

# Southwest Wisconsin Counties Consortium Meeting

November 23, 2021

Meeting Minutes

The Southwest Wisconsin Counties Consortium meeting was held on Tuesday, November 23, 2021, via conference call and at the SWWDB Administrative Office, 1370 North Water Street, Platteville, WI 53818. Attendance was as follows:

**Members Present:**

Mr. Art Carter  
Mr. Robert Keeney

Mr. John Meyers  
Mr. Russ Podzilni \*

**Members Absent:**

Mr. Marty Brewer

Mr. Jack Sauer

**Staff Present:**

Ms. Katie Gerhards  
Ms. Rhonda Suda

Ms. Danielle Thousand

\*Joined via conference call.

The meeting of the Southwest Wisconsin Counties Consortium (SWCC) was called to order by Mr. Carter at 11:36 a.m.

**1. Approval of Agenda**

The meeting agenda of the November 23, 2021, SWCC meeting was reviewed by SWCC members. No corrections or changes were made.

Motion made by Mr. Podzilni, seconded by Mr. Meyers, to approve the November 23, 2021, SWCC meeting agenda. **Motion carried unanimously.**

**2. Approval of Minutes**

The meeting minutes of the August 24, 2021, SWCC meeting were distributed and reviewed by SWCC members.

Motion made by Mr. Keeney, seconded by Mr. Podzilni, to approve the minutes of the Southwest Wisconsin Counties Consortium (SWCC) meeting held on August 24, 2021. **Motion carried unanimously.**

**3. Program Year 2021-22 Financial Reports, Quarter 1**

Ms. Thousand presented the financial statements to SWCC members. The draft financial statements include the Balance Sheet and Statement of Operations as of September 30, 2021.

The Balance Sheet is current through Quarter 1 (July 1 – September 30). It shows that revenues are exceeding expenses by \$45,856.70. SWWDB is still in the process of closing the Foodshare Employment and Training (FSET) grant from last year that ended September 30, 2021, which would impact/increase

both Accounts Receivable and Accounts Payable. The last check run to process FSET invoices from last year is today. Ms. Thousand noted that FSET is SWWDB's largest funding source.

There are some negative asset amounts on the Balance Sheet. Ms. Thousand explained that SWWDB had an employee who was going out on extended leave. The SWWDB Finance Dept. had the employee prepay their share of benefits because the employee was unsure how long they would be out and SWWDB owes that employee coverage. SWCC members were also informed of the new lease for the new Rock County Job Center site. It is slightly less than that of the old site.

Account 1540-PAS Rewrite Project is a new account. PAS (Payment Authorization System) is SWWDB's software used for obligating, vouchering, and tracking funds. Case Managers use it every day to reserve funds for program participants. In August, SWWDB made a down payment for the project. When the project is complete, SWWDB will amortize it over a 10-year period.

Account 3003-Accrued Vacation includes only vacation for the new/current program year that is earned but not yet used. Any carried over vacation from the prior year ending June 30, 2021 (as it cannot pay out upon termination) is not a liability to SWWDB, so this account will only be on the statements in quarters one through three. By Quarter 4, carried over vacation must be used or it will be lost. Any unused vacation from the current program year can be carried over with prior approval from Ms. Suda.

Mr. Meyers asked about SWWDB's company car and if it gets depreciated. Ms. Thousand said yes and it is fully depreciated already.

Since SWWDB is through Quarter 1, the goal on the Statement of Operations is to be around 25% spent. The column labeled "Pct" is showing revenues at 24.07%, and expenditures at 24.86%. SWWDB's budget is running in line.

Ms. Thousand stated that conference season will kick off in Quarter 2. However, account 6170-Staff Train/Development is showing around 382% spent. When the budget was prepared, SWWDB administration was not aware of the Pathways Home 2 funding. This grant came with training staff needed to complete.

Account 6343-Board is starting to have activity again. SWCC members were told to expect this account to increase.

Account 6709-Incentives is showing 32% spent due to the Foster Care/Independent Living grant. Eligible youth participants can receive direct stimulus payments of \$1,000 per month for six (6) months.

The Budget Modifications show changes to the budget since the last meeting. The biggest change is the addition of the Pathway Home 2 funding. It is a \$3 million grant and is connected with the Department of Corrections (DOC) and county jails.

