

**Workforce Solutions Deep East Texas
Board Meeting Minutes
415 S. First Street, Suite 110B
Lufkin, TX 75901
July 19, 2022**

I. KELLI MARSHALL CALLED THE BOARD MEETING TO ORDER AT 2:59 P.M.

MS. MARSHALL ANNOUNCED IN ACCORDANCE WITH GUIDANCE FROM THE TEXAS WORKFORCE COMMISSION (WD LETTER 28-19) DATED NOVEMBER 19, 2019, REGARDING THE TEXAS OPEN MEETINGS ACT GOVERNMENT CODE CHAPTER 551 ALLOWING THE USE OF VIDEOCONFERENCING AS A METHOD FOR CONDUCTING BOARD MEETINGS, THE BOARD IS PROVIDING FOR PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN ITS BOARD MEETING AT THE ADDRESS LISTED ABOVE AND VIA VIRTUAL MEETING WEB LINK. SHE ALSO SAID THE MEETING IS BEING RECORDED AND THE OPEN SESSION PORTION OF THE MEETING IS AVAILABLE TO THE PUBLIC UPON REQUEST. THE BOARD SERVES TWELVE (12) COUNTIES AND LISTED THE HOST LOCATION, AND PRESIDING OFFICER, KELLI MARSHALL, WAS PHYSICALLY PRESENT.

AFTER THE ROLL CALL, CHAIR KELLI MARSHALL CONFIRMED THAT A QUORUM WAS PRESENT:

Members Present: Joe Clyde Adams, Lisa Balty, TJ Colwell, Tyane Dietz, Tim Ditoro, Robert Fitzpatrick, Ethan Herr, Staci Hodges, Anita Humphreys, Malcolm Ifoezeh, Garvey Jackson, Gene Lee, Kelli Marshall, Quincy Martindale, Ellen Mills, Randall Roberts, John Allen Slocomb, John White

Members Absent: Rebekah Burkhalter, James Gentry, Phyllis Grandgeorge, Wayne Haglund, Eddie Hopkins, Kotosha Jeffery, Laurie King, Matthew Lowery, Marisa Phillips, Jessica Rogers, Rich Scott

Board Staff Present: Mark Durand, Debb Homman, Lauren Phipps, Karen Stubblefield, Misty Woodard

Visitors: Kevin Bradford, LaTreaser Cartwright, Rhonda Cartwright, Paul Dunn, Michelle Kennedy, Christina Ward

KELLI MARSHALL REMINDED THE BOARD MEMBERS OF THE CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATION.

Kelli Marshall asked that all members sign a conflict of interest declaration regardless of whether they have a conflict and return the form to board staff.

WELCOME OF GUESTS:

None

II. Public Comments

None

III. Discussion/Action: Approval of Minutes – May 10, 2022

Motion: Ellen Mills made the motion to approve the minutes as presented.

Second: Robert Fitzpatrick

In Favor: All
Oppose: None
Abstain: None
Motion: Passes

IV. Information Item

A. 2022 Teacher Externship

Mark Durand reported on the 2022 Teacher Externship that took place June 13-17, 2022. Workforce Solutions Deep East Texas (WSDTE) partnered with 25 local businesses and 11 independent school districts to link classrooms with the workplace and help shape tomorrow's workforce for industry needs. The Teacher Externship program was developed based on feedback from area employers who said there was a disconnect between workplace expectations and the qualifications of individuals entering the workforce. The employers emphasized the need to address the skills gap in manufacturing, health care, professional and technical services, and information technology industries. The project was funded through the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) in the amount of \$58,112. Through the program, 27 Career and Technical Education (CTE) teachers were matched with businesses across the region for a week of learning, observing and job shadowing. Among the immediate positive outcomes from the experiences were skill-specific lessons for the classroom, internships, job opportunities, mock interviews, employers speaking at schools, and student tours during the upcoming school year. Employers emphasized the need for soft skills such as reliability, accountability, communication, empathy, attendance, professional behavior, listening, decision-making, productivity, and problem-solving. In an evaluation completed by participants, 100% of teachers and employers stated they would recommend the Externship to their peers. The Externship also highlighted Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) services and the Student HireAbility initiative as part of a presentation by Aubrey Jones, Student HireAbility Navigator (SHN), which led to Ms. Jones connecting to both employers and teachers.

B. Budget Training Dates

The Board's Finance Director, Misty Woodard, and other Board staff are developing Budget Training for Board Members. This training will be offered twice in the month of August. Board Members have the option of attending one or both of the trainings, and can attend virtually or in-person. The tentative dates for training are Monday, August 15th, and Wednesday, August 24th.

