

**Workforce Solutions Deep East Texas
Executive/Finance Committee Meeting Minutes
415 S. First Street, Suite 110B, Lufkin, TX 75901
November 14, 2023**

I. CHAIR KELLI MARSHALL CALLED THE EXECUTIVE/FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING TO ORDER AT 1:04 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. MARSHALL CONFIRMED THAT A QUORUM WAS PRESENT:

Members Present: Robert Fitzpatrick, James Gentry, Garvey Jackson, Kelli Marshall, Ellen Mills, John Allen Slocomb

Members Absent: Lisa Balty, Tyane Dietz, Wayne Haglund, Kotosha Jeffery, Gene Lee

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

Visitors: Scott Amey, Kevin Bradford, LaTreaser Cartwright

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 – September 19, 2023

Motion: Robert Fitzgerald made the motion to approve the minutes as presented.

Second: Garvey Jackson

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

IV. Information and Briefing Items

A. SNAP Embargo Monitoring Report

Mr. Durand explained that The Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) conducted a review of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) during the March 2023 annual monitoring. The review period was December 2021 through December 2022 and included tests of transactions and ensuring fiscal and program controls are effectively managed. The review indicated the fiscal and program systems for the SNAP program are effectively managed.

B. Texas Workforce Commission FY'22 Audit

The Texas Workforce Commission conducted a review of the Board's audit report for fiscal year ending September 30, 2022. The review noted no issues and closed the audit file.

C. Tri-Agency Regional Convener Grant Report

The Tri-Agency Regional Convener Team of Jeff Eichman and Josh Fleming gave an update on the current activities of the grant. Approximately 20 leaders including secondary and post-secondary education, education service centers, economic development, and employers are meeting and collaborate to assist with the implementation of deliverables for the Jobs for the Future (JFF) and Tri-Agency program. High demand industries were selected (Manufacturing, Health Care, Construction, Transportation and IT) and under each of those industries, there are specific occupations that they are focused on. Mr. Eichman and Mr. Fleming are working on Asset and Gap Analysis Report, which is to be completed by the end of January 2024 to create a plan to help create a path into the workforce. Mr. Fleming also explained they created a name for the cross-sector pathways leadership team called Student Pathways for Economic Advancement in the Region (SPEAR) and that there will be a \$1,000 stipend for the school's Information Technology or Audio Visual department to the team that creates a new logo for SPEAR. Mr. Durand mentioned that Jeff and Josh are doing a great job and have contacted 47 of the 53 ISDs in the region gathering information of CTE programs and how they align with industry needs. Mr. Fleming also noted that they are meeting with local employers and gathering real-time data to bring back to the team.

V. Discussion and Possible Action

A. Action Item 23-22 Child Care Quality Implementation and Expenditure Plan

Also known as CCQ, this funding is used to help Texas Rising Star (TRS) Centers become a qualified center or to raise their TRS level. All child care centers that have an agreement with Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) must have TRS certification or working toward it by September of 2024. The commission increased the board's allocation for quality from 2% to 4% of a Board's Child Care and Development Fund allocation. For 2024, 4% CCQ is \$700,348 which has been built into this year's budget. Debb Homman and the child care staff have been working on this plan identifying ways to utilize the funding to assist the child care centers in improving their quality care. Those Quality Activities are:

Training and Professional Development – this includes professional development, Annual TRS Banquet, statewide conferences, and CDA classes; Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS) – this includes a family engagement event, incentives, signage, classroom educational materials and curriculum training; Infant and Toddler Quality Initiatives – which includes classroom educational material required by TRS; Supporting Health and Safety – includes CPR classes, AEDs and age-appropriate nap cots/cribs; Evaluating Quality – includes a wearable device for language assessment;

and Shared Services – including desk scanners to cut down on fraud.

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

Second: Ellen Mills

In Favor: All

Oppose: None

Abstain: None

Motion: Passes

B. Action Item 23-23 Language Access Plan

Mr. Durand stated the Board's EO Officer, Lauren Phipps, developed the Board's Language Access Plan to assist in serving Limited English Proficient (LEP) customers. To ensure equal and meaningful access to individuals who are LEP, the Board has developed a Language Access Plan in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, and its implementing regulations as set forth in 29 CFR Part 31 and Section 188 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and its implementing regulations as set forth in 29 CFR Part 38. This plan is to assess current other-than-English language capabilities, identify languages that are likely to be encountered in the Deep East Region, determine the language needs of LEP customers, provide best practices and strategies in service to maximize efforts in outreaching LEP persons, provide equal and meaningful access for benefits, information and services, a plan for staff training and monitoring to ensure equal access. Spanish and Chinese are the predominant languages in our region, but there are many dialects of Spanish. The Board has procured TranslateLive ILA Pro tablets. These tablets allow for real-time, natural back-and-forth communication with customers who speak a language other than English. Two sets of tablets were purchased and are being utilized by staff at the Angelina and Shelby County Centers. If this is successful, we can purchase additional units.

Ms. Dietz is anxious to hear how successful this is and how we can use in the future. Ms. Marshall asked if this had been considered for the budget, and Ms. Soto-Mendoza stated it had.

Motion: Ellen Mills made the motion to accept the Language Access Plan as presented.

Second: Robert Fitzpatrick

In Favor: All

Oppose: None

Abstain: None

Motion: Passes

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

None

VI. Discussion and Acceptance of Financial Reports

A. Financial Reports for August & September 2023

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

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 23 day of January 2024

Kelli Marshall
Kelli Marshall, Chair

Attest

Dara Harmon
Dara Harmon, Exec. Administrative Assistant