Minutes - Amended
Kansas City & Vicinity
Workforce Development Board Meeting
July 10, 2025
10:00 - 11:30 am 1740 Paseo

Members Present	**FEC Staff**	**Ex-Officio Member**	**Guests**
Jeron Ravin	Tirhas Kidane	Will McCarther	Tiffini Reed
Clyde McQueen	Shelley Penn		Nathan Scott
Bobby Barlow (by phone)	Andrea Robins		
Leslie Elwell	April Law		
Jill Lawlor	Tami Blair		
LaTanya Davis	Rohina Behrmann		
Yolanda Waldon	Stefan Townsend		
Joe Reardon			

The meeting began with Clyde McQueen commenting that this was the first time in five years that the KCV Board had met in person. He thanked everyone for taking the time to come to the meeting.

Call to Order
Chairman Jeron Ravin opened the meeting by thanking everyone for joining in person.

Minutes
Mr. Ravin requested a motion to approve the minutes from April 10, 2024. A motion was made and seconded, and the Board unanimously approved the minutes as written.

Employer Partners
Rohina Behrmann introduced Tiffini Reed, HR Director of Behavior Health Allies. Ms. Reed provided an update on her organization's work with autistic individuals, explaining that they operate 26 homes serving the top 1-3% most complex cases of autism. The organization's funding comes from insurance, state relationships, and its board. They currently have 507 employees and are experiencing rapid growth.

Mr. McQueen inquired whether they are observing an increasing number of individuals in their early 20s seeking assistance. She clarified that there is a significant prevalence of this age group facing challenges, particularly after leaving home. Once they are on their own and no longer under their parents' care, their disabilities tend to become more apparent.

Stefan Townsend introduced Natha Scott, Director of Operations for Gann Asphalt and Concrete, Inc. Mr. Scott shared that they hired 8 or 9 people through a recent hiring event, mostly under 25 years old, for CDL and general labor positions. He discussed the on-the-job training subsidies, which typically cover 50% of wages for skilled labor positions.

Financial Report and Monitoring

Tirhas Kidane presented the Financial Report. As of May 31, 2025, the Kansas City and Vicinity Workforce Development Region demonstrated strong financial performance. Formula-funded program expenditures were on target, with the Economically Disadvantaged (ED) Adult Program at 86%, the Dislocated Worker Program at 62%, and WIOA Youth at 99% for PY24 and 82% for PY25. Discretionary grants averaged 75% expenditure for adult-focused programs and 60% for youth. Overall, 74% of the $5.9 million operations budget and 72% of the $5.6 million in participant-related payments were expended, resulting in total expenditures across all programs and services of 73%.

FY 2026 Budget and Revenue Projections:

Mrs. Kidane reported that projected revenue for FY26 is $11.1 million, with 66% coming from competitive discretionary grants. The remaining one-third consists of formula-based allocations for youth, adult, and dislocated worker programs. While Adult and Dislocated Worker formula funding shows a slight increase over FY25, it remains below FY24 levels, and Youth formula funding has declined year-over-year. Discretionary funding starts at $7.3 million for FY26, down slightly from $7.9 million in FY25 but higher than the $7.06 million received in FY24—providing a solid base for continued growth through active grant-seeking efforts.

The proposed FY26 budget totals $11.17 million, reflecting a 3% decrease from FY25. Strategic investments include a 19% increase in MIS/Technology to refresh the IT infrastructure and support hybrid meetings via Zoom, as well as a 25% increase in Community Outreach/Public Relations to enhance engagement with clients and employers. These increases are offset by a 64% reduction in record retention costs resulting from one-time cleanup and a vendor switch, as well as a 35% decrease in telephone expenses through consolidation and renegotiation. Program payments total $5.26 million, with participant wages and support services increasing by 5% and training costs decreasing by 10%. Transportation costs remain flat. Mrs. Kidane emphasized that, given the high reliance on discretionary funding, continued performance, compliance, and operational efficiency remain critical to sustaining funding and services.