V. Board Members Comments on Activity in their Respective Areas

None

VI. Executive Director's Report

A. Contracts/Agreements

Mr. Durand reported the Board is partnering with Legacy Institute for Financial Education (LIFE) for the Carpentry Registered Apprenticeship Program which will provide for 25 apprentices to pursue NCCER Level 1 and 2 certifications.

B. Performance

Child Care:

Child care enrollment for May was at 1,916 children enrolled with target number of 1,960 (95.70%). The Board and Child Care Contractor have been preparing for the additional funding of \$816,601 for Child Care Formula (low income) enrollments, which will gradually increase the target goal of children served to 2,291. The target enrollment for June was 2,199. Mr. Durand also noted the Annual TRS Banquet has been scheduled for August 27, 2022 at the Pitser Garrison Center.

Workforce:

The May 2022 Monthly Performance Report (MPR) reflected two (2) missed measures. One missed measure was the Employed Quarter 4 Post Exit measure for Dislocated Worker. The target goal was 83.44%, and the actual was 62.50%. To meet this measure, only one more participant needs to participate, and workforce staff are expected to meet this measure for June. The other missed measure was CHOICES Full Engagement Rate

with a target rate of 50% and an actual rate of 46.29%. The Board is currently under a Technical Assistance Plan (TAP) for this measure. Progress has been made each month toward meeting this goal.

C. Contacts and Coordination Efforts

Mr. Durand and other Board staff attended several events and meetings including the East Texas Healthcare Partnership Launch and follow-up meetings, a meeting with the Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) regarding referrals and sanctions of participants, a Skills Development Fund meeting with Angelina College, TWC and employers, a Texas Industry Partnership (TIP) roundtable discussion with TWC and leaders of both the city and county of Nacogdoches.

D. Rules and Legislation Update

Mr. Durand reported the National Association of State Workforce released its list of 2022 Legislative Priorities, and the list focuses on Unemployment Insurance, Workforce Systems, and Data Infrastructure Support. The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) increased the mileage reimbursement to .625 cents per mile effective July 1, 2022.

E. Funding

TWC added an additional \$203,321 to serve SNAP Able-Bodied Adults Without Dependents, for a total grant award of \$707,112. These funds are provided to assist SNAP participants find work. The Board received \$146,832.36 in grant funds for the Vocational Rehabilitation Integration Agency Infrastructure Cost Reimbursement Agreement. The contract period is September 1, 2022, through October 31, 2023 for the reimbursement of space utilized by VR staff in the Angelina, Polk, and Nacogdoches Workforce Centers. The Board also received an additional \$488,193 in WIOA grant funds.

F. Other Activity and Administrative Matters not requiring action by the Board

Mr. Durand reported the unemployment rate for May 2022 was 5%, which is slightly up from the 4.7% unemployment rate in April 2022 and down from the 6.9% unemployment rate in May 2021.

VII. Committee Reports

A. Business Services Committee

1. Committee Activity

2. Discussion/Possible Action

a. Action Item 22-15 Local Employer of Excellence Nominee

Ms. Tyane Dietz reviewed the Business Services Committee's recommendation for Local Employer of Excellence nomination, Pinecrest Retirement Community (Pinecrest). Ms. Dietz stated Pinecrest has partnered with WSDet for many years.

Motion: The Business Services Committee recommended for approval of Pinecrest Retirement Community as the Local Employer of Excellence nominee.

Second: Kelli Marshall

In Favor: All

Oppose: None

Abstain: None

Motion: Passes

b. Action Item 22-20 High Demand Job Training JEDCO & DETCCA

The TWC High Demand Job Training (HDJT) Program is designed to address skills gaps and ensure a talent pipeline to address industry needs. HDJT is intended to support Boards in partnering with local Economic Development Corporations (EDC) that use their local economic development sales taxes for high-demand job training. WSDet, Jasper Economic Development Corporation (JEDCO) and the Deep East Texas College and Career Academy (DETCCA), are collaborating to purchase information technology (IT) equipment to enhance the IT skills of the DETCCA students. The equipment will supply two (2) computer labs with 40 PCs and 15 Apple computers. The equipment will prepare 30 students to enter the field of network system and support occupations such as local area networks (LAN); wide area networks (WAN); and data communications. The students will earn a Level I Certificate in Computer Support with 24 college credit hours from Lamar Institute of Technology. The students attending the program will be from six (6) Independent School Districts that comprise DETCCA (Burkeville, Jasper, Kirbyville, Newton, Spurger, and Woodville). The TWC

HDJT Grant requires the Board to partner with a local EDC. JEDCO has agreed to designate \$56,172, and WSDet will submit the grant for an additional \$56,172, for a total of \$112,344 to purchase the above-mentioned equipment.

Motion: The Business Services Committee recommended for approval of the High Demand Job Training Grant with JEDCO and DETCCA.

