



Area 20 Workforce Development Region Fairfield – Hocking – Pickaway – Ross – Vinton

April 22, 2026
Pickaway County OhioMeansJobs

Board Members: Steve Carson, Missy Clum (virtual), Carrie Fife, Jennifer Friel, Sally Galecki (virtual), Richard Games, Aaron Graham, Richard Groves, Nathan Hale, Rick Henson (virtual), Todd Hoffman, Kimberly Jeffers (virtual), Katie Karwatske, Michael Linton, Theresa Ragosta (virtual), Chuck Reisinger, Josh Renison, Ben Smith (virtual), Tom White
Partners: Corey Clark, Sam Davidson, Melissa Mahaffey, Rick Reynolds, Jodi Smith, Bryn Stepp, Cristy Stewart, Nick Tatman, Jody Walker
Staff to the Board: Tia Arnold, Angel Conrad, Bayley Fields, Jo Miller, Rick Szabrak
Guests: Medea Loibl (virtual)

Welcome and Introductions

Chairman Linton called the meeting to order and brief introductions took place among the attendees.

Approval of Agenda

No additions or deletions.

Approval of February 11, 2026, Minutes

Jennifer Friel motioned to approve the February 11, 2026, minutes and Nathan Hale seconded. The motion passed.

Board Roster Update

Bayley Fields provided the board roster update, introducing Naomi Stonerock of Sofidel as a new board member. Bayley also shared that Chelsie Huffman of Park National Bank accepted a new role, outside of Area 20's region, so she has stepped down from the board. The board will be seeking a replacement for her position.

Election of Chair and Vice Chair

Rick Szabrak asked the Board for Chair and Vice Chair nominations. Michael Linton was nominated for Chair by Nathan Hale and seconded by Jennifer Friel. Carrie Fife nominated Theresa Ragosta for Vice Chair and Todd Hoffman seconded. Both motions passed.

Financial Report

Rick Szabrak presented the financial report. In looking at funds which expire in June 2026, Rick shared that each OhioMeansJobs (OMJ) Center is over, or close to, spending their allocated funds; this does not mean the OMJs are overbudget—it means the OMJs are dipping into the second year's funds (the Area has two years to spend its funds). Rick also explained dislocated worker spending is down and that this is a result of a grant that was received to assist in the Pixelle layoff that happened in the summer of 2025. Looking at funds that expire in June 2027, each OMJ Center has adequate funds to spend, putting the Area on target and in a good position financially.

Rick added that the Area is working to spend down the grant received in response to Pixelle; Rick Reynolds of South Central OMJ shared that 38 participants are in training now (with help from the grant), but interest has slowed. Some former workers have gone to work for the new company that moved into the mill, and the OMJ is working with that company to start on-the-job trainings (OJTs).

Auditor of State Audit

Rick Szabrak explained that the Area gets audited every year by a third party, but the state performs an audit every ten years; Rick commended Bayley Fields and Angel Conrad on their work during the audit as the outcome was very positive.

Employer Services Plan

Bayley Fields shared that, during OMJ certifications earlier in the year, it was discovered that the Area does not have a formal plan for employer engagement. Bayley reviewed the plan, including employer services offered and social media strategy. She stated many of the items in the plan are things the Area already does, but they are in the formal plan for accountability purposes. Bayley added that community engagement, a section of the employer services plan, is something that was included in the plan in an effort to engage with local businesses on a more regular basis. Moving forward, board



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staff will report out on the activities (or tracking mechanisms) each quarter to better show how the Area is engaging with employers.

Bayley also shared that there has been an increased interest in spending down employer services dollars, so there has been discussions regarding writing into the policy a percentage cap of how much the Area will spend as right now it is the responsibility of the OMJ operators to assess their budgets and determine if they have the money to spend on things like OJTs. The Employer Services Committee will be convening to discuss what those percentages should be.

Data Collection Policy

Bayley Fields discussed that the Area has begun quarterly policy audits as some policies were adopted in the early days of the workforce area's inception and some were created on an as-needed basis; now, the Area is trying to be proactive by reviewing policies and seeing if anything needs changed. The data collection policy currently states that data will be submitted to a centralized data management department; Area 20 does not have a department such as that, so Bayley suggested the policy be revised to say the board will ensure data is being submitted correctly into the state's designated case management system through monitoring and performance reports. Richard Games motioned to approve the updated policy and Richard Groves seconded. The motion passed.

Governance Agreement

Rick Szabrak reviewed the Area's governance agreement and a requested change to the agreement; the change would allow for the OMJ Centers to execute some activities and services for youth services. Some elements that youth service providers are responsible for can be handled by the OMJ Centers—and this would give the OMJs more flexibility in what they are able to offer; however, for this change in the governance agreement to happen, the board needs to approve it as well as commissioners from each county in the workforce area. Nathan Hale motioned to approve the change and Todd Hoffman seconded. The motion passed.

OhioMeansJobs Operator and Career Services

Rick Szabrak stated it is time to procure OMJ services; in January, a request for proposal (RFP) went out which allowed entities to apply to offer OMJ services. As part of the procurement process, the Area had a committee get together and score applications. Rick commented the scores this year appeared higher than in previous years, which indicates that performance among the OMJs has continued to improve. Bayley Fields shared the scores with board members and stated she has no concerns with the scores; however, she noted that Pickaway OMJ lacks some valuable technology such as Microsoft Word that would greatly benefit OMJ customers. However, Cristy Stewart is actively working with her fiscal department to remedy this problem.