The Rapid Response Annual Allotment was adjusted to the actual amount received which was less. However, the Rapid Response Dislocation Grants received additional funding via a modification. The Employee Recovery and Dislocated Worker Grant (ERDWG) increased as SWWDB received the second year of funding in the amount of \$250,000.

Ms. Thousand indicated that with the Department of Workforce Development's (DWD) approval, SWWDB transferred formula funds from the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Dislocated Worker program to the WIOA Adult program because that is where the need is. It was noted that the ERDWG helps serve participants in the Dislocated Worker program.

Another big change is being awarded the Worker Advancement Initiative (WAI) grant. It is a \$1.6 million grant that can be used through September 30, 2023. SWWDB's budget has nearly doubled with these new grants.

The Independent Living/Foster Care grant increased as SWWDB is able to help purchase a vehicle for participants. This grant assists foster care youth aging out of the system and is a great opportunity.

Ms. Suda added that these new grants provide SWWDB with many opportunities to partner with WIOA partners and make new partnerships. When SWWDB administration applied for the Pathway Home 2 grant, the application was written aggressively with three (3) other boards-Fox Valley, Northwest, and Western. The goal is to serve 800 individuals that are lower risk in 3.5 years. The grant does not eliminate serving high risk individuals. The grant will serve those incarcerated 280 days before their release. Participants will maintain the same Case Manager throughout their time receiving assistance and receive services such as counseling and assessment behavioral intervention.

The total grant is worth around \$3.8 million. Ms. Suda added that there will be carryover every year. Each local board will receive between \$150,000 and \$170,000 in subcontracts. Supportive and training funds are available. Examples of supportive assistance includes, but are not limited to, transportation, auto repairs, rent, security deposit, assessments such as AODA and mental health (if not covered by BadgerCare), and stipends. SWWDB's practice is to pay landlords directly rather than offer stipends. Examples of training assistance includes tuition, books, and fees.

The programming will be wrapped up by December 2023 with one-year of follow-up. There will be no more enrollments after December. SWWDB will be working with the county jails and the Prairie du Chien Correctional Institution and may work with the facility in Oregon. Again, the grant is intended to help individuals that are low to medium risk. DOC only helps those that are high risk. SWWDB's Special Projects Supervisor, Marcia Galvan, is the lead on this grant. Ms. Galvan is also working on the Opioid/Support to Communities grant.

Ms. Suda continued by explaining the Worker Advancement Initiative (WAI) grant. It is funded by the State of Wisconsin through DWD. The funds come from the U.S. Department of Treasury. The grant is geared towards where the need is. SWWDB administration determined that the grant should concentrate on childcare/early childhood education, truck driving, manufacturing, and trades. The funds will help participants in childcare provider/early childhood education training offset the cost of tuition, books, and fees and also offer a stipend. The goal is for individuals to remain in their training program and complete it. The grant was written to assist up to 25 individuals in this area, but these numbers are flexible.

Maintenance Technician is a driver industry in all counties in Southwest Wisconsin. The Techs currently working are older and retiring. Employers have indicated a need. This grant will offer entry-level individuals with training and to receive a stipend of \$13 per hour.

Construction UP is for new and existing apprentices. Up to \$5,000 in classroom training is available for day school expenses. Once participants complete training, they can get a \$1,000 stipend.

SWWDB will be working with Blackhawk Technical College (BTC) and Southwest Wisconsin Technical College (SWTC) on the Power Skills portion of the grant. The technical colleges will provide 40 hours of training that includes teamwork, leadership, critical thinking, and more. A \$200 incentive for completing the training is available to participants. SWWDB staff will continue to help with employment and job searching.

SWWDB administration reached out to the Community Action Program (CAP) agencies in Southwest Wisconsin regarding this grant. After their participants get employed and earn a wage of \$15.00 per hour or more, the agency is no longer able to assist. The individuals lose benefits depending on their wage. Ms. Suda went on to say that SWWDB has signed a small contract with the CAP agencies to provide support to individuals who have left the CAP programs and found employment at \$15.00 per hour or more, but are still experiencing needs that cannot be addressed. This could lead to the individuals leaving their job. Enrollments are expected to begin in January.

