

**Workforce Solutions Deep East Texas
Board Meeting Minutes
415 S. First Street, Suite 110B
Lufkin, TX 75901
May 10, 2022**

I. TYANE DIETZ CALLED THE BOARD MEETING TO ORDER AT 2:35 P.M.

MS. 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 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, TYANE DIETZ, WAS PHYSICALLY PRESENT.

AFTER THE ROLL CALL, CHAIR KELLI MARSHALL CONFIRMED THAT A QUORUM WAS PRESENT:

Members Present: Joe Clyde Adams, Lisa Balty, Rebekah Burkhalter, TJ Colwell, Tyane Dietz, Tim Ditoro, Robert Fitzpatrick, Staci Hodges, Eddie Hopkins, Malcolm Ifoezeh, Garvey Jackson, Kotosha Jeffery, Gene Lee, Kelli Marshall, Quincy Martindale, Marisa Phillips, Randall Roberts, Jessica Rogers, Rich Scott, John Allen Slocomb, John White

Members Absent: James Gentry, Phyllis Grandgeorge, Wayne Haglund, Ethan Herr, Anita Humphreys, Laurie King, Matthew Lowery, Ellen Mills

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

Visitors: Jessica Blair, LaTreaser Cartwright, Rhonda Cartwright, Rae Champagne, Paul Dunn, Michelle Kennedy, Pam King, Shakia Roberts, Christina Ward

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

Kelli Marshall 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:

None

II. Public Comments

None

III. Discussion/Action: Approval of Minutes – April 12, 2022

Motion: Quincy Martindale made the motion to approve the minutes as presented.

Second: Jessica Rogers

In Favor: All

Oppose: None

Abstain: None
Motion: Passes

IV. Information Item

A. JET Grant Update

Mark Durand and Karen Stubblefield provided updates regarding the Job & Education for Texans (JET) Grant. Mr. Durand stated two responses were submitted by the April 28, 2022 deadline regarding Request for Application (RFA) 32022-00045 for public junior colleges, public technical institutes, and public state colleges. Angelina College submitted a response regarding the Electromechanical Technology Associate of Applied Science and Level 1 Certificate Program. Lamar State College Port Arthur submitted a response regarding the Rural Licensed Vocational Nursing Program in partnership with Deep East Texas College and Career Academy. Ms. Stubblefield noted the upcoming deadline of June 9, 2022 for Texas independent school districts, open-enrollment charter schools and Windham School District to submit responses to RFA 32022-00194. Board staff have been communicating with and encouraging ISDs to submit applications. Ms. Stubblefield reported 10 ISDs to date are working on their applications.

V. Board Members Comments on Activity in their Respective Areas

Ms. Dietz asked contractor staff if efforts have been made to reach out to individuals with Gattefossé, a company that is setting up a plant in Lufkin, to see what the needs are of this company. Ms. LaTreasar Cartwright responded that Workforce staff have not connected with the company yet, but they will. Mr. Durand mentioned that Woodville ISD voters approved a multi-million dollar bond for renovation and construction of school facilities.

VI. Executive Director's Report

A. Contracts/Agreements

Memorandums of Understanding are being entered into with employers and school districts participating in the upcoming Teacher Externship program. Mr. Durand noted of the 44 teacher nominations, 28 teachers applied for the externship. The contract with Engage by Cell has been renewed, allowing workforce and child care contractor staff to utilize text messaging to communicate with customers. A response was submitted by the Board for the TWC Construction Building Apprenticeship RFA.

B. Performance

Child Care:

Mr. Durand reported that as of April 30, 2022, child care enrollment was at 1,975 children enrolled with target number of 1,960. The Board and Child Care Contractor are preparing for the additional funding of \$816,601 for Child Care Formula (low income) enrollments, which will increase the target goal of children served to 2,291. Mr. Durand also noted the Annual TRS Banquet has been scheduled for August 27, 2022 at the Pitser Garrison Center.

Workforce:

The Board and Workforce Contractor had the first monthly call with the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) to discuss performance progress in relation to the CHOICES Technical Assistance Plan (TAP) that was put in place. The performance measure continues to move upward. At the direction of Mr. Durand, a Transportation Sub-Committee was formed, which consists of Board, Child Care, and Workforce staff. This Committee will research available transportation resources in Deep East Texas and develop an informational document that can be shared with staff and customers.

C. Contacts and Coordination Efforts

Mr. Durand presented labor market information to the Nacogdoches Chamber of Commerce. Mr. Durand attended several events, including the Nacogdoches Chamber of Commerce Eggs and Issues Breakfast where Judge Greg Sowell presented the State of the County, the Hudson ISD CTE Advisory Committee meeting, and the Ribbon Cutting for the Angelina College and Lockheed Martin education partnership. Ms. Karen Stubblefield participated with Crockett in the recruitment of a new employer. Ms. Lauren Phipps conducted Equal Opportunity (EO) training for contractor staff. Mr. Durand announced he was elected for a third term on the Jasper ISD School Board.

