

Workforce Solutions - Deep East Texas
415 S. First Street, Suite 110B
Lufkin, TX 75901
Business Services Committee Meeting Minutes
September 10, 2021

I. CHAIR TYANE DIETZ CALLED THE BUSINESS SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING TO ORDER AT 3:10 P.M.

CHAIR TYANE DIETZ 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 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.

AFTER THE ROLL CALL, MS. DIETZ CONFIRMED THAT A QUORUM WAS PRESENT:

Members Present: Lisa Balty, Tyane Dietz, Tim Ditoro, Staci Hodges, Eddie Hopkins, Anita Humphreys, Quincy Martindale

Members Absent: TJ Colwell, Wayne Haglund, Karen Hatton, Laurie King, Rich Scott

Board Staff Present: Mark Durand, Karen Stubblefield, Debb Homman, James Parry

Visitors: Billy Reddick, Paul Dunn, Monica Peters-Clark, Shakia Roberts

CHAIR TYANE DIETZ REMINDED THE COMMITTEE MEMBERS OF THE CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATION.

Chair Tyane Dietz 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:

None

II. Public Comments

None

III. Discussion/Action: Approval of Minutes – June 8, 2021

Motion: Eddie Hopkins made the motion to approve the minutes as presented.

Second: Lisa Balty

In Favor: All

Oppose: None

Abstain: None

Motion: Passes

IV. Information and Briefing Items

A. IT Registered Apprenticeship Expansion Grant

Mark Durand mentioned that Workforce Solutions Deep East Texas has been awarded its first IT Registered Apprenticeship Expansion Grant, in the amount of \$200,000, and is partnering with Legacy Institute for Financial Education (LIFE). During this eighteen (18) month grant, the goal is to work with fifty (50) apprentices to build IT partnerships with other organizations and businesses. This program will assist employers throughout the region in filling IT positions within their organizations. The grant will cover training, curriculum and the apprentice navigator that will work with the employers and also offset wages for the employers.

V. Discussion and Possible Action

A. Action Item 21-22 Request to Submit Application for RFA Teacher Externship

Karen Stubblefield said the Texas Workforce Commission issued a Request for Application (RFA) on Thursday, August 26, 2021, announcing the RFA 32022-00028 Externships for Teachers program to Local Workforce Development Boards to outreach and collaborate with Texas ISDs and Employers to provide Externships for Teachers. Ms. Stubblefield mentioned the success of the first Teacher Externship that was held June 14-18, 2021. Among the positive outcomes from the experiences were: skill-specific lessons for the classroom, job opportunities for graduating students, new clinical experience opportunities, and plans for student tours. Teachers also heard employers emphasize the need for soft skills such as communication, empathy, attendance, professional behavior, listening, making eye contact, and problem-solving. Mark Durand stated the goal for this Teacher Externship is to place 30 teachers (priority placement for CTE teachers) with area businesses in high-demand occupations with a Grant Application Request not to exceed \$60,000.

Motion: Eddie Hopkins made the motion to approve the request to submit application for RFA Teacher Externship as presented.

Second: Quincy Martindale

In Favor: All

Oppose: None

Abstain: None

Motion: Passes

B. Action Item 21-23 Work Experience and Work Activity Policy

Mark Durand requested approval of the changes in the Work Experience and Work Activity Policy regarding the expansion of the definition of eligible youth work experience applicants as defined by The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) to include all unemployed youth. This policy was updated by removing primarily displaced homemakers (page 1), removing the language that limited its participants to those who have never worked or have less than six (6) months of consecutive work experience in the last two (2) years (pages 1 and 2), and replacing Job Service Matching System (JSMS) with TWIST and Work in Texas systems (page 7). Mr. Durand stated that the workforce contractor has updated their procedures to match these policy changes.

Motion: Anita Humphreys made the motion to approve the Work Experience and Work Activity Policy as presented.

Second: Quincy Martindale

In Favor: All

Oppose: None

Abstain: None

Motion: Passes

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

None

VI. Reports

A. Business Services Initiatives

B. Workforce Center Update

Billy Reddick discussed that Workforce Solutions Deep East Texas is not meeting one of the four goals. The measure not being met is the percent of employers in WDA utilizing Workforce assistance. Mr. Reddick also discussed the Number of Recruiting Events Held report and the increase in employers and job seekers that attended in Quarter 3 compared to Quarter 2. Twenty (20) hires were reported during this Quarter compared to the nine (9) hires in Quarter 2. Eddie Hopkins asked board members if the decreasing need for Licensed Vocational Nurses (LVN) in hospital settings, where the preference is Registered Nurses (RN), is also applicable to other businesses within the healthcare industry. Quincy Martindale and Anita Humphreys both discussed that businesses, such as home health and health clinics, have a continued need for LVNs.

VII. Take Up Other Action, As Needed

The Board Members discussed the unemployment rates and ways to increase the number of job seekers searching for employment. Ideas were shared on how to become more active in the community and expand the outreach to youth. Billy Reddick stated that staff members, including the Outreach and Eligibility Team, will be attending numerous community events, and employers will be invited and encouraged to attend these events. The staff will share information obtained from these events with employers that are unable to attend. Tyane Dietz said that she would like to see more involvement with the schools. Mark Durand briefly discussed the actions being taken by Workforce Career and Education Outreach Specialist, James Parry, to accomplish interaction with the schools, particularly the high schools. Ms. Dietz mentioned the need for an ongoing list of certifications that employers value so that these certifications can be implemented in training of job-seekers and employees wishing to build their credentials. Tim Ditoro said that Lockheed Martin and Angelina College are in discussions to partner on training for Lockheed Martin's apprentices and employees. A grant opportunity may be required for Angelina College to install the equipment necessary to train participants for positions with Lockheed Martin. Although Lockheed Martin implements a third party for hiring, it may be possible to partner with the third party for training of new-hires. Mark Durand explained that the workforce staff will work with the third party entity in referring possible candidates to Lockheed Martin. Monica Peters-Clark noted that 14 employers have registered to participate in the upcoming Job Fair in Nacogdoches. Billy Reddick said he is working to put into place Business Services Advisory Meetings beginning in October 2021 regarding Employer Focus Groups and Industry Focus Groups.

VIII. Adjourn

Tyane Dietz adjourned the Business Services Committee Meeting at 4:19 p.m.

Duly passed and approved on this 8th day of November 2021



Tyane Dietz, Chair

Attest



Lauren Phipps, Executive Assistant