actively participate in hiring events, job fairs, on the job training and other innovative workplace solutions. Three awards were presented to the following: City of Cincinnati, PNC Bank, Turner Construction.

INNOVATION - This category recognizes creativity, innovation, and or programming that promoted career advancement, job mobility, and or equity. Results include improved employment attainments, credentials, certifications, job quality, increasing wages, and/or promising practices to help strengthen the region's economy. Nominees may include individuals, organizations or training providers and education partners. Three awards were presented to the following: Cincinnati & Hamilton County Public Library, Damascus, Michael Hill.

OHIOMEANSJOBS (OMJ) CERTIFICATION - This category recognizes a phase three certification achieved by the OhioMeansJobs Center, also known as one stop certification. This process was established by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act or WIOA. To ensure optimal Customer Access, high quality job seeker services, effective Employer Services, and effective center management. The recipient of this award is the OhioMeansJobs leadership team.

WORKFORCE EMPLOYEE OF THE YEAR - This category recognizes outstanding workforce development professionals who have demonstrated excellence in customer service, dedication, teamwork, productivity, partnership, passion and/or equity. Ideal nominees will be part of the Ohio Means Jobs network through one of the 20 partnering organizations. The recipient of this award is Leah Winkler.

LEADERSHIP - This category recognizes outstanding achievements and effective community leadership as well as dynamic disruption to the status quo and promoting a stronger workforce in our region. Four recipients were presented with this award, including the following: Laurence F. Jones III, Myron Hughes, Tom Burton, and Commissioner Alicia Reece.

Congratulations again to all the award winners!

Workforce Council's Executive Director, Jason Ashbrook, introduced our guest speaker Patrice Borders.

VII. Special Presentation: The Power of Resiliency by Patrice B. Borders

I'm here because resilience is important. I'm here because this organization operationalizes resilience. When you hear a story, like Commissioner Reece shared, where there was a woman who had a job for 18 years and lost it, and was concerned about keeping her home, while also needing to find a job, she found resilience here. Resilience is our capacity when we meet disappointments, when we meet difficulties, and we meet disasters for us to be able to bounce back. And this is what this organization does, for so many allows the space to be with what it is. Through the Workforce Mission it's the opportunity to build communities of resilience to create access, and through training to ensure people can what make it happen. So that's the definition of resilience. And for me, I believe there are three keyways that we can build resilience as individuals. The first is to be present for what is. James Baldwin, and he's one of my favorite writers, famously said, and I'm going to paraphrase *that what we need to change cannot change unless we really face it*. And not everything we face can be changed, but nothing can be changed if it is not the face, which requires some quality of mindfulness, which requires our ability to be present with what is, how do we do that? We make sure that we are here now in the moment. The 20 second H.U.G. reminds us to be present in the here and now. H stands for Here. Ask and answer these 3 questions, Where are you? HERE, What time is it? NOW, and What are you? IN THIS MOMENT. U stands for Uniting what is best within you, those core values that are in your mission that even though, through branding transformation, which is phenomenal, is still at the essence of what you do, creating communities of resilience. And then G is about being Guided by intention. It's about who you want to show up as the essence that you want to bring into the world being guided by intention, being intentional about what you say, what you do and who you are. So, it's about being present. Resilience requires that because again, as Baldwin said, we can't change the things that we do not face. And if we're not present, we're not going to be able to understand or monitor or check or even have awareness of what they are. How do we build resilience? When we fail, we build resilience. We can only avoid failure if we say nothing, do nothing and be nothing. We can't wait. So, it is a universal truth that we will fail. The third point is self-compassion as a way of facing failure. How to learn from our mistakes. Because again, as James Baldwin said, we cannot change what we do not face. In everything that we face cannot be changed, but nothing can be changed unless we face it. And that is bringing that mindfulness to what is happening to us and around us. Patrice thanked us for being here now, in this moment.

Jason Ashbrook thanked Patrice. That was so powerful and so, so relevant. Thank you Patrice!

Jason also recognized and thanked some of our local leaders present today, Commissioner Reece, Keizayla Fambro, Chief of Staff to Mayor Aftab, Joyce Powdrill with the office of Senator Sherrod Brown, Garrett Arnold with the office of Senator JD Vance. Also, from the Ohio Department of Job & Family Services; Coretta Pettway, Deputy Director, Julie Wirt, Assistant Deputy Director, and Jay Mendoza, Bureau Chief.

VIII. Executive Director Report by Jason Ashbrook

Key Highlights/Updates

Welcomed our new board members and awards winners.

