

**Workforce Solutions Deep East Texas
Board Meeting Minutes
415 S. First Street, Suite 110B
Lufkin, TX 75901
November 9, 2021**

I. CHAIR WAYNE HAGLUND CALLED THE BOARD MEETING TO ORDER AT 2:30 P.M.

MR. HAGLUND 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. HE 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, WAYNE HAGLUND, WAS PHYSICALLY PRESENT.

AFTER THE ROLL CALL, MR. HAGLUND CONFIRMED THAT A QUORUM WAS PRESENT:

Members Present: Joe Clyde Adams, Lisa Balty, Rebekah Burkhalter, TJ Colwell, Tyane Dietz, Tim Ditoro, Gregg Durham, Robert Fitzpatrick, Phyllis Grandgeorge, Wayne Haglund, Ethan Herr, Staci Hodges, Eddie Hopkins, Anita Humphreys, Malcolm Ifoezeh, Kotosha Jeffery, Gene Lee, Kelli Marshall, Ellen Mills, Randall Roberts, Rich Scott

Members Absent: James Gentry, Karen Hatton, Garvey Jackson, Laurie King, Quincy Martindale, Marisa Phillips, Jessica Rogers, John Allen Slocomb, John White

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

Visitors: LaTreaser Cartwright, Paul Dunn, Michelle Kennedy, Billy Reddick, Christina Ward

WAYNE HAGLUND REMINDED THE BOARD MEMBERS OF THE CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATION.

Wayne Haglund 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:

Mark Durand introduced Lauren Phipps, who joined the Board staff in September as the Planning and Policy Specialist.

II. Public Comments

None

III. Discussion/Action: Approval of Minutes – September 14, 2021

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

Second: Ellen Mills

In Favor: All

Oppose: None
Abstain: None
Motion: Passes

IV. Information Items

A. Appointment of Board Officer's Nominating Committee

Mark Durand stated the Board appoints the Board Officers every two years. Mr. Haglund will appoint a nominating committee for the three positions of Board Chair, Vice Chair, and Secretary. Currently, Mr. Haglund is the Board Chair, Kelli Marshall is the Vice Chair, and Kotosha Jeffery is the Secretary. Mr. Haglund and Mr. Durand reviewed the by-laws and Officers can serve a second consecutive term, if selected by the nominating committee. The election of officers will be held at the first Board meeting in 2022.

V. Board Members Comments on Activity in their Respective Areas

Mark Durand mentioned Eddie Hopkins, as an Economic Developer, is opening a few new locations in Jasper, Texas. The Nacogdoches Chamber President, Wayne Mitchell, reached out to Workforce Solutions Deep East Texas during a Stakeholders Meeting to talk about businesses in Nacogdoches.

VI. Executive Director's Report

A. Contracts/Agreements

B. Performance

C. Contacts and Coordination Efforts

D. Rules and Legislation Update

E. Funding

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

Mark Durand discussed the partnership with Junior Achievement and the work the Executive Director of Junior Achievement, Ms. Staci Hodges, and others are doing to expand the JA Inspire Event to reach approximately 6,000 students throughout the region. Workforce Solutions Deep East Texas (WSDet) and Workforce Solutions East Texas have each made a financial contribution of \$4,000 to assist with the virtual platform of the JA Inspire Event. Ms. Hodges added that Junior Achievement has gained approval to extend services outside of their area, to include Polk and Trinity counties. Mr. Durand reported that currently ten (10) Independent School Districts have entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with WSDet to participate in the Workforce Career Education Outreach Program. James Parry, the Workforce Career Education Outreach Specialist, is working closely with these ISDs, providing presentations on career readiness, target occupation lists, high demand occupations, and soft skills. MOUs have been completed with rural computer kiosk host sites. As of August 2021, year-to-date child care enrollment was 100.56%, which is within the meeting performance target of 95-105%. The average per day enrollment is 1964, with a target goal of 1960. As of October 2021, there are forty (40) Texas Rising Star (TRS) Providers, with 1231 children enrolled in TRS centers. 53% of Deep East Texas child care providers are TRS. Mr. Durand noted the TWC is planning to implement a requirement that all child care providers be TRS. Workforce continues to have three missed measures reflected in the Monthly Performance Measures (MPR) report: (1) Dislocated Worker Employed Quarter 2; (2) C&T Participants Employed/Enrolled Quarter 2 Post-Exit; and (3) Dislocated Worker Credential Rate. Dynamic Workforce Solutions is working to improve efforts for these measures. Mr. Durand reported on the success of the Texas Forest Country Annual Economic Summit. TWC approved 2.45 billion one-time funds, to be awarded in January 2022, to aid child care providers. House and Senate are beginning negotiations on a final bill that includes WIOA State Grants and Registered Apprenticeships funding. Due to redistricting of House, Representative Trent Ashby will be serving Angelina, Houston, San Augustine, Trinity, Polk, and Tyler Counties; Representative Clardy will serve Nacogdoches, Shelby, Sabine, and Newton Counties; and Representative Phelan will server Jasper County. Mr. Durand noted the WIOA guideline that came out stating that if a county has over 25% poverty rate, the youth qualifies for WIOA services. None of the twelve counties had a 25% or higher poverty rate, but over twenty (20) cities did meet the poverty rate guideline so focus is being directed to those areas in hopes of improving youth enrollment. Unemployment rate is down from 6.8% in August 2021 to 6.3% in September 2021. The unemployment rate for September 2020 was 8.5%. Mr. Durand provided a log reflecting Board Staff training.