Mr. Meyers asked if SWWDB had any plans to provide assistance in the medical field. Ms. Suda responded no, but DWD will consider grant modifications six (6) months after the grant start date. At that time, Ms. Suda stated that she will entertain ideas for planning in the medical field. When SWWDB administration was writing the grant application, there was no medical presence at the planning sessions. Mr. Meyers stated there is a need at the county nursing home level as they are in crisis-mode. Mr. Keeney agreed. The rural healthcare field is an issue.

Motion made by Mr. Meyers, seconded by Mr. Keeney, to approve the Program Year (PY) 2021-2022 financial statements, including the Budget Modifications, for the period ending September 30, 2021.

**Motion carried unanimously.**

#### **4. Fiscal Year 2020-21 Audit**

The draft audit report was presented to SWCC members. The audit was conducted by Wegner CPAs of Madison. Wegner staff conducted the audit virtually October 4 – October 7, 2021.

Ms. Thousand indicated that the audit went very well. Wegner is not recommending any adjusting journal entries or proposing any changes to internal controls. During the pandemic, the Finance Dept. has continued to keep multiple staff involved in every process. It was a clean audit with an unmodified opinion.

SWWDB's reserves have been critical lately. Ms. Thousand has been unable to request reimbursement for activities in the Pathway Home 2 (PH2) grant due to an issue at the Department of Labor (DOL) and with the potential for a government shutdown, a healthy reserve has been reassuring.

The draft of the Form 990 was received this morning and was presented for review. The Form 990 is a non-profit income tax document. It matches the financial statements.

On the program side, the Foodshare Employment and Training (FSET) program saw a decrease in enrollments. During the pandemic, the Department of Health Services (DHS) waived the work requirements from April 2020 to September 2021. Earlier this fall, DHS asked the federal government

for another waiver and received approval through September 2022. However, individuals can volunteer to join the program to help them get the skills to work. The waiver is one of the reasons for lower enrollments over the last year.

Ms. Thousand reiterated that the financial statements tie to the audit. Financially, SWWDB is in good shape.

Motion made by Mr. Meyers, seconded by Mr. Podzilni, to approve the Fiscal Year 2020-21 draft audit report, including the draft Form 990, as presented. **Motion carried unanimously.**

## 5. Appointment of Board Members

Board member David Gaspar, formally of Miniature Precision Components (MPC) in Janesville, retired after MPC was acquired by Novares. Mr. Gaspar formed Tailored HR and gave up his position on the Board. Ms. Suda reached out to trade associations in the area for nominations. The Platteville Regional Chamber and Janesville Chamber of Commerce each submitted nominations. There is only one (1) position to fill and SWWDB administration received two (2) nominations. If SWCC members approve the addition of both nominations, SWWDB would have 26 Board members and the percentages would still meet Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) requirements.

Kelly Sharpe is the Human Resources Director for Skyway Precision, Inc. in Platteville. However, Ms. Sharpe lives in Michigan. Ms. Suda noted that she would call-in for meetings, but also gets the opportunity to travel.

Andrew Marcotte is the Human Resources Manager for Blain's Farm & Fleet in Janesville. Mr. Marcotte's applicant form lists other local/national boards, committees or commissions he serves on. He has indicated that he looks forward to participating on the Board. Ms. Suda stated that Mr. Marcotte would represent the warehousing and logistics business area.

SWCC members need to appoint one (1) of these nominations, but can also appoint both. Mr. Keeney and Mr. Meyers are concerned about having representation from someone out-of-state and asked if this has been done before. Ms. Suda is not aware of any board member that has served on the SWWDB Board of Directors and lived outside of Wisconsin. Mr. Carter added that Ms. Sharpe's presence might bring a different perspective and asked if she ever visits Southwest Wisconsin. Ms. Suda said yes – Ms. Sharpe has been to the area.

Motion made by Mr. Meyers, seconded by Mr. Keeney, to appoint Andrew Marcotte to serve on the Southwest Wisconsin Workforce Development Board (SWWDB) Board of Directors. **Motion carried unanimously.**

Motion made by Mr. Podzilni, seconded by Mr. Meyers, to discuss Kelly Sharpe's SWWDB Member nomination papers. Ms. Sharpe works for Skyway Precision in Platteville. Mr. Carter stated that the Board does not have enough representation from small business owners or local businesses. There are many larger corporation representation. SWCC members discussed putting Ms. Sharpe's nomination on hold and finding representation from a small business. Ms. Suda reminded SWCC members that the Board's membership meets the requirements with Mr. Marcotte's approval. Ms. Suda will inform Ms. Sharpe that she was not selected, but SWWDB will keep her nomination papers on file. In the meantime, Ms. Suda will search for a small business representative.