Annual Financial Monitoring:

Mrs. Kidane also shared that Booth Management Consulting conducted the annual financial monitoring on behalf of the Missouri Department of Higher Education & Workforce Development (DHEWD) for the period July 1, 2024, through January 31, 2025. The review covered financial systems, including cost allocation, payroll, procurement, subrecipient monitoring, and compliance with WIOA and Uniform Guidance. The outcome was highly positive—**no findings or recommendations were issued**, affirming the strength and integrity of internal controls and fiscal oversight in place.

Mr. McCarther inquired about any potential red flags to watch for in the near future. Mr. McQueen noted that grant proposals are now facing much closer scrutiny, with requests for cell phone numbers of our partners. Additionally, Medicaid is requiring individuals to requalify every six months instead of annually. As a result, many people are losing coverage because they lack the skills to reapply or have difficulty providing the necessary documentation. Jill Lawlor commented that the requirement to reapply every six months is causing a significant backlog, leaving many individuals without insurance until they can get requalified.

Ms. Lawlor requested a list of all our programs that may be at risk, as she would like to present these concerns to the City to explore potential solutions. Mr. McQueen mentioned that our SkillUp program has experienced cuts of approximately 50%. Shelley Penn suggested that we may need to explore private funding options.

It was properly moved and seconded to approve the Financial Report, and passed by common consent.

Performance Summary

Ms. Penn presented the Performance Summary. She provided an update on several partnerships and initiatives. The FEC has collaborated with the Excelsior Springs Chamber of Commerce to engage smaller employers, worked with United Auto Workers to assist laid-off employees, and partnered with Swope Health and MCC to train certified medical assistants. Ms. Penn also shared success stories of clients who have overcome barriers to employment, including Maria Williams, who now works as a CNA earning $23 per hour, and Naya McCaskill, who completed a sterile processing technician certification and is employed at $20 per hour. Additionally, Ms. Penn highlighted the YouthBuild program's success in helping young people like Mahguyby Collins explore career options and earn credentials. She reported on the challenges faced by homeless youth and the importance of addressing housing issues before job training. She highlighted success stories, including Caleb Bailey, who obtained his CDL license and secured a job paying $22 per hour. Ms. Penn also shared placement wage data across various sectors, with hazardous material jobs offering the highest wages at $42 per hour. She emphasized the importance of sector-based partnerships, aligning training with employer hiring cycles, and increasing dislocated worker services. She noted a trend among job seekers in realizing the need for credentials to remain competitive in the current job market, especially following recent layoffs in industries such as automotive and government.

Mr. McQueen pointed out that many people are unaware of the different sectors. Competition has intensified due to recent layoffs, so individuals need to consider alternative employment options.

It was properly moved and seconded to approve the Performance Summary, and passed unanimously.

Program Monitoring

Andrea Robins presented the program monitoring results, which include two types of participant monitoring. The Office of Workforce Development's review found two issues: one related to the advanced tracking system and another concerning work experience activities. Corrective action plans have been implemented, including weekly meetings between the Quality Assurance and Fiscal teams, as well as real-time data entry for work experience activities. The Planning Department's monitoring of 94 participant files revealed no eligibility issues but identified areas for improvement in work experience documentation and employment plans. The one-stop operator monitoring found no issues, though a recruitment plan was required when positions were vacant.

It was properly moved and seconded to approve the Program Monitoring and passed unanimously.

President's Report

Mr. McQueen introduced Julie Carter, the Director of the Department of Higher Education and Workforce Development. Ms. Carter discussed the I-70 Corridor Initiative, which will involve St. Louis, Columbia, and Kansas City, focusing on training for youth. The department has received state appropriations for apprenticeships, launched programs such as Neighborhood Works and COTY (Career Opportunity Training for Youth), and secured funding for reentry programs in prisons. Ms. Carter emphasized the importance of collaboration and leveraging resources from city, county, and state partners to create a more holistic and user-friendly system. She also mentions new initiatives targeting TANF recipients and plans to coordinate efforts between different levels of government for more effective outcomes.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned with there being no further business.