

Workforce Solutions Deep East Texas
415 S. First Street, Suite 110B
Lufkin, TX 75901
Business Services Committee Meeting Minutes
December 8, 2022

I. CHAIR TYANE DIETZ CALLED THE BUSINESS SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING TO ORDER AT 2:01 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. PRESIDING OFFICER, TYANE DIETZ, WAS PHYSICALLY PRESENT.

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

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

Members Absent: Wayne Haglund, Anita Humphreys, Laurie King, Matthew Lowery, Rich Scott

Board Staff Present: Mark Durand, Josh Fleming, Anna Holderberg, Debb Homman, Aubrey Jones, Charles Jones, James Parry, Lauren Phipps, Misty Woodard

Visitors: Scott, Amey, Jessica Blair, LaTreaser Cartwright, Rhonda Cartwright, 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:

Mark Durand introduced the newest Board staff member, Anna Holderberg. Ms. Holderberg has filled one of two positions for Child Care Business Specialist.

II. Public Comments
None

III. Discussion/Action: Approval of Minutes – October 14, 2022

Motion: Staci Hodges made the motion to approve the minutes as presented.
Second: Eddie Hopkins
In Favor: All
Oppose: None
Abstain: None
Motion: Passes

IV. Information and Briefing Items

A. Child Care Business Specialist

Mr. Durand introduced Anna Holderberg, and briefly summarized what her role as a Child Care Business Specialist entails. Ms. Holderberg was hired and joined the Board staff in November. The Board continues to search for the second Child Care Business Specialist. The Child Care Business Specialist's overall goal is to increase capacity of child placements by fostering relationships with child care providers and assisting them with business development needs. Ms. Holderberg's orientation process is nearly complete, and she has already begun gathering feedback for the child care provider needs assessment. Ms. Holderberg reported on what she has already accomplished. She has met with two (2) entities interested in building new centers, and she is connecting them with resources as they plan for expansion in their communities in Shelby and San Augustine counties. She was invited to serve on the planning committee for the new child care center at San Augustine ISD. Ms. Holderberg plans to shadow the Child Care Coordinator and Texas Rising Star staff. She will continue to meet and build relationships with the owners/directors over the next months.

B. Workforce Career and Education Outreach Specialists

Workforce Career and Education Outreach Specialist, James Parry, provided updates on the Workforce Career and Education Outreach Specialist Program (WCEOS). The goal of 20 signed Letters of Agreement with Independent School Districts (ISDs) for PY'22-23 has already been met as of November 2022. The WCEOS Program has agreements