Motion made by Mr. Meyers, seconded by Mr. Keeney, to oppose appointing Kelly Sharpe to the Southwest Wisconsin Workforce Development Board (SWWDB) Board of Directors due to her location. Ms. Sharpe’s application will be kept on file for future consideration. **Motion carried unanimously.**

**6. Board Member Reappointment**

SWWDB Board members are appointed to three-year terms on a calendar year cycle. Therefore, the end of the calendar year brings an end to the appointment term of several Board members.

The terms of the following Board members below are due to expire on December 31, 2021, and are recommended for re-appointment:

Member	Title	Company / Organization	Industry / Representation
Dale Poweleit	Field Representative	Steamfitters Local 601	Workforce - Labor
Chris Comella	Regional HR Business Partner	Inclusa	Healthcare
Ivan Collins	Member	Rock County Central Labor Council	Workforce -Labor
Michael Williams	Training Coordinator	Bricklayers and Allied Craftworkers of Wisconsin	Workforce - Apprenticeship
Heather McLean	Business Manager	Reddy Ag Service	Agriculture Service
Tracy Pierner	President	Blackhawk Technical College	Education

Motion made by Mr. Podzilni, seconded by Mr. Keeney, to re-appoint the members above to a new three-year term beginning January 1, 2022 through December 31, 2024. **Motion carried unanimously.**

**7. Southwest Wisconsin Counties Consortium Agreement**

SWCC members reviewed the updated language in the Southwest Wisconsin Counties Consortium (SWCC) Agreement. The update addresses each county’s responsibility in the event SWWDB is assigned Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) disallowed costs that cannot be addressed through SWWDB corporate reserves. The Department of Workforce Development (DWD) is requiring a language change as the current SWCC Agreement indicates the state can make a final assignment of disallowed costs, which is not allowable under WIOA.

The chief Local Elected Officials (LEOs) in a local area are liable for disallowed costs related to the misuse of WIOA funds. Ms. Suda assured SWCC members that SWWDB has corporate reserves to give SWWDB more flexibility with workforce needs that funding does not cover. It also protects the counties. Using SWWDB’s corporate reserves would have to be included in the SWCC Agreement. There is also an agreement between the LEOs and workforce board that will need to be reviewed. The SWCC Agreement is the agreement being addressed at this time.

If disallowed costs were identified, the Program Operator (Manpower) would reimburse SWWDB and in turn, SWWDB would reimburse the state. Ms. Suda added that there have been disallowed costs that Program Operators or SWWDB have picked up, but never the counties. The SWCC Agreement must also

address situations where the local elected officials do not agree. SWCC members were reminded that this agreement only covers obligations to WIOA, not the Foodshare Employment and Training (FSET) program or any new grant.

SWCC members will present the updated SWCC Agreement to their respective county as this is a liability for the county. Ms. Suda will put the information into the SWCC Agreement and send via email for the County's legal to review.

**8. Leased Employee Program**

Ms. Thousand presented a summary of SWWDB's leased employee program to SWCC members. It is summarized by contract/department, not by person. As of November 16, 2021, SWWDB has four (4) contracts: one (1) with Grant County, one (1) with Green County, and two (2) with Richland County.

The leased employee information shared with SWCC members is current through SWWDB's first fiscal quarter (July 1 – September 30). The information compares the third calendar quarter numbers in 2019, 2020, and 2021. In 2019, there were 58 leased employees with a gross billing of around \$193,000. In 2020, there were 27 leased employees with around \$189,000 in gross billing. In 2021, there were 36 leased employees with around \$212,000 in gross billing. The reason for the decrease from 2019 to 2020 was that there was no Rock 5.0 internship program due to COVID-19. There was also no Rock 5.0 internship program in 2021. There has been a lot of turnover in Richland and Green Counties.

Ms. Thousand noted that SWWDB charges an admin fee of 7% and has done so for a very long time.

**9. Adjournment**

Ms. Suda will update the SWCC Agreement and send it to SWCC members and will look into providing medical assistance in the Worker Advancement Initiative (WAI) grant.

Motion made by Mr. Keeney, seconded by Mr. Meyers, to adjourn the meeting at 1:08 p.m. **Motion carried unanimously.**