

Workforce Solutions - Deep East Texas
415 S. First Street, Suite 110B
Lufkin, TX 75901
Operations Committee Minutes
October 6, 2022

I. CHAIR ROBERT FITZPATRICK CALLED THE OPERATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING TO ORDER AT 2:05 P.M.

MR. FITZPATRICK 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. PRESIDING OFFICER, ROBERT FITZPATRICK, WAS PHYSICALLY PRESENT.

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

Members Present: Joe Clyde Adams, Rebekah Burkhalter, Robert Fitzpatrick, Ethan Herr, Malcolm Ifoezeh, Randall Roberts

Members Absent: Phyllis Grandgeorge, Marisa Phillips, Jessica Rogers, John White

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

Visitors: Scott Amey, Jessica Blair, Kevin Bradford, LaTreaser Cartwright, Rhonda Cartwright, Michelle Kennedy, Monica Peters-Clark, Shakia Roberts

CHAIR ROBERT FITZPATRICK REMINDED THE COMMITTEE MEMBERS OF THE CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATION.

Chair Robert Fitzpatrick asked that all members sign a conflict of interest declaration regardless of whether they have a conflict and send it to the Board staff for recordkeeping.

WELCOME OF GUESTS:

None

II. Public Comments

None

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

Motion: Ethan Herr made the motion to approve the minutes as presented.

Second: Joe Clyde Adams

In Favor: All

Oppose: None
Abstain: None
Motion: Passes

IV. Information Items

A. TAA File Review for 3rd Quarter

The Board's Workforce Services Coordinator, Sarah Milligan, reported on the Quarter 3 review of Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) files conducted by the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC). TWC requested two (2) TAA files from the Board for Quarter 2 of 2022. On September 6, 2022, TWC issued the results of the two (2) file reviews to the Board. In TWC's review of Reemployment Plan (REP), TWC noted the following areas of concern, and Ms. Milligan reported the resulting actions taken by staff: (1) REP must be completely filled out, and staff must adequately justify all TAA approval criteria - staff provided documentation for the three (3) specific job leads as required to meet the TAA approval criteria; (2) the comprehensive assessment must be clearly outlined on the REP - staff amended the REP to include the assessment type; and (3) staff must properly document student enrollment on the REP and in The Workforce Information System of Texas (TWIST) counselor notes - staff provided the student enrollment documents and updated TWIST counselor notes to indicate full/part-time for the 2019 fall semester. Due to the actions taken by staff, all these issues have been resolved. In TWC's review of TWIST, TWC noted the following areas of concern, and Ms. Milligan reported the resulting actions taken by staff: (1) remedial weeks must be properly documented - the total number of remedial/prerequisite weeks documented on the REP was 55, but the correct number was 38 which is documented in TWIST case notes; (2) service 68 employability should be entered and properly documented after breaks in training - contractor staff will ensure services are provided after breaks in training of 90 days or more; and (3) staff must document a 30-day customer contact in TWIST on time - contractor staff ensure a 30-day customer contact is entered timely. Due to these actions taken by staff, all these issues have been resolved, as well. TWC response to TAA overall file compliance rate is 90.5%, which meets the state's requirement of 90% or above. The analysis reflects that staff is operating with good practices for managing cases and providing services to TAA customers. No response was needed to TWC.

V. Discussion/Possible Action

A. Action Item 22-27 Child Care Policy Updates

TWC issued revised Chapter 809 rules, which took effect on October 3, 2022. The Board is required to update its policies to align with the rules issued by TWC. As a result, many updates were made to the Board's Child Care Policy. Child Care Coordinator, Debb Homman, reviewed all changes made to the policy, including changes to job search requirements, minimum activity requirements for parents, updating language regarding attendance reporting, strengthening child care provider payment requirements to align with industry practice of prospective payments, removing the language allowing providers to charge parents above the parent share of cost, and making technical changes and clarifications. Notable changes to the policy include the requirement for all providers contracted with Child Care Services (CCS) to be a Texas Rising Star provider (or be working toward becoming a Texas Rising Star provider), the removal of postgraduate enrollment in activity hours for eligibility, and the replacement of the term "postsecondary" with "undergraduate", the inclusion of the 60-month time limit for parents to participate in CCS while enrolled full-time in an undergraduate degree program, and the inability of CCS-contracted providers to charge parents above the parent share of cost. Ms. Homman reiterated the requirement of the Board to follow and adopt the rules and regulations set forth by TWC. Mr. Durand mentioned the revised policy had been sent to Board Member, Marisa Phillips, for review, and Ms. Phillips had no questions or concerns regarding the changes.

