

Sonoma County Workforce Investment Board

Minutes of January 13, 2021

Members Present: Ananda Sweet, Ed Barr, Ethan Brown, Erin Carlson, Susan Cooper, Sara Cummings, Brad Davis, Keith Dias, Nancy Emanuele, John McEntagart, Brandy Evans, Steve Herrington, Steve Herron, Kristina Holloway, Eddy Gilbert for Roy Hurd, Stephen Jackson, Judy James, Scott Kincaid, Chris Knerr, Anita Maldonado, Michael Pickens, Frank Cuneo for George Steffensen, David Tam, Pedro Toledo, Corry Lemmings for David Wayte, and Becky Sandoval for Audra Verrier

Absent: Robin Bartholow, Paul Duranczyk, Roy Hurd, George Steffensen, Pedro Toledo, David Wayte, and Audra Verrier

Staff: Katie Greaves, Shaydra Ennis, Sharona Elfus-Schatzkin, Amanda Gayda Jessica Taylor, Manuel Benitez, Lupe Castaneda, Lonje Deschamps, Pedro Guevara, Tiffany Hill, Sarah Lewis-Crow, Michelle Revecho, Katie Stohlmann, Antonio Vigil, and Judy Oates

***Attendees with asterisks arrived late or departed early.**

I. Introductions and Public Comment

No comments.

II. Approve Minutes of November 18, 2020

The committee reviewed the minutes of September 10, 2020.

Motion to approve the November 18, 2020 minutes: Stephen Jackson /s/ Steve Herron. All approved with the correction of “Job Corps” to replace “North Bay Job Corps”. (Ananda Sweet, Ed Barr, Ethan Brown, Erin Carlson, Susan Cooper, Sara Cummings, Brad Davis, Keith Dias, Nancy Emanuele, John McEntagart, Brandy Evans, Steve Herrington, Steve Herron, Kristina Holloway, Eddy Gilbert for Roy Hurd, Stephen Jackson, Judy James, Scott Kincaid, Chris Knerr, Anita Maldonado, Michael Pickens, Frank Cuneo for George Steffensen, David Tam, Pedro Toledo, Corry Lemmings for David

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Wayte, and Becky Sandoval for Audra Verrier). There were no “nay” votes and no abstentions. The motion carried.

III. Announcements

The Business Services Team had two announcements.

- The Sutter Health Employer Spotlight will be held via Zoom on January 19 from 2:00pm to 3:30 pm. Sutter Health recruiters will discuss application and selection process for Clinical and Non-Clinical employment opportunities.
- Santa Rosa Junior College in conjunction with Sonoma County Adult Education is offering an ESL construction course January 21 through April 8. Classes will be 100% on line and held Tuesday and Thursday evenings from 6:00 pm to 8:30 pm.

IV. Presentation by Dr. Robert Eyler

Items Dr. Eyler discussed included:

- Themes economists are watching include the presidential transition, vaccinations, and temporary or permanent unemployed.
- At a national level one out of three people in hospitality/hotels/food/beverages are not working. For food and beverages, the number is one in five.
- It took 69 months to regain the same number of workers from the beginning of the great recession. Recovery will take time.
- Sonoma County has 5% unemployment, which is better than the rest of California.
- There has been some recovery momentum in manufacturing and farming.
- Areas that require proximity to the client other than healthcare will be slower to recover.
- The north bay has done better than the nation on average.
- Napa has had more tourism regionally than other areas.
- This recession may cause structural change with new business models having to emerge.

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- Wineries and the travel industry were hurt by the pandemic and the fires in Sonoma County. It may take a while for people to feel comfortable to travel again.
- Some people are moving to areas with more job prospects and lower cost housing.
- Businesses that will emerge well from the recession include construction, manufacturing, and professional services, and agricultural.
- Businesses that will emerge changed from the recession include retail, restaurants, hotels and events, personal services, fitness centers, and administrative services. Health care is not in either group as it is a mix due to the many types of positions.
- Median housing prices in Napa are now higher than San Francisco.
- Sonoma County is becoming an older aged based community.
- Not sure how much education will stay on-line versus returning to the classroom. Definitely some will return to in person classes, but probably not all.
- Transferable skills for people entering or re-entering the workforce are things like coding and construction
- Job Link can prepare to provide workers for the High Road Workforce by having a partnership with Santa Rosa Junior College (SRJC) for their training classes and workforce development core.
- Education infrastructure will start trending to allow more for stacking of credentials. Expect the junior colleges will take the lead on this.
- The future of planning for Green Jobs depends on the funding with the new administration.
- Expect to see many of the people who moved from the San Francisco and other cities to return once the pandemic end company ask their staff to return to the office.
- For additional data to review Dr. Eyler recommends [TrackTheRecovery.org](https://www.TrackTheRecovery.org).