Second: Ellen Mills

In Favor: All

Oppose: None

Abstain: None

Motion: Passes

Let the record show Mr. Eddie Hopkins was not in attendance to abstain from voting on Action Item 22-20 due to Conflict of Interest.

c. Action Item 22-23 High Demand Job Training CEIDC & Crockett ISD

WSDet, Crockett Economic and Industrial Development Corporation (CEIDC) and Crockett Independent School District (CISD) are collaborating to purchase health sciences and advanced manufacturing equipment to enhance the technical skills of CISD students. The health sciences equipment totaling \$7,168 includes manikins and simulators to train approximately 12 students during September 2022 through April 2023. Upon completion of the training, the students will earn Certified Nursing Assistant; Phlebotomy Technician; and EKG Technician certifications. The advanced manufacturing equipment totaling \$22,832 includes the purchase of a used forklift. Currently, CISD provides classroom instruction to the students, but then students must travel to Lufkin to test for their certification. The purchase of the forklift will allow CISD to certify students on-site. CISD is projecting 50 students will receive Forklift and OSHA certifications. All these occupations are listed on the WSDet Demand Occupation list. The CEIDC has agreed to designate \$15,000, and WSDet will submit the grant for an additional \$15,000, to purchase the above-mentioned equipment.

Motion: The Business Services Committee recommended for approval of the High Demand Job Training Grant with CEIDC and Crockett ISD.

Second: Robert Fitzpatrick

In Favor: All

Oppose: None

Abstain: Tim Ditoro and Randy Roberts

Motion: Passes

Tim Ditoro and Randy Roberts declared a conflict of interest.

Mr. James Gentry was not in attendance to abstain from voting on Action Item 22-23 due to a conflict of interest.

B. Operations Committee

1. Committee Activity

2. Discussion/Possible Action

a. Action Item 22-22 CCQ Revised Plan

Debb Homman, Child Care Coordinator, reviewed the Child Care Quality (CCQ) Plan and the Texas Rising Star (TRS) Support Funds Revised Plan. States are required to annually prepare and submit a quality progress and expenditure report. The purpose of this report is to show the state's progress on improving the quality of child care programs and services. This report must be submitted to the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) annually no later than November 1st. TWC approved the Board's CCQ Plan of \$577,014 on November 16, 2021. These funds must be expended no later than October 31, 2022. Boards received funding for the TRS Support Funds and were required to develop a plan for use of additional Board Contract Year 2022 Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) federal funds to promote increased and ongoing participation of child care centers in the TRS

program. Submission of this plan to TWC was due no later than October 31, 2021. The Board's TRS Support Funds Plan for \$418,816 was approved on January 4, 2022. Due to several cost categories expenses below the initial projected cost a revised plan was submitted to TWC on June 16, 2022, and approved on June 24, 2022. This revised plan includes updated planned expenditures for a Professional Development Day for TRS providers. Previously, the TRS Plan allocated \$50,000 for the Professional Development Day, but the actual cost was slightly under \$29,000. The excess \$21,000 was reallocated to support child care staff in obtaining their Child Development Associate (CDA) by purchasing CDA books and paying the testing fee for CDA candidates. Board staff mentioned CDAs must be renewed periodically. Mr. Tim Ditoro responded that Angelina College offers a CDA that does not require renewal, and he will provide information following the meeting to Ms. Homman; who will then follow up with Angelina College.

Motion: The Operations Committee recommended for acceptance of the CCQ Plan and TRS Support Funds Revised Plan as presented.

Second: Ellen Mills

In Favor: All

Oppose: None

Abstain: None

Motion: Passes

C. Executive/Finance Committee

1. Committee Activity

2. Discussion/Possible Action

a. Action Item 22-16 Annual Audit

The Board is required to have an annual audit performed. This year's annual audit had to be completed by June 30, 2022. The Executive/Finance Committee convened June 28th to review the Audit Report provided by Alexander, Lankford & Heirs, Inc. The Audit Report reflected no material findings.

Motion: The Executive/Finance Committee recommended for acceptance of the Annual Audit.

Second: Quincy Martindale

In Favor: All

Oppose: None

Abstain: None

Motion: Passes

b. Action Item 22-17 Dynamic Workforce Solutions Contract Renewal

The workforce contract with Dynamic Workforce Solutions (DWFS) includes the option of four (4) one-year renewals before the Board will be required to procure a contractor again, and this contract is up for the first one-year renewal, contingent upon satisfactory performance and Board approval. Mr. Durand provided an overview of contract performance over the past eight (8) months. At the time of this overview, DWFS was meeting 19 of 21 measures. One of the measures was only being missed by one participant. DWFS has made progress each month on the second missed measure, but is projected to meet this measure in the near future. Mr. Durand stated TWC did not note any findings in either fiscal or programmatic reviews, and DWFS was determined to be materially compliant in all areas of the fiscal integrity review conducted by Diaz, Smith, and Associates (DSA). Mr. Durand also reviewed employer satisfaction results, where nearly all of the 206 businesses surveyed provided positive assessments of their experiences with DWFS.

