

**Workforce Solutions Deep East Texas
415 S. First Street, Suite 110B, Lufkin, TX 75901
Executive/Finance Committee Meeting Minutes
August 8, 2023**

I. CHAIR KELLI MARSHALL CALLED THE EXECUTIVE/FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING TO ORDER AT 1:05 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 THE OPEN PORTIONS OF ITS COMMITTEE 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, MS. MARSHALL CONFIRMED THAT A QUORUM WAS PRESENT:

Members Present: Tyane Dietz, Robert Fitzpatrick, James Gentry, Garvey Jackson, Gene Lee, Kelli Marshall, John Allen Slocomb

Members Absent: Lisa Balty, Wayne Haglund, Kotosha Jeffery, Ellen Mills

Board Staff Present: Mark Durand, Jeff Eichman, Dara Harmon, Anna Holderberg, Debb Homman, Josh Fleming, Lauren Phipps, Maribel Soto-Mendoza, Sarah Milligan, Karen Stubblefield

Visitors: Scott Amey, LaTreaser Cartwright, Mike Dobert, Paul Dunn, Michelle Kennedy

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

Ms. Marshall asked that all members sign a conflict of interest declaration regardless of whether they have a conflict and send the form to Board Staff.

WELCOME OF GUESTS:

Mark Durand introduced Mike Dobert, the HR Consultant.

II. Public Comments

None

III. Discussion/Action: Approval of Minutes – June 20, 2023

Motion: Tyane Dietz made the motion to approve the minutes as presented.

Second: Robert Fitzpatrick

In Favor: All

Oppose: None
Abstain: None
Motion: Passes

IV. Information and Briefing Items

A. Modified Strategic Plan Approved

Mr. Durand provided updates regarding the Modified Strategic Plan also a two-year modification that was sent to TWC. Lauren Phipps stated that we were required to reflect labor market and in-demand industries. The Board approved the version in January 2023, it was made public for comments – there were none – so it was submitted in March 2023. We received approval letter from Governor Abbott’s office on June 30, 2023. It has been published on the Board’s website.

B. Tri-Agency Regional Convener Grant

Jeff Eichman, Regional Convener Lead provided updates regarding the Tri-Agency Regional Convener Grant. Establishing a Texas Regional Pathways Network (TRPN) with the vision that all Texans are prepared to contribute to a competitive Texas economy. We are looking to focus on: Manufacturing, Healthcare, Transportation, Utilities and Construction industries in the Deep East Texas Region. Focusing on 3-5 specific careers within those industries. The WSDet team met with Jobs for the Future (JFF) coach, Shana Payne to create a Pathways Landscape Map. This team will meet to see what targeted pathways are already established within the 12 counties and track the skills that are leading to the establishment of jobs in those industries and then accessing where there are gaps. Planning on preliminary targets for occupations and had representation from the industries as members of the pathways leadership team. Josh Fleming added that we have several occupations on the list that we can narrow down from. Ms. Dietz voiced the need of partnerships within the school districts to share the wealth of information and programs within the rural areas. Training programs strategically placed to assist all ages, from school to adults that need training. Ms. Marshall brought up the limitations of traveling to other districts in the rural areas for classes. Ms. Dietz mentioned the interest in knowing the numbers of individuals in the eastern counties that are traveling to Louisiana for work and what kind of training is available to minimize the outmigration. James Gentry asked if Houston County was included and Mr. Eichman’s response was that Crockett ISD’s Assistant Superintendent is serving on the committee.

V. Discussion and Possible Action

A. Action Item 23-13 Request for Renewal of Workforce Services Contract

Board staff presented information to support the recommendation of contract renewal of the Workforce Operations and Management contract with Dynamic Workforce Solutions, LLC (DWFS). Staff reviewed Performance, Monitoring, Employer and Customer satisfaction results. Diaz, Smith and Associates performed the fiscal integrity review and DWFS was fiscally compliant in all areas. Based on the FY’23 mid-year review of the DWFS contract staff recommended the renewal of the contract which will represent the second-year renewal of the four-year renewal option as outlined in the original Request for Proposal. Contract period will be October 1, 2023 through September 30, 2024.

Motion: Tyane Dietz made the motion to accept the request to renew the Workforce Services Contract as presented.

Second: Robert Fitzpatrick

In Favor: All

Oppose: None

Abstain: None

Motion: Passes

B. Action Item 23-15 Renewal of Monitoring Contract

Mark Durand explained that the Board procured Diaz, Smith and Associates (DSA) to perform annual fiscal and program monitoring services. Key aspects in their contract include: monitoring childcare and workforce contractors reports, completing fiscal integrity reports, and assisting during TWC annual monitoring. DSA submitted a budget of \$38,850 to perform the monitoring for FY '24, which reflects no change in the FY '23 contracted amount.

Motion: Robert Fitzpatrick made the motion to accept the request for renewal of Monitoring Contract.

Second: Gene Lee

In Favor: All

Oppose: None

Abstain: None

Motion: Passes

C. Action Item 23-16 Renewal of Auditing Contract

Mark Durand stated that the Board is required to have a financial audit conducted each year and a copy must be furnished to TWC within nine months of the end of each fiscal year. In 2022, the Board voted to contract with Alexander, Lankford and Hiers, Inc. (ALH) Certified Public Accounts of Lufkin for Independent Auditing Services. ALH originally requested a 7% increase to cover inflation, but the Board countered with 5% and ALH accepted the proposal to perform the 2023 audit at a cost of \$41,107.50.

Motion: Tyane Dietz made the motion to accept the request to renew the Auditing Contract as presented.

Second: Gene Lee

In Favor: All

Oppose: None

Abstain: None

Motion: Passes

D. Action Item 23-17 Employee Handbook

The Board's HR Consultant, Mike Dobert, presented new Employee Handbook and he explained the differences of our Operating Procedures vs. what are necessary for an employee handbook and separating the two. The biggest difference is transitioning from Sick/Vacation days to Paid Time Off (PTO). Updating the language to meet current workforce needs and align with the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA). Mr. Durand mentioned this Employee Handbook would also include a 90-day introductory period for new employees. The new Employee Handbook would go into effect January 1, 2024. As insurance rates continue to increase, Executive staff are looking at ways to offset the cost while continuing to pay 100% of the employee health, dental and vision insurance plans. Sick leave hours that are unused as of December 31, 2023, will transition to a long-term illness bank that can be used by employees for extended illnesses. Hours will be available until September 30, 2025. To assist in the transition of vacation hours employees will be allowed a one-time sell back of a maximum of 40 hours. Hours will be deducted from their vacation accrual.

Motion: Tyane Dietz made the motion to accept the Employee Handbook as presented.

Second: Robert Fitzpatrick

In Favor: All

Oppose: None

Abstain: None

Motion: Passes

E. Open Session Action, if any, as a result of Closed Session

None

VI. Discussion and Acceptance of Financial Reports

A. Financial Reports for May and June 2023

- **Statement of Financial Position**
- **Budget vs. Actual**
- **Grant Report**

Chair Kelli Marshall deferred the Financial Reports to the Board Meeting due to likelihood of causing a delay in commencement of Board Meeting.

VII. Discussion of issues to be brought before the Committee

None

VIII. Adjourn

Kelli Marshall adjourned the Executive/Finance Committee Meeting at 2:28 p.m.

Duly passed and approved on this 19 day of Sept. 2023



Kelli Marshall, Chair

Attest



Dara Harmon, Exec. Administrative Assistant