D. Rules and Legislation Update

Mr. Durand reported on the proposed Wagner-Peyser Rule changes, noting the proposed change would require states to utilize State Merit staff when providing Wagner-Peyser Employment Services. Mr. Durand

also reported the Texas State Board of Education voted in favor of requiring a new teacher certification exam, which would replace multiple choice questions with an essay and a sample lesson plan, in an effort to better prepare new teachers and try to retain them in the teaching/education profession. The new exam must still be approved before it is officially adopted for new Texas teachers, and is expected to be considered in June 2022.

E. Funding

The Board did not receive additional funding during this reporting period.

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

Mr. Durand reported the unemployment rate for March 2022 was 5%, which is down from the 6.2% unemployment rate in February 2022 and the 7.6% unemployment rate a year earlier, in March 2021. Mr. Durand mentioned the disparities in local, state and national average weekly wages for Quarter 3 of 2021. The Deep East Texas weekly wage was \$864; a significant difference from the Texas average weekly wage of \$1,228 and the U.S. average weekly wage of \$1,251.

VII. Committee Reports

A. Business Services Committee

1. Committee Activity

2. Discussion/Possible Action

a. Action Item 22-13 Employer of the Year Nominees

Ms. Tyane Dietz reviewed the Business Services Committee's recommendations for Employer of the Year nominations, as follows: Tyson Foods nominated for Larger Employer of the Year, Turner Fabrications nominated for Small Employer of the Year, Provalus nominated for Veteran-Friendly Employer of the Year, and Advance'd Temporaries Staffing Agency nominated for HireAbility Employer of the Year. Ms. Dietz stated the Business Services Committee ran out of time to select a nominee for Local Employer of Excellence, but the Committee will reconvene later and present their nomination at the next meeting.

Motion: The Business Services Committee recommended for approval of the Employer of the Year nominees.

Second: Gene Lee

In Favor: All

Oppose: None

Abstain: None

Motion: Passes

B. Executive/Finance Committee

1. Committee Activity

2. Discussion/Possible Action

a. Action Item 22-12 Public Outreach Policy

Ms. Kelli Marshall stated the Public Outreach Policy came before the Executive/Finance Committee previously but the Committee Members had questions and concerns surrounding some of the verbiage within the policy. Revisions have since been made to the Public Outreach Policy which satisfy the Committee Members' concerns.

Motion: The Executive/Finance Committee recommended for approval of the Public Outreach Policy as presented.

Second: Joe Clyde Adams

In Favor: All

Oppose: None

Abstain: None

Motion: Passes

b. Action Item 22-14 Closed Session – Deliberation Regarding Executive Director Salary and Compensation. Gov't Code Section 551.074

Ms. Kelli Marshall stated that during the Closed Session of the Executive/Finance Committee meeting, the Committee agreed to defer discussion of the Executive Director's compensation and salary until after the original 90-day review period to allow time for the Executive Director to submit

documentation to the Board members. Ms. Marshall noted 60 days remain of the 90-day review period.

Motion: The Executive/Finance Committee recommended to defer discussion of the Executive Director's salary and compensation until the end of the original 90-day review period.
Second: Quincy Martindale
In Favor: All
Oppose: None
Abstain: None
Motion: Passes

The Board did not enter into closed session regarding Action Item 22-14.

3. Open Session Action, if any, as a result of Closed Session
None

4. Discussion and Acceptance of Financial Reports

a. Financial Reports for March 2022

1. Statement of Financial Position

2. Budget vs. Actual

3. Grant Report

Misty Woodard provided financial updates for the month of March 2022. Ms. Woodard referenced the variance narrative and reviewed the contracts outstanding. Ms. Woodard noted the Board is under budget for staff salary and wages because there are currently 15 employed Board staff member, and the Board budgeted for 16 staff members. Ms. Woodard explained the \$68,000 utilized for gift cards from the Child Care Quality grant funds, stating \$300 gift cards are being issued to Child Care Services provider employees that have been employed since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020 and are still employed with that childcare provider. Providers have difficulty hiring and retaining staff, so the gift cards are a way of recognizing and incentivizing the provider staff members who maintained employment throughout the uncertainty of the pandemic. Ms. Marisa Phillips stated the timing of issuing the gift cards is well done as it aligns with Teacher Appreciation Week. On a motion by the Executive/Finance Committee and seconded by Eddie Hopkins, the Board accepted the financial reports.

VIII. Adjourn

Kelli Marshall adjourned the meeting at 3:22 p.m.

Duly passed and approved on this 19th day of July 2022

Kelli Marshall
Kelli Marshall, Chair

Attest

Lauren Phipps
Lauren Phipps, Planning and Policy Specialist