Motion: The Executive/Finance Committee recommended for approval of the Dynamic Workforce Solutions Contract renewal.

Second: Ellen Mills

In Favor: All

Oppose: None

Abstain: None

Motion: Passes

c. Action Item 22-18 Goodwill Industries Contract Renewal

The Board originally contracted with Goodwill Industries of Central East Texas (GWI) in 2020-2021 based on the results of RFP #20.395. The RFP allowed for an initial year and four one-year renewal options. The 2022-2023 contract term, if approved, will be the 2nd year option of the 4-year option to renew period noted in the RFP. Mr. Durand reviewed performance, noting GWI is currently meeting year-to-date performance (95.7%). The total number of contracted child care centers is 91. Mr. Durand further stated TWC did not note any findings in either fiscal or programmatic reviews, and GWI was determined to be materially compliant in all areas of the fiscal integrity review conducted by DSA. Of the 38 parent appeals from August 2021- June 2022, 10 parent appeals were overturned in favor of the parent, and 28 parent appeals were upheld. There were instances where child care providers received overpayment as a result of human error on GWI's part; however, overpayment was recouped from GWI.

Motion: The Executive/Finance Committee recommended for approval of the Goodwill Industries Contract renewal.

Second: Tyane Dietz

In Favor: All

Oppose: None

Abstain: None

Motion: Passes

d. Action Item 22-19 Child Care Business Support Specialist Positions

TWC issued WD Letter 05-22 on April 14, 2022, approving funding to support the child care industry by authorizing Boards to hire new staff members to focus on child care business outreach and support. Mr. Durand reiterated that this is additional funding that would be allocated to the Board. Mr. Durand explained the differences between the Child Care Business Support Specialist position and the TRS Assessors and Mentors positions. A Child Care Business Support Specialist will work with and assist providers with the business aspect of their operations. Ms. Homman has talked to many providers who are receptive to receiving help and guidance with their business.

Motion: The Executive/Finance Committee recommended for approval of the Child Care Business Support Specialist Positions.

Second: Robert Fitzpatrick

In Favor: All

Oppose: None

Abstain: None

Motion: Passes

e. Action Item 22-24 Information Security Policy Update

TWC identified concerns with timely termination of TWIST access during their annual monitoring review. Board staff reviewed TWC Information Technology (IT) policies and revised the Board's Information Security Policy with updated procedures to ensure access to TWIST is revoked in a timely manner upon user's termination.

Motion: The Executive/Finance Committee recommended for acceptance of the revised Information Security Policy as presented.

Second: Quincy Martindale

In Favor: All

Oppose: None

Abstain: None

Motion: Passes

f. Action Item 22-14 Closed Session – Deliberation Regarding Executive Director Salary and Compensation. Gov't Code Section 551.074

Ms. Kelli Marshall stated during the Closed Session of the Executive/Finance Committee meeting, the Committee agreed to a 4% salary increase regarding the Executive Director's compensation, beginning with the July 16, 2022 pay period.

Motion: The Executive/Finance Committee recommended for approval of a 4% salary increase regarding the Executive Director's compensation, beginning with the July 16, 2022 pay period.

Second: Robert Fitzpatrick

In Favor: All

Oppose: None

Abstain: None

Motion: Passes

The Board did not enter into closed session regarding Action Item 22-14.

3. Open Session Action, if any, as a result of Closed Session
None

4. Discussion and Acceptance of Financial Reports

a. Financial Reports for May 2022

1. Statement of Financial Position

2. Budget vs. Actual

3. Grant Report

Misty Woodard provided financial updates for the month of May 2022. Ms. Woodard referenced the variance narrative and reviewed the contracts outstanding. Ms. Woodard noted the Board is under budget for staff salary and wages because there were 15 employed Board staff members for May, and the Board budgeted for 16 staff members. For May, staff travel totaled \$1,604 and Board member travel totaled \$1,202. Board member travel was for the Quarterly TAWB Meeting. Banquet items for TRS child care providers and 45 outdoor play huts and climbers totaled \$66,000 for Child Care Quality Improvement. On a motion by the Executive/Finance Committee and seconded by Tim Ditoro, the Board accepted the financial reports.

VIII. Adjourn

Kelli Marshall adjourned the meeting at 4:08 p.m.

Duly passed and approved on this 13th day of September 2022

Kelli Marshall

Kelli Marshall, Chair

Attest

Lauren Phipps, Planning and Policy Specialist