V. WIB In 2021

Ananda invited members to discuss what the WIB will work on in 2021. Responses

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included the following.

- Manufacturing will be important and should be discussed even though it is not currently one of our current three focus areas.
- Need to be careful about training a lot of people on coding. There is a lot of low code / no code automations that may replace some of the lower jobs in coding over the next few years. We need to look at what jobs will be available when people will be trained and ready to work. It is a good idea for 2021-22 but maybe not for 2026.
- Healthcare should remain a focus as it is a growing and huge need, especially senior care.
- We should promote apprenticeships in construction as much as possible. These are living wage jobs and have a clear path to retirement. Other benefits are the ability to earn as you learn, no student debt, and a salary that will allow you to buy a home and raise family.
- Want to look at ways to keep people in the county and attract youth with more opportunity. Currently we have an older population and many people have moved away due to the fires.
- Today's high school youth have experienced trauma from the pandemic, the fires, and distance learning causing skill gaps in their education. Discussed issues for youth.
 - SCOE is looking at the skills gap for youth. Many foundation skills are taught to the younger students so this is especially hard on them to not be in the classroom.
 - Youth Troop is a student data survey through the CTE Foundation. They report that 70% of Sonoma County high school juniors and seniors do not see a future for themselves working locally. We are an anomaly to the nation. Most kids reported in this survey they have frustrations about the interruptions caused by the distance learning. Sonoma County youth said their biggest stress is there is

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no future here for them. They have been scarred by multiple natural disasters growing up. Even if we extend our school year we need a counseling component for the youth, the teachers, staff, parents, and families for all they have endured. Teen suicide is up. Child abuse is up. People are stressed. We have a whole generation that are losing out on the core basics of learning to read and basic math. High schools have a greater percent of D and F letter grades than ever as grading mechanisms need to change when distance learning and that was not done. Schools are doing meetings on the social emotional impact youth are facing and are very concerned.

- The EDB is working with Human Services staff on a workforce development survey for employers. It will be an opportunity to see where the needs are with local employers. They will share when this is complete.
- Katie asked members to think about the changes and concerns in the school system, and changes that we can make with the workforce and Job Link system. Historically we work from the supply/job seeker side. We have been trying to turn to a more industry focused/demand orientation. We will need help from WIB members to take some of the ideas from Dr. Eyster's presentation and make them happen. They sound simple but are actually quite complicated. For example, a partnership with SRJC will take a lot of planning to implement. We want to be more demand driven and determine what skill sets will be in demand, how to best provide that training, and find the job seekers to put in those industries. The state is also asking us to be more demand driven and requiring us to incorporate our efforts in our local plan.

VII. Other

Patti Andrews reported that the EDB in partnership with the SRJC and the WIB is applying for a grant for an ELL cohort that includes an overview of construction training. Attendees will be encouraged to apply for jobs in construction and the trades. The EDB has the role of employer liaison to sign up employers as partners. Scott and Ed of the

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WIB are some of the employers participating and have recommended other employers for her to reach out to.

Please reach out to Patti if you would like to partner in this cohort. The agreement is non-binding, but lets the State know you have a need for employees and would be interested in hiring people with this training. The application will be submitted next Tuesday and she has a goal of showing a need for at least 60 employees for this type of position in local companies 2021 to 2024.

VIII. Job Link Operations

Katie introduced two new staff members.

- John Paul is our new Job Link Manager replacing Jessica Taylor. He was promoted from within the department and has a lot of expertise in social services and employment training.
- Fabiola Garcia Almonaci is our new Program Planning and Evaluation Analyst replacing Patti Andrews. She was promoted from within the department and will supervise staff, work with job counselors and partner agencies, and ensure we are on track with programs and our mission.

IX. Adjourn 5:00 pm

Next meeting: **March 10, 2021 via Zoom**

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