

**Northwest Central IL Works (NCI Works)
Meeting**

Tuesday, March 5, 2024

12:00 Noon

**Illinois Valley Community College, Room C325, 815 N. Orlando Smith Ave., Oglesby, IL
NCI Works One Stop Center, Conference Room E, 1550 First Street, Ottawa, IL
Sinnissippi Centers Conference Center, 325 IL Route 2, Dixon, IL**

Or by

Join Zoom Meeting

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AGENDA

Call to Order (Patty Head)

Roll Call

Chairman's Comments

- Jesse Nauman
- Maryann Rice

Consent Agenda (Action Item):

Consent Agenda Items - Anyone may remove an item from the consent item list by requesting the chair to do so. Items removed will be discussed and voted upon immediately following passage of the remaining consent items.

- NCI Works (November 7, 2023, 2023 Meeting Minutes) (Page 1)
- Executive Committee Meeting (January 2, 2024 Meeting Minutes) (Page 7)
 - Approval of the Financial Reports Ending October 31, 2023
 - Approval to Apply for IE Grant
 - Approval to Submit Application for the Trade Case Management Grant
 - Approval to post the PY 24 Regional & Local Plans for Public Review
 - Approval of NCI Works Committee Structure (Page 13)

Business Meeting

Committee Reports

- Targeted Population Committee/Workgroup Report (January 16, 2024) (Page 17)
- Employer Engagement Committee Report (February 6, 2024) (Page 19)
- Business Liaison & Marketing Committee Report (February 7, 2024) (Page 21)
- Youth Committee Report (February 13, 2024) (Page 23)

- Approval of the Regional Office of Education Contract Modification (*Action Item*)

Oversight Committee Report (Gerald Waszkowiak)

- Review and Approval of the Financial Reports Ending December 31, 2024 (*Action Item*) (Page 28)
- Review & Approval 1st Quarter Title I Performance Report (*Action Item*) (Page 35)
- Review of the Title I Performance Assessment for LWIA #4 (Program Year 2022) (Page 36)
- Review & Approval of 2nd Quarter Partner Report (*Action Item*) (Page 37)
- Review of the Partner Referral Report (Page 38)
- Review of Resource Room Comments (Page 39)

Other Business

- Approval to Relocate the One Stop Center (Carrie Folken) (*Action Item*)
- PY 24 MOU Update (Carrie Folken)
- Report of Outcome for PY 2024 MOU Modification (Page 40) (*Action Item*)
- PY 2024-2028 Plans (*Due to the large size of these documents, please review the plans on the BEST, Inc. website*) - [Regional/Local Plans – BEST, INC \(best-inc.org\)](https://www.best-inc.org)
 - Review & Approval of PY 2024-2028 Local Plan (*Action Item*)
 - Review & Approval of PY 2024-2028 EDR #5 Regional Plan (*Action Item*)
 - Review & Approval of PY 2024-2028 EDR #6 Regional Plan (*Action Item*)
- Request approval for Apprenticeship Expansion Modification (Carrie Folken) (*Action Item*)
- Request approval for any grant modifications (if necessary) (Carrie Folken) (*Possible Action Item*)
- Partner Updates (Partner members) and Member updates (NCI Works members that want to update the board about their business needs)
- **Apprenticeship Activities**

Our 3rd scheduled event took place November 14th with 17 individuals present. This was a Healthcare Summit Event with OSF being the primary provider present for the morning.

In December our first new apprenticeship program was signed by both the company, Jo-Carroll Energy in Elizabeth, IL, and the US DOL Region 5 Office of apprenticeships. This allows us to move forward with the procurement and purchase of training materials and the train-the-trainer

for Morrison Institute of Technology which will be the training provider for this new Broadband Technician program. We are in the process of adding Jo-Carroll's program to the ETPL.

Also in December, our second program, Wolf Line Construction out of Galena, was submitted for review to US DOL Region 5. Those standards have been reviewed and some minor adjustments made. Signatures from the company and DOL are expected to occur in January 2024.

BEST, Inc. staff attended and successfully completed the required TPM training offered by the US Chamber. Three staff members completed all requirements of the training December 18, 2023.

