

**Workforce Solutions Deep East Texas
Executive/Finance Committee Meeting Minutes
415 S. First Street, Suite 110B, Lufkin, TX 75901
January 23, 2024**

I. CHAIR KELLI MARSHALL CALLED THE EXECUTIVE/FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING TO ORDER AT 1:02 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 VIDEO-CONFERENCING 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, MS. MILLS CONFIRMED THAT A QUORUM WAS PRESENT:

Members Present: Lisa Balty, Tyane Dietz, Robert Fitzpatrick, Kotosha Jeffery, Gene Lee, Kelli Marshall, Ellen Mills, John Allen Slocomb

Members Absent: Wayne Haglund, Garvey Jackson

Board Staff Present: Mark Durand, Dara Harmon, Debb Homman, Sarah Milligan, Maribel Soto-Mendoza, Karen Stubblefield

Visitors: Scott Amey, Paul Dunn, LaTreaser Cartwright, Rhonda Cartwright, Michelle Kennedy

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

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

WELCOME OF GUESTS:

None.

II. Public Comments

None.

III. Discussion/Action: Approval of Minutes – November 14, 2023

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

Second: Tyane Dietz

In Favor: All

Oppose: None

Abstain: None

Motion: Passes

IV. Information and Briefing Items

A. Teacher Externship Grant Update

Mr. Durand reported that the Board successfully submitted the application for this grant to provide fifteen teachers with an Externship that provides teachers the opportunity to engage in industry-related activities. The grant start date will be February 2024, and the award amount is \$55,683.00. Some changes to this year's RFA include:

- The individuals eligible for the externship expanded to include middle and high school teachers, school counselors, school administrators, teachers from IHEs, and teachers in Adult Education and Literacy Programs.
- The minimum number of days the Teacher Extern spends at the worksite has increased from three to five days.
- An additional responsibility was added for the employer: to collaborate with the ISD to provide a tour of the worksite or offer classroom presentations during the school year to extend the school to work pipeline.

The maximum stipend remained at \$1,000. Funding may be available to allow for an additional two or three more teachers if needed. The concern is the employers' time and training required. There are no foreseeable issues finding teachers. Board staff is currently in the process of identifying and recruiting employers.

B. Tri-Agency Regional Convener Report

Mr. Durand discussed the progress of the Asset Map and Gap Analysis report, which is due at the end of January. The pathways leadership team SPEAR (Student Pathways for Economic Advancement in the Region), has been formed and consists of 20 members that represent secondary education, post-secondary education, Education Service Centers (ESC), economic development corporations, and regional employers. The team selected the winning SPEAR team logo that was developed by Center ISD's Graphics Communication program and will be awarded with a \$1,000 stipend for their student's career-related workforce skills. Some early responses noted on their survey that schools may not have a connection with local employers for their CTE courses. Tyane Dietz asked if all our ISDs have filled out the survey fully. Overall, it may be they underestimate the value and relationship of partnerships with employers. When complete Ms. Dietz asked to share the results and noted the importance of business partnerships.



V. Discussion and Possible Action

A. Action Item 24-01 Child Care Advisory Committee

Mr. Durand noted that the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) issued WD Letter 19-23, Change 1, aligning with the 87th Texas Legislature, House Bill 619 requiring the implementation for Boards to establish local child care committees. At a minimum, individuals appointed must represent the following entities: Licensed child care centers participating in TWC's Child Care Services (CCS) program; Licensed or registered child care homes participating in CCS; Families currently or formerly served by CCS; CCS contractor; Board members and/or Board staff and other child care stakeholders that represent the interests of the children and/or the families served. Currently, Workforce Solutions Deep East Texas has an Advisory Committee that includes Texas Rising Star Providers, Board and Contractor staff. To meet the new requirement set forth the Board is adding the additional required members to the committee to align with HB 619. As required in WD Letter 19-23, Change 1, The Child Care Advisory Committee will meet at least quarterly and report to the Deep East Texas Local Workforce Development Board's Operation Committee and Board to provide an update, at least twice per year, on the issues discussed by the committee; and any input on CCS policy change recommendations.