Workforce Council Annual Report for 2021-2022- copies of this publication were made available at each table/place setting, as well as online at CincyWorkforce.org

Annual Independent Fiscal Audit – this audit was recently completed by our new auditor Locey, Mitchell & Associates. That audit report was reviewed by our executive committee and board treasurer in December, and subsequently included in the consent agenda packet for today. Of course, we are thankful no findings were identified from this audit. Also, as a reminder in terms of our area wide fiscal allocations, that Hamilton County JFS, as our fiscal agent, manages those WIOA/federal resources, and is also audited separately by the Ohio Department for job and family services.

Branding Updates – our new website, CincyWorkforce.org, officially launched at the end of January, we're going to continue to make new updates to the site. While we're on the topic of branding, though, I want to acknowledge Deskey, who has been the marketing firm that we've partnered with during this process over the past year. Special thanks to Debbie Happe and her team, as well as CEO Becky Hyde, for their partnership.

Grant & Upcoming Projects – a new grant, Business Resource Network, was awarded to us and will allow the creation of an onsite Business Resource Center at the OMJ Center. It will help support our small and medium sized businesses, as well as businesses owned by women and people of color, through the offering of updated technology, resources, event space, and other employer tools. We are coordinating with Hamilton County JFS, to complete the procurement and purchasing process for those items and of those upgrades. Another new project in the works is our Career Navigator Program, which is another example of the innovation that's happening with Princeton city schools. This navigator program will also feature a partnership with the village of Lincoln Heights, and others. An updated application will be submitted to the state by April 30. If/when the application is approved, the program will feature an anticipated start date of July 1.

OMJ Center Facility Updates - several facility updates and improvements were completed last year. But we have several more that are underway. We have some updated technology equipment that's going to be purchased and installed in our conference rooms, along with new customer furnishings in the common areas. I mentioned our new Business Resource Center for our employers; those enhancements will join the previous enhancements we did last year, which included brand new Wi Fi, new painting, updated electrical, updated HVAC, ADA accessibility and much more.

The Talent Collaboration - excited to report that we had our first regional partner convening of talent collaborative of Greater Cincinnati that took place on January 26, featuring nearly 50 participating workforce partners from the tri state. The convening allowed us to share insights from another peer metro collaborative from Greater Louisville, a fellow River City metro. The Convening also helped facilitate a conversation with the regional workforce partners on what are their current pain points that they're seeing, and how can we work together to further strengthen our regional workforce system. I am proud to serve as the 2022 and 2023 Chair of

the Talent Collaborative, with support from a very strong steering committee from the Cincinnati Regional Chamber, The Health Collaborative, Brighton Center, and the NKY Workforce Investment Board.

Regional Plan – Two years ago, we partnered with the Workforce Board of Butler, Clermont, Warren Counties (Ohio Workforce Area 12) to develop a strategic Regional Plan, as required by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). This Plan is now set for a biennial update. We will be coordinating with the Area 12 board to complete this update. We will be looking closely at the labor market data, which has updated since that time. We want to make sure that the updates completed are driven by the labor market and industry data that we're seeing. But in addition to that, we want feedback from you. Similar to the original Plan, we will provide an online survey to the Board and Community as a forum to provide public comments and input into the updated Plan. The survey is scheduled for distribution during the month of May, with the updated Plan submitted to the state (ODJFS) by June 30.

National Association of Workforce Boards Forum – this annual conference is the largest convening of workforce boards and professionals in the nation. The event will be held March 25th – 28th in Washington, DC. If any of the board of directors would like to attend, please let J. Ashbrook know as soon as possible, to allow us to support the travel costs associated with this event.

J. Ashbrook thanked the HCJFS/OMJ Center staff, Youth Providers, MOU partners, Workforce Council staff members and contractors for all their amazing work and support over the past year.

IX. Board Member and Public Announcements/Comments

Bianca Owens with the City of Cincinnati – "I just want to say thank you. As someone fairly new to this scene, I think it is really refreshing to see that this many people care about workforce development in our city. It's beautiful."

X. Upcoming Meetings - Events

Chair Sorenson-Williams noted that the upcoming meetings are listed on the agenda.

Next Board of Directors Meetings

August 10, 2023 – Board of Directors Quarterly Meeting 8 AM – 10 AM

November 9, 2023 – Board of Directors Quarterly Meeting 8 AM – 10 AM

XI. Adjournment

At 1:20 PM a motion to conclude the Quarterly Board Meeting was made by C. Fridel, and seconded by M. Fox. No further discussion and the motion was unanimously approved by the Board of Directors.

Respectfully submitted,

René McPhedran
Secretary