- **Supplemental Grant Update**

Project Number 1

The local area had communication with homeless shelters and other community based organization to discover that a lack of computers to be used in the growing population of the shelters was a big issue. In one shelter particularly, they have seen an increase of over 20 people for a longer time span than in previous years at this time. Computers would be used for job search, online interviews, and education to better advance the residents to be job ready. In this project 2-3 computers would be purchased for each shelter or community based organization with the grant funds along with essential supplies needed for the job search. Some essentials supplies would consist of resume paper, printer, ink, and envelopes.

The very nature of a shelter indicates that most of the population will be accessing these tools in the evening and overnight hours which little to no access in the community would be available during those times. It is vital to our declining workforce pool to put the tools in the hands of individuals that could increase that population.

Update: Computers were purchased and delivered to Sterling, Peru and Ottawa Shelters along with Perfectly Flawed Foundation and Safe Journeys. Job search handouts were created and were given to them to review with interested candidates as well as resume paper and envelopes. All organizations were very thankful for the supplies.

Project Number 2

Professional Development in the form of an inclusive conference is needed in rural Illinois. Although workshops are offered online for a reasonable amount, some workforce professionals do not have in their budget, money for an in-person rural professional development opportunity to network with like professionals to aid in common workforce needs. This conference would be centered on Workforce Professionals, Educators and Business that have common needs to help assist today's and tomorrow's workforce. Some examples may include; mental health, job coaching, substance abuse, rural resources, and barriers to overcome. This conference would be paid for in total by this grant to allow for more individuals to participate on a very limited budget. Increasing the network to work together in a rural community will benefit all the interested parties.

Update: JoAnn has been working very hard on this conference. It will be May 1st at Starved Rock lodge. The day will have local speakers as well as a national speaker. The day will also have a resource fair for service providers of mental health. We are very excited to have this opportunity and so are our partners.

Project Number 3

Work Based Learning in the form of Work Experience for individuals who are not WIOA participants. This was brought up in conversation with the homeless shelters, the older workers, and also with individuals who may be involved in the court system. Allowing for a more structured staff assisted work experience to gain that positive work reference for individuals with all types of barriers. This would allow for individuals who may be having a hard time finding that perfect job/career to test the waters before jumping in. It also allows for the employer to invest without having 100% of the cost. Wages, Workers Compensation and FICA would be paid out of this grant. Number of hours, length of agreement and pay would depend on the occupation and the individual experience.

Update: We have 40-50 slots to fill. At the time of this report we have secured 7 worksites and we have 19 individuals that we are working on worksites for. It seems to be very challenging this time of year but the BSR and Diamond are reaching out to not only worksites that we have used in the past but new ones, too. Other staff with business connections are also reaching out for initial contacts and then handing the paperwork portion over to the BSRs.

Project Number 4

“Work in the Real World” career exploration. This event would be located in two areas of the Local Workforce Area. It would be a career exploration event with presentations from local businesses to attract young local talent to stay or return to our local area. Careers in occupations that are in demand or are facing a large number of openings due to retirement will be represented as well as the military. This event will target high school students and college enrollees. Cost of the event will be paid for by this grant along with transportation, giveaways, and lunch.

Update: We are working with SVCC for 2 events before June 30, 2024 and the EFE (Education for Employment) from LaSalle County for 2 events.

Sauk events are a CTE introduction in April and then in June more of a business panel event from those CTE occupations.

LaSalle County EFE is a trip to the Apprenticeship school for 129 kids to Electrical, Carpentry and Laborers school.

The second event is a virtual reality day. After completing a job shadow and research, an occupation will be selected and then a salary will be given. With that salary they have to plan a month with the money that they would receive on the job. Of course, obstacles are thrown in their path and they have to plan for that.

Administration costs in the amount of 10% of the full grant amount would allow for overseeing and managing this grant.

Total Grant \$452,153.39

- Success Stories
 - BEST Success Stories (Page 43)
- Next Meeting: May 7, 2024

Public Comments / Recognition of Guests

Adjournment