Motion: Joe Clyde Adams made the motion to accept the Child Care Policy as presented.
Second: Ethan Herr
In Favor: All
Oppose: None
Abstain: None
Motion: Passes

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

None

VI. Board Reports

A. Workforce Center Report

Ms. LaTreasor Cartwright, Project Director, started the report by sharing success stories of helping customers across the Deep East Texas region find meaningful employment. Jessica Blair reported on the rural services outreach year end numbers, with 217 total job seekers served and 216 total services issued. Ms. Blair stated Workforce staff are available in all counties, including counties without Workforce Centers, by staff visiting libraries, probation offices, and various other public locations. Ms. Blair reviewed the number of registrations and the number of registrants in attendance for the 30-minute webinars and in-house workshops that were offered monthly for FY 2022. The 30-minute webinars produced a year-to-date (YTD) total of 353 registrations, of which 175 registrants actually attended. The in-house workshops produced a year-to-date total of 406 registrations, of which 280 registrants attended. Ms. Cartwright reviewed year end program performance, noting an increase in performance in all measures for WIOA Adult. Only one measure for Dislocated Worker decreased in performance, but WSDet still met all measures for Dislocated Worker. All performance measures were met for WIOA Youth. Ms. Cartwright was happy to announce WSDet met the CHOICES target goal for end of year following being on a Technical Assistance Plan (TAP). All year end program performance measures were met. Ms. Blair reviewed the Greeter Report for Foot Traffic. Foot Traffic accounts for each visit made by individuals to a workforce center, including multiple visits by one individual. The year-end total of Foot Traffic for all workforce centers in the Deep East Texas region was 24,256. Mr. Durand pointed out the total number of first-time visitors of 759 for the year. Rhonda Cartwright summarized the year-end report regarding the National Dislocated Worker Grant (NDWG) funding WSDet received to assist local counties (Newton County and Shelby County) affected by Hurricane Laura. This provided 65 participants with temporary jobs to assist with clean up, recovery and humanitarian efforts in areas impacted by the disaster. Of those 65 participants, 38 are active and 27 either obtained employment or other workforce-related activities. Eighteen (18) of those participants completed Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) training and obtained certificates. Shakia Roberts reviewed the WIOA year-end enrollment report, with total year-end enrollments for Adult at 85, Dislocated Worker at 42, and Youth at 70, for a year-end total of 197 WIOA enrollments. Ms. Cartwright discussed the strategic initiative for Program Year 2023, with focus on increasing outreach presence in the rural counties.

B. Child Care Services Report

Michelle Kennedy reported on the Child Care Services (CCS) Performance Data, noting the YTD goal for October 2021 – August 2022 was 2,081 enrollments. The average number of children served YTD was 1,993 for 95.77% of target. The new target as of October 2022 is 2,349 average per day. Ms. Kennedy reported 235 children still enrolled in Service Industry Recovery (SIR). SIR ends in March 2023 but a significant number of SIR children are converting to regular CCS low-income enrollment. Ms. Kennedy reported a total of 93 Provider Agreements with 81 agreements in the DET region and 12 agreements outside of the workforce delivery area. Agreements outside of the DET region typically occur due to parents living in DET region but may work in another region. Child Care Coordinator, Debb Homman, provided updates regarding the Texas Rising Star (TRS) program. There are currently 41 TRS providers. Two (2) new centers have upcoming assessments to become TRS centers. Ms. Homman reported that all CCS contracted providers must now become TRS centers. As a result, TRS staff are visiting current contracted providers who have not applied to become TRS to go over the new guidelines. Also, Board staff are conducting meetings with providers to ensure they are informed of all the changes made by TWC.

C. Student HireAbility Report

Mr. Durand reported that the Board's Student HireAbility Navigator, Aubrey Jones, continues to be out in the field, working diligently to bring awareness, information and resources to employers, education systems, and individuals in the Deep East Texas region.

VII. Adjourn

Chair Robert Fitzpatrick adjourned the Operations Committee Meeting at 3:12 p.m.

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


Robert Fitzpatrick, Chair

Attest


Lauren Phipps, Planning and Policy Specialist