VII. Committee Reports

A. Operations Committee Reports

1. Committee Activity

2. Discussion/Possible Action

a. Action Item 21-26 TWC Monitoring Reports 21.17.0001

Mark Durand discussed TWC's annual monitoring review that was conducted March 1-5, 2021. TWC reviewed Child Care Services, CHOICES, Employment Services, Trade Adjustment Assistance and Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act programs administered by the Board from December 1, 2019 through November 30, 2020. TWC identified no findings, areas of concern or observations listed on the fiscal and program report or the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) reports. Mark Durand pointed out that TWC did note two areas that need improvement: (1) PIRTS case was left open longer than the allowed time frame without journal notes. Although the Board left the case open during recoupment process for tracking purposes, TWC advised that cases should be closed after 90 days in all circumstances. Board closed the case and will ensure all future cases are closed within 90 days of investigation. (2) TWIST access was not terminated immediately upon termination of staff. Board has initiated process with contractors to eliminate this issue.

Motion: The Operations Committee voted and recommended acceptance of the TWC Monitoring Reports 21.17.0001 as presented.

Second: Mr. Haglund stated no second was needed on the motion from the committee.

In Favor: All

Oppose: None

Abstain: None

Motion: Passes

B. Business Services Committee

1. Committee Activity

2. Discussion/Possible Action

a. Action Item 21-27 Rapid Response Policy

Tyane Dietz said TWC provides updated language for various policies. WSDet policies must align with TWC's updated policies. Ms. Dietz reviewed the purpose of this policy.

Motion: The Business Services Committee recommended for approval of the Rapid Response Policy as presented.

Second: Mr. Haglund stated no second was needed on the motion from the committee.

In Favor: All

Oppose: None

Abstain: None

Motion: Passes

C. Executive/Finance Committee

1. Committee Activity

2. Discussion/Possible Action

a. Action Item 21-28 Workforce Board Office Lease

Mark Durand stated the Board staff released a Request for Proposal (RFP) soliciting proposals for lease space for the Workforce Board Office, as the current lease expires November 30, 2021. The Board received one (1) proposal from SBC Holdings, LLC, which is the current landlord. The proposal was to continue to occupy the current space and expand into the vacated space previously occupied by the Child Care Services staff. This proposal will eliminate excessive relocation expenses and will only require minor renovations. These renovations will be at no cost to the Board. The proposal includes a lease term of ten (10) years for \$0.95 per square foot, which includes utilities, custodial services, restroom supplies, landscaping, and pest control. Mr. Durand noted that SBC Holdings met the minimum required score of 70, with an average score of 92; and there have been no previous issues with the landlord.

Motion: The Executive/Finance Committee recommended for approval of the Workforce Board Office Lease as presented.
Second: Mr. Haglund stated no second was needed on the motion from the committee.
In Favor: All
Oppose: None
Abstain: None
Motion: Passes

b. Action Item 21-29 Houston County Workforce Center Lease

Mark Durand said the Board entered into an Interlocal Agreement with the Crockett Economic Development Corporation (landlord) on January 1, 2019, for a three (3) year lease agreement of the Houston County Workforce Center. In lieu of rent, Workforce Solutions Deep East Texas reimburses the landlord pro-rated share of the cost of electric, water, sewer, gas, custodial services and grounds maintenance based on the ratio of square footage of workforce center space to the total square footage of the building. The FY'2021 total cost for services to the Crockett EDC for the Houston County Workforce Center equaled \$7,426.00 – much cheaper than procuring a new rental location and the current location meets the needs of the workforce center.

Motion: The Executive/Finance Committee recommended for approval of the Houston County Workforce Center Lease as presented.
Second: Mr. Haglund stated no second was needed on the motion from the committee.
In Favor: All
Oppose: None
Abstain: Tim Ditoro, Randy Roberts, Wayne Haglund
Motion: Passes

Tim Ditoro, Randy Roberts, and Wayne Haglund declared a conflict of interest.

c. Action Item 21-30 Selection of Independent Auditing Services

Mark Durand reviewed the three proposals the Board received in response to a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) released by the Board soliciting responses from qualified and experienced public accounting firms to perform fiscal year audit reviews of federal and state grants and all other programs administered by the Board. Following the review of the proposals with the Executive/Finance Committee, the Committee recommended to select Alexander, Lankford & Hiers, Inc. based on the accounting firm's experience and knowledge as the current auditor.

Motion: The Executive/Finance Committee recommended to select Alexander, Lankford & Hiers, Inc. for Independent Auditing Services, and if a satisfactory agreement is unable to be negotiated, this matter will come back before the Board in a separate action.
Second: Mr. Haglund stated no second was needed on the motion from the committee.
In Favor: All
Oppose: None
Abstain: None
Motion: Passes

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

None

4. Discussion and Acceptance of Financial Reports

a. Financial Reports for August and September 2021

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

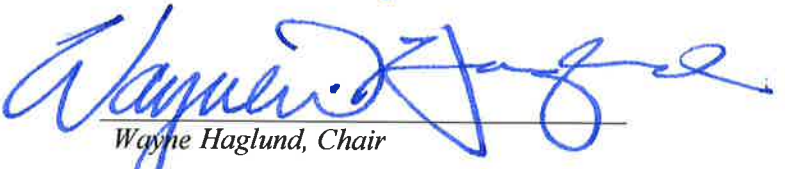
Misty Woodard provided financial updates for the months of August and September 2021. She

referenced the variance narrative and reviewed the contracts outstanding. On a motion by Tyane Dietz, seconded by Gregg Durham, the Board accepted the financial reports as presented.

VIII. Adjourn

Wayne Haglund adjourned the meeting at 3:18 p.m.

Duly passed and approved on this 8th day of FEBRUARY 2022


Wayne Haglund, Chair

Attest


Lauren Phipps, Planning and Policy Specialist