Going county by county, Michael Linton called for a vote to appoint Fairfield County Job and Family Services to offer OMJ services in Fairfield County. Jennifer Friel motioned and Tom White seconded. The motion passed. In a vote to appoint Pickaway County Job and Family Services to offer OMJ services in Pickaway County, Katie Karwatske motioned and Carrie Fife seconded. The motion passed. In a vote to appoint South Central Ohio Job and Family Services to offer OMJ services in Ross, Vinton, and Hocking counties, Tom White motioned and Nathan Hale seconded. The motion passed.

Youth Services Provider Renewal

Rick Szabrak explained youth services were procured a year ago and that the youth service providers are now up for renewal; each year, the board must vote to renew the youth providers. The first up for renewal was Pickaway-Ross for Pickaway County; Todd Hoffman motioned to renew and Richard Groves seconded. The motion passed.

Moving onto Fairfield County, Rick shared that Fairfield County currently has two youth providers; the program elements are divided between each. Corey Clark proposed to the board for consideration to bring youth services in-house at Fairfield County Job and Family Services. Corey explained that some youth services are provided in-house already, some are provided by Opportunity Works, and some services are provided by both. In an effort to streamline and make services more efficient as well as reduce costs, Corey asked that the board appoint Fairfield County Job and Family Services as the Fairfield County youth services provider. Nathan Hale motioned to appoint this change and Tom White seconded. The motion passed.



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For Ross County, Pickaway-Ross was up for renewal again; Richard Games motioned to renew and Tom White seconded. The motion passed. In Hocking County, HAPCAP was up for renewal; Todd Hoffman motioned to renew and Tom White seconded. The motion passed. In Vinton County, Sojourners was up for renewal; Carrie Fife motioned to renew and Richard Groves seconded. The motion passed.

Rapid Response Update

Bayley Fields reported on increased rapid response activity including a third job fair at Smead Manufacturing in Hocking County. She reported it was a small hiring event, but the attending employers included good, regional manufacturers. The Area also held a job fair at Geodis, a logistics company in northern Pickaway County, as ~100 people are being impacted by a layoff due to an account closure. Area 20 partnered with Area 11 (Franklin County) for this event as many of the employees are Franklin County residents. Bayley expressed it was a good event overall and an opportunity to network with new employers the Area didn't previously have connections to.

WorkOhio

Rick Szabrak refreshed the board on the WorkOhio initiative led by Lieutenant Governor Jim Tressel; the program is an attempt to simplify things for job seekers and serves as a lead generator for the OMJs. The program is organized by economic development regions, so Fairfield and Pickaway counties are in the central region and Ross, Vinton, and Hocking counties are in the southeast region. Rick asked the OMJs to report on the leads they are receiving as a result of this initiative. Jodi Smith of Fairfield County OMJ reported a total of nine leads in the first week. The consensus among the OMJs, and the group, is that the program is slow-moving.

OhioMeansJobs Center Updates

Jodi Smith provided updates for Fairfield County OMJ. Jodi shared that, in the first quarter of 2026, the OMJ saw ~1,300 visitors. The OMJ hosted a hiring event for Rural King, which is moving into Lancaster, and the event saw 116 job seekers. Rural King, due to the success of the event, was able to hire for all positions. Jodi also reported 40 open cases, seven new enrollments in fields such as nursing and CDL, and that a recent collaborative job fair with Ohio University Lancaster saw 55 registered employers and 89 job seekers.

Cristy Stewart provided updates for Pickaway County OMJ. Cristy reported the Resource Room saw 858 visits in the first quarter of 2026. The number of visits in February was high due to the annual Pickaway County OMJ job fair—that event saw good attendance (65 employers and 106 job seekers). Cristy also reported nine open cases and 20 open youth cases.

Rick Reynolds from South Central Ohio OMJ discussed the combined numbers of Ross, Vinton, and Hocking counties. Combined, South Central OMJ saw 2,369 Resource Room visits in the first quarter of 2026. Rick reported there 39 participants enrolled in adult training and 80 open cases across the South Central OMJ region. The Vinton County OMJ Center will be relocating in July to the new Rio Grande Community College McArthur Center; this will provide the public with better access to OMJ services. The annual Ross County Employment Expo is scheduled for Thursday, May 14, from 1 p.m. - 3 p.m.

OhioMeansJobs Social Media

Tia Arnold shared a social media report with the board and reviewed analytics for the Fairfield, Pickaway, and South Central Ohio OMJ pages—including some examples of posts that performed well in the last quarter and the number of job postings shared to each page. Tia also provided analytics for the Area's quarterly email newsletter.

Apprenticeship Update

Jo Miller provided the apprenticeship update. Jo shared that Accurate Heating and Cooling apprentices will soon be finishing their first year of classroom training, two industrial maintenance apprentices will be starting in June, and 15 teacher apprentices are starting in Pickaway County (with a total of 45 through the grant period) at various schools. Jo added that she is working with Magna Seating in Lancaster on a robotics maintenance apprenticeship and that there is an Apprenticeship Summit happening on May 1 at the Fairfield County Workforce Center; the event will include an employer panel and a workshop on registered apprenticeship.



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Open Discussion

Jo Miller mentioned that the board's apprenticeship committee lost a couple of members, so she made a call to the group to encourage board members to get involved as well as more businesses. Tom White agreed to help get more businesses involved—and Bayley Fields added that committee members do not necessarily have to be board members.

The next board meeting will be July 22, 2026, at the Fairfield County Workforce Center. Michael Linton adjourned the meeting.

Area 20/21

Representative  Date _____

Area 20/21 Board

Chair  7/22/2026
Date _____