

**SOUTHERN ALLEGHENIES WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING**

Tuesday, April 14, 2026

**Southern Alleghenies Planning and Development Commission, also available via Zoom
Meeting Platform
Altoona, Pennsylvania**

ACTION SUMMARY

Following are the major actions taken by the SAWDB Executive Committee at its regular meeting held on April 14, 2026, via the Zoom meeting platform.

1. Approval of Minutes of March 9, 2026
2. Approval of Minutes of March 31, 2026

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Members Participating

Cory Sisto	IFC Services
Joshua Miller	Somerset Trust Company
Keith Baker	BWPO
Wendy Melius	CCA

Non-Members

Amy Horwath	Goodwill
Barb Covert	E & T
Brad Burger	Goodwill
Debbie Ankney	Tableland Services
Erin Geller	Goodwill Bedford
Heather Saly	BWPO CareerLink®
Joe Razo	BWPO CareerLink®
Judy Lutz	E & T
Linda Straka	Career Planner Somerset
Lisa Phillips	Tableland
Sarah Helman	Goodwill
Jennifer Sklodowski	SAP&DC
Steven Howsare	SAP&DC
Emily Hite	SAP&DC
Jill Reigh	SAP&DC
Sydney Burkes	SAP&DC
Tim Baranik	SAP&DC
Carrie Fisher	SAP&DC

Call to Order

SAWDB Chair, Mr. Cory Sisto, called the meeting of the Southern Alleghenies Workforce Development Board Executive Committee to order at 10:00 a.m. The meeting was open to the public and available virtually using Zoom.

Approval of Minutes from March 9, 2026, and March 31, 2026.

Mr. Cory Sisto asked for a motion for approval of minutes from March 9, 2026, and March 31, 2026, Executive Committee meeting. There were no questions, concerns, or discussions regarding the minutes.

Mr. Joshua Miller entered a motion to approve the March 9, 2026, and March 31, 2026, SAWDB meeting minutes as presented. Mr. Keith Baker seconded the motion. The motion was carried.

Director's Report

Red/Green Report

Ms. Jennifer Sklodowski referred to the Red/Green Report and noted that this report reflects nine months of expenditures. Quarterly expenditure rates are measured against 80% expenditure requirement. The invoices were due on the 12th, which makes this an accurate picture of spending moving into the last quarter of the fiscal year. Providers are spending at an accurate rate for our region. Providers have not met the quarter target for TANF spending. Ms. Sklodowski knows that providers may have been conservative with TANF funding to have funds available for the summer program.

Ms. Sklodowski referred to page 2 of the Red/Green report and stated that it tracks expenditure rates as measured against the 20% and 75% WIOA expenditure requirements. Providers are over the 20% of the budget spent for Youth Work Experience. Moving into the summer program, WIOA OSY is over 82% of the budget spent. There was an opportunity in March to request more funding for the Youth Program. The Youth Program was awarded the \$150K that was requested. The monies awarded need to be expended by June 30, 2026.

Financial Update

Ms. Sklodowski shared the updated line item added for Incumbent Worker that was voted upon with \$50K in Dislocated Worker Incumbent Working training funds.

Mr. Sisto inquired about the company who was interested in activity regarding Incumbent Worker that spurred the \$50K allocation.

Ms. Sklodowski sent the information to the company's economic development department, then they will look at everything and send it back. After it is sent back, the company will then connect Ms. Sklodowski with the HR department.

Mr. Mike White contacted the Fiscal department for SAP&DC to inform about the change to the MODs which is now a two MOD a year limit.

Legislative and Policy Updates

Ms. Sklodowski attended the National Conference last month and had the opportunity to hear U.S. Assistant Secretary of Labor Dr. Henry Mack speak. Dr. Mack spoke of the workforce system, along with his continued interest in seeing WIOA reauthorized. The administrations remain focused on reauthorization and assisting the workforce development challenges faced. The main topic was apprenticeships. On April 6th, the Congressional House Republicans introduces the reauthorization bill named a Stronger Workforce for America. The key takeaway from the bill was the training requirements remain stable. No major tangible changes from the December 2024 bill they had introduced, Adult and Dislocated Worker programs will remain at 50% training requirement with 10% for supportive individual career services. The 50% training requirement was a concern but with the additional line item with the Incumbent Working Training will help with the requirement

guidelines. The Critical Industry Skills Fund includes that additional 10% for states set aside there was no wiggle room. The Make American Great Again Pilot is now called the Block Grant Pilot that is referencing the Presidents budget proposal for WIOA. The PA implementation would require agreement from the governor for a statewide pilot or agreement from a local consortia for regional pilots. The major structural change was the adult education shift. The biggest change is the statutory move from Title II from the Department of Education to the Department of Labor. This change is a significant point of contention with the Democrats stating that it makes the bill down on arrival as it codified the effective elimination of the Department of Education role in adulthood.

Multi-Year Local Plan – Full Approval Granted

Ms. Sklodowski announced the Multi-Year Local Plan was fully approved. The formal confirmation was received that the final submission for the Multi-Year Local Plan has been accepted. Approval has been extended through June 30, 2029, with the board staff completing the final administrative steps. The plan needs posted on the SAP&DC website which will make us fully ratified.