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

Second: Kelli Marshall

In Favor: All

Oppose: None

Abstain: None
Motion: Passes

B. Action Item 24-02 WIOA Supportive Services Policy

Sarah Milligan reported that staff recently reviewed the Supportive Services Policy to update the allowable assistance and maximum limits that may be provided to participants for each specific type of supportive service. Types of Supportive Services were updated or added as follows:

- **Classroom Related Assistance** – available to WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth, Choices, and SNAP participants. Funding includes the cost of books, supplies, uniforms, tools, equipment, training related applications, tests, and certifications as required for participation in coursework. Limit increase from \$1,000 to \$1,500 per semester.
- **Personal Vehicle Expenses** – available to WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth, Choices, and SNAP participants. Funding includes minor repairs, maintenance, driver’s license fees, inspection, registration tags, insurance, batteries, tires, and one-time car payment. Limit increase from \$500 to \$800 each 12-month period, except car payments which are limited to one-time only.
- **Food Assistance** – available to WIOA Youth participants. Funding includes grocery food cards or Visa cards, depending on the individual’s circumstances, and food resources available in local areas. Limited to \$25 per day; and
- **Work-Related Assistance** - available to WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth, Choices, and SNAP participants. Funding includes tools, uniforms, etc. when these are not provided by the employer but are needed to perform the job. Limit increase from \$300 to \$800 one-time.

Motion: Kelli Marshall made the motion to accept the policy as presented.

Second: Ellen Mills

In Favor: All

Oppose: None

Abstain: None

Motion: Passes

C. Action Item 24-03 Apprenticeship Board Service Award Implementation Plan

During the Texas Workforce Conference in December 2023, the Texas Workforce Commission recognized and awarded Workforce Solutions Deep East Texas the Third Place Board Service Award and \$50,000 for increasing the availability of registered apprenticeships in the region. The Board introduced registered apprenticeship programs to the region with the IT Registered Apprenticeship Expansion Grant of \$200,000 that began in September of 2021. The Board partnered with Legacy Institute for Financial Education (LIFE) to serve as the training provider and apprenticeship navigator. The Board/LIFE partnership continued with a second Apprenticeship Texas Expansion grant of \$50,000, which is supporting the LIFE Build division to train and employ workers in the construction industry, specifically carpentry. Board staff have developed a plan to spend the \$50,000 on activities that involve awareness and pathways to apprenticeships during the grant period, January 1 – December 31, 2024: Pre-apprenticeships, \$35,000; Apprenticeship Success Story Video, \$4,000; Department of Labor Registered Apprenticeship Training, \$1,000; Texas Workforce Commission Apprenticeship Conference, \$5,000; Board Admin Cost, \$5,000.

Motion: Ellen Mills made the motion to accept the plan as presented.

Second: Lisa Balty

In Favor: All

Oppose: None

Abstain: None

Motion: Passes

D. Action Item 24-04 Staff Plan Proposal

The Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) issued WD Letter 25-23, on requirements to the Boards for participation in the Infant-Toddler Specialist Network (ITSN). The WD Letter requires Boards to

designate one staff member to serve as the Infant-Toddler Specialist. The person will serve as the subject matter expert and attain certification as an Infant-Toddler Specialist. Infant Toddler Specialist must meet the following requirements: Complete the required Infant-Toddler Specialist training through the Children's Learning Institute (CLI); Be actively involved in ongoing CLI-facilitated Infant-Toddler Specialist professional learning communities; Attain and maintain Texas Infant-Toddler Specialist Certification. The Infant Toddler Specialist will be responsible for the following: Mentoring and training child care program staff serving infants and toddlers, particularly classroom teachers; Provides technical assistance and cross-training on infant and toddler focused topics to local Texas Rising Star mentors who are not certified Infant-Toddler Specialists. The Board approved 20.5 FTEs in the PY'24 budget. . The Infant-Toddler Specialist position will fill the vacancy of the Child Care Business Industry Specialist (CCBIS) position. The Board will not fill the CCBIS position due to the funding for the CCBIS ends April 2024. The Infant-Toddler Specialist will not increase the overall FTE's.

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

Second: Ellen Mills

In Favor: All

Oppose: None

Abstain: None

Motion: Passes

E. Action Item 24-05 Deliberation of Executive Directors Evaluation and Employment

Removed from the agenda items and no action or discussion taken.

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

None.

VI. Discussion and Acceptance of Financial Reports

A. Financial Reports for October & November 2023

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

Finance Director, Maribel Soto, provided financial updates for October and November 2023. Ms. Soto referenced the variance narrative and reviewed the Contracts Outstanding report, stating no concerns.

VII. Discussion of issues to be brought before the Committee.

None.

VIII. Adjourn

Kelli Marshall adjourned the Executive/Finance Committee Meeting at 2:22 p.m.

Duly passed and approved on this 13 day of Feb. 2024



Kelli Marshall, Chair

Attest



Dara Harmon, Exec. Administrative Assistant