

## MINUTES OF THE ASHTABULA COUNTY BUSINESS ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING

**Friday, February 18, 2022 at 11:00 a.m.**  
**Ashtabula County Educational Service Center Via ZOOM**

### **Members Present:**

Mr. Mike Candela, Superintendent, Ashtabula County Educational Service Center  
Ms. Beth Dougherty, Human Resource Generalist, INEOS Pigments USA  
Ms. Hattie Grubke-Barnard, Workforce Development Administrator, Ohio Means Jobs Ashtabula  
Mr. Richard Jackson, Executive Vice President, Operations ASHTA Chemicals, Inc.  
Ms. Kelli Jones, Executive Director, Leadership Ashtabula County  
Mr. Greg Myers, Executive Director, Growth Partnership of Ashtabula County  
Dr. William Nye, Superintendent, Grand Valley Local School District  
Ms. Christina Ray, Human Resources Director, Ashtabula County Educational Service Center  
Mr. Craig Sernik, Executive Director, Area 19 NOC COG  
Ms. Krista Shean, Director of Data, Accountability, and Professional Development, Ashtabula Area City Schools  
Mr. George Smith, Ashtabula County Educational Service Center Governing Board Member  
Dr. Sue Stocker, Dean and Chief Administrative Officer, Kent State University at Ashtabula  
Mr. Scott Wludyga, Superintendent, Ashtabula County Technical and Career Campus  
Ms. Wendy Zele, Manager of External Affairs, FirstEnergy Corporation

### **Members Absent:**

Mr. Patrick Arcaro, Executive Director, Ashtabula County Department of Job and Family Services  
Mr. Jonathan Forbes, Director of Human Resources, Ashtabula County Medical Center  
Mr. John Ringer, President, Ringer Screen Print, Inc.  
Mr. Mike Sass, Director of Human Resources, Community Care Ambulance  
Ms. Lisa Shank, Human Resources Manager, Lake City Plating  
Mr. William Stoots, Operations Manager, Worthington Industries

### **Items Discussed:**

1. Call to Order  
Mr. Mike Candela
2. Introductions  
Everyone introduced themselves.
3. Review and Approve Minutes from October 15, 2021 Meeting  
Motion by Mr. Richard Jackson, second by Mr. Craig Sernik All in favor.

#### 4. Mr. Greg Myers and Ms. Kelli Jones

Reviewed a PowerPoint with our members regarding past surveys and a new potential to identify industry needs in our county:

- On March 29, 2022 Growth Partnership is hosting a roundtable discussion on Tuesday, March 29, 2022 from 1:00 to 2:30 p.m. to help feed into the second phase of the survey. Participation is limited. They do have some businesses already signed up to participate. Here is a link if you are interested in participating:  
<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/where-are-the-workers-roundtable-ashtabula-county-tickets-261253485207>
- Mr. Myers will share some data with us specific to Ashtabula County.
- Comment: Mr. Jackson asked do we know why and do we have the data why our high school graduates are leaving our county when there are job and career opportunities in our county? There should be some data through ACCESS and through A-Tech that we can capture. Mr. Candela will research this data and bring information to the group.
- Comment: Dr. Dean Stocker indicated that enrollment is declining at Kent State Ashtabula and this is an issue we need to address as well. Ms. Grubke-Barnard indicated that enrollment for services at the Department of Job and Family Services for tuition assistance is also on a decline.
- Mr. Wludyga mentioned that Senate Bill 166 should be implemented next month. This bill will allow employers to earn a 15% tax incentive when they hire a student participating in work-based learning. Mr. Wludyga will keep us updated.
- Mr. Sernik commented they are in total agreement with this report and realize there are things that need to be addressed in order to increase our county residents with demand skills and training. They have some ideas that may work to address this issue. There is a manufacturing program that Kent State developed for Trumbull County that we may want to duplicate. He also mentioned that the Ohio Means job credential may also be a great option.

#### 5. Mr. Craig Sernik and Ms. Hattie Grubke-Barnard

Virtual reality technology as a career exploration and career training tool: Ms. Grubke-Barnard commented on the virtual reality technology demonstration. There is another version of this technology for career exploration that Ohio Means Jobs Ashtabula might be able to implement for our school districts. They do have some funds available for purchasing or leasing this technology, Oculus. They are thinking of implementing a pilot program. Mr. Sernik will develop a subcommittee with a couple of members to discuss further.

#### 6. Mr. Mike Candela and Mr. Craig Sernik

- Facilitated discussion regarding future activities for our business advisory committee. We should really look at developing and implementing the Job Readiness Seal.
- Discussion - work through the school counselors and life skills coaches in the districts to assist with creating awareness of career opportunities. Further discussion regarding ability for schools to even offer opportunities while in school to create career awareness and opportunities.
- Mr. Sernik indicated the best way to move forward with our group would be to develop some working subcommittees to implement some of the ideas and topics we have discussed. As far as getting the school Superintendents involved we can ask Mr. Sernik to present to our Superintendents. We will also develop a subcommittee regarding potentially using the Oculus technology with our youth (Potential members: Mr. Candela, Mr. Wludyga, Mr. Sernik, Ms. Grubke-Barnard and Mr. Myers).

#### Additional Comments:

- Ms. Grubke-Barnard announced there will be a Virtual Job Fair on March 30, 2022. She will send out an invite.
- Ms. Shean commented that she has been very involved in workforce connections in our county and has been in communication with many groups and we need to get a connection with the potential employees.

7. Upcoming Activities and Meeting Topics

- Implementing Job Readiness Seal.
- OhioMeansJobs presentation set up for next meeting.
- Career Connections Summit with school counselors and other related agencies. Mr. Sernik would like to set up an annual summit where we can focus on OMJ and other career connections resources. Ideally possibly set up something this school year?

8. Motion to Adjourn

Motion by Mr Greg Myers, and seconded by Mr. Mike Candela. All in favor.

9. Next Meeting Date:

Friday, May 13, 2022

Attachments: Presentation by Mr. Greg Myers regarding survey data.