RFP Timeline Adjustment and Update

The adjustment to the RFP timeline is as follows.

- April 22, 2026 – Board staff review of RFP (Comments due to director COB 4/24)
- April 27, 2026 – Board will reveal RFP to committee members
- May 12, 2026 – Final submission for release at Full Board Meeting
- May 14, 2026 – Bidders Conference held at 2PM
- May 22, 2026 – RFP's Responses due by COB
- May 26, 2026 – RFP's will be prepared by Director
- May 27, 2026 – RFP's will be presented to Committee Members

Commonwealth Update

Mr. Keith Baker updated on the Commonwealth. The house bill that was passed on April 6 called a Stronger Workforce for America Act of 2026 and the primary legislation vehicle right, essentially the latest attempt to update WIOA since it was last updated in 2014. What is new with this bill? One of the biggest changes is the move from the adult ed programs from the US Department of Education, over to the Department of Labor. The intent there is to better align education with Workforce Training and employer needs. There is a stronger emphasis on training as mentioned which is 50% of funding goes to training which means that 50% of funding is left to run programs. This will expand the use of it as work-based learning and apprenticeships. The key concerns and pushbacks are reduced flexibility for local boards, possible shift of funds from local to state level and more federal mandates on training spending. The bill currently lacks bipartisan support, the adult education shift is a major sticking point and with a narrow House majority, passage is considered unlikely in its current form. WIOA has not been reauthorized since 2014 despite multiple attempts. The 2026 bill is largely a revival of earlier proposals with some updates with congress still actively debating federal vs. local control, training mandates, funding distribution and system alignment across agencies.

President Trump has set a goal of one million apprenticeships by 2029 with USDOL releasing

\$85M in new funding for apprenticeships. The fourth round of State Apprenticeship funding uses a performance-based formula with states being rewarded for growing apprenticeships and pushing states to tie WIOA money more directly to apprenticeships. This is to reduce bureaucracy, to speed up program approvals with a target of 30 days, to be standardized process across states and to increase transparency. This is to push employer driven models with an employer-lead design and industry aligned training. The tie between apprenticeships to the workforce system and to push to align apprenticeships, WIOA funding, career and tech education which would directly intersect with CareerLink® operations.

Ms. Wendy Melius asked if the apprenticeship program follows the HPO list and if there is a wage requirement to be part of the program.

Mr. Baker will look into that information.

PA CareerLink® days is August 10th to September 18th. The funding was made available through RFF process, up to \$20K. The RFF funds cannot be used for food, food trucks, food vouchers or lunches. CareerLink® should be sure to count the number of job seekers, employers, and on the spot interviews and hires. Vital records may be available to attend the event if the request is in early enough.

The AGWorks of the Southern Alleghenies is funding from DOL specifically to work the AG businesses, AG business employers and the recipient of the grant was Penn State Extension. Penn State has developed different webinars and farm events. The webinars are focused on AG business employers and address things like HR, bookkeeping, hiring practices, and more on the administrative lines. Penn State also does farm events that are also designed for workforce professionals to help them become more familiar with business needs during this process. The goal of the grant is to introduce AG businesses to the PA CareerLink® system. At every Penn State event they ask the employers in attendance if they are interested in being contacted by their local CareerLink® and if they are the employers information is sent to BWDA who puts it on a shared spreadsheet across the Commonwealth. The local point of contact goes to that spreadsheet for their local workforce area and begin outreach to introduce to the services, the POC will try to reach out three times, and the attempts are documented along with whatever was conducted during. The goal for Penn State is to have 1000 employers contacted by the end of the grant which ends at the end of next year. As far as the Southern Alleghenies there are only 10 employers on that spreadsheet that have been contacted at least once.

One Stop Operator Report

Mr. Brad Burger has given the full report to the board office. Mr. Burger highlighted that the facilities are stable, but they are working through a couple technical issues. Spring job fairs are underway with some occurring and others already occurred. Ms. Gwen Fisher, the site administrator for Blair and Bedford counties, is on an extended leave of absence with Ms. Erin Geller being the acting site administrator for Bedford County and Mr. Joe Razo is the acting site administrator for Blair County. Mr. Burger thanked them for stepping up. Mr. Burger was happy to announce that all three site administrators were selected as Women in Business Publications Top nonprofit female leaders for 2026 which is such an accomplishment. This is Ms. Barb Coverts 3rd year in a row. The committee congratulated them. Mr. Burger announced that Ms. Heather Saly, the site administrator for Cambria and Somerset Counties, has been selected by the Somerset County Chamber of Commerce as the Outstanding Person of the Year, the committee

congratulated Ms. Saly. Mr. Burger shared his appreciation for the site administrators because they do a great job representing the CareerLink® system and they are the face of CareerLink® for the counties that they serve. This is a testament to their leadership on how they are regarded in the community because of their presence.

Other Business

None

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:40 a.m.

A motion was made by Mr. Joshua Miller to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Keith Baker seconded the motion.

The next meeting of the Southern Alleghenies Workforce Development Board Executive Committee will be held on **Tuesday, June 9, 2026, 10:00 a.m.**