



**ROCKVILLE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, INC.**  
**WORKFORCE EDUCATION COMMITTEE**

September 10, 2020  
11:00 AM – 12:00 PM  
Via Zoom

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**ATTENDEES:** Raquel Bunai, Kathryn Davis, Ryan Gandy, Steve Greenfield, Whitney Harmel, Jennifer Hester, Kim Kelley, Carla Merritt, Julie Monshemvula, Cindy Stewart Rivarde

**WELCOME**

Dr. Kim Kelley welcomed the committee and mentioned that Ed Harrington would not be able to join the meeting. It has been confirmed that Mark Drury, Leonard Howie, Ernesto Chanona, Ed Harrington, and Jose Ochoa can all attend the September 30 REDI roundtable.

**POTENTIAL PANEL QUESTIONS**

- ✓ What are their roles and vision as new leaders in the county?
- ✓ What are their roles with Workforce Montgomery from their perspective?
- ✓ What are their strategic plans and major initiatives for Montgomery County?
- ✓ What is happening with the Workforce Development board?
- ✓ Where is Mr. Howie on defining tasks for the Workforce Development board?
- ✓ How are they applying their vision within this pandemic environment?

**FEEDBACK FROM REDI COMMITTEE**

- ✓ Ryan Gandy sent Mark Drury the questions to prepare him for the roundtable.
- ✓ Kathryn Davis mentioned that it might be helpful if we knew which topics the panelists would want to address instead of them all answering the same questions.
- ✓ Jennifer Hester was wondering if there was a better person to ask to be a panelist rather than herself since both she and Leonard Howie are on the Worksource Montgomery board.
  - Dr. Kelley suggested Jennifer to be a speaker instead of a panelist.
  - Jennifer mentioned that there is a committee for business engagement and outreach and inviting the chair of that committee, Derek Turner, might be more appropriate.
  - Dr. Kelley thought it might be good to have Derek Turner query employers on what they need.
    - Jennifer Hester and Steve Greenfield both agreed.
    - Jennifer mentioned that based on the work her committee has done for Worksource Montgomery she would be comfortable in speaking about why the program is in place and the importance of making sure that they understand

what businesses need so that they can make sure the programs for the American Job Center are functioning correctly and giving people what they need to be employable.

- Carla Merritt asked Jennifer what is the process is for Worksource Montgomery whenever someone comes through their doors.
  - Jennifer responded that that's where Leonard Howie would be good at giving an overview of how it works.
  - Kathryn Davis suggested having a conversation regarding how businesses are being directed to partner with Worksource Montgomery.
  - Dr. Kelley asked Jennifer if her interaction with Worksource Montgomery has been beneficial. She also recommended that Mark Drury and Leonard Howie discuss how these county resources have been beneficial to employers.
  - Whitney Harmel asked if there was going to be a packet to distribute with information regarding the employers and their contact information. Employers appreciate resources that will help them and that would encourage employer participation.
- ✓ Cindy Stewart Rivarde suggested inviting Ahmed to discuss the tech sector and we already have Jose and Ernesto on the panel to discuss the bio sector.
- ✓ Steve Greenfield suggested Barbara Ebel, Chief of Unemployment Services for Montgomery County. She might be worth inviting as a panelist as she has extensive experience in the labor force at Montgomery County.
  - Carla Merritt thinks inviting her is a terrific idea. Jennifer Hester is happy to ask her to join the panel.
- ✓ Dr. Kelley discussed that either Jennifer Hester will become a panelist or she will contact Barbara Ebel to join the panel.
  - Jennifer thought that Derek Turner would also be a good choice to be on the panel and she would be happy to reach out to him as well.
  - Dr. Kelley likes the idea of inviting both Barbara Ebel and Derek Turner and suggested that whoever is contacting them that they should relay that they should speak briefly about their roles, their goals, and how employers can connect effectively with the organizations they work with and could give REDI some kind of contact for employers that would benefit the results of the roundtable discussion.
- ✓ Steve Greenfield thinks it's important to know what kind of talent employers are looking for so that educational institutions can better prepare themselves to educate students to fill the positions employers are in need of.
  - Dr. Kelley asked what if employers could have the opportunity to hire employees as a test to see if they fit that position as an apprentice.
  - Carla Merritt mentioned that the Department of Labor has a program called On the Job Training (OJT) where apprentices are paid for 90 days to try out job positions.

#### **NEXT STEPS FOR THE ROUNDTABLE**

- ✓ Cindy Stewart Rivarde will provide welcome comments to introduce the roundtable event.
- ✓ The panelists will need to work on questions for the speakers.

- ✓ Audience members will ask questions via chat which Dr. Kelley will monitor and provide to Ernesto Chanona.
- ✓ Cindy described the following format:
  - Ernesto Chanona is the moderator
  - The speakers are Mark Drury, Leonard Howie, and Derek Turner
  - The panelists are Ahmed's HR Director, Ed Harrington, Barbara Ebel, and Jose Ochoa
  - Dr. Kelley will monitor the Zoom chat
- ✓ Dr. Kelley mentioned that the next steps for roundtables should be to introduce an industry major focus and at some point discuss a potential portal for Montgomery County and the City of Rockville.
  - Cindy mentioned that the next step of the portal discussion was to have a conversation with Ben Wu and Bill Tompkins because MCEDC was also looking at something so it would be good to coordinate with them.
- ✓ Jennifer Hester will reach out to Barbara Ebel and Derek Turner to see if they are able to join the roundtable event on September 30.
- ✓ Dr. Kelley and Cindy will meet with Ernesto Chanona prior to September 30 to prepare for the roundtable.
- ✓ Dr. Kelley mentioned to the REDI committee that when they talk to the roundtable participants to ask what's the takeaway that they can give to attendees to make it a valuable use of their time.
- ✓ Cindy mentioned that eventually this group would want to end up with a list of the resources. What are the training programs at Montgomery College? What are the parameters of the 90-day trial program for an employee? It would be good to bring all this information into a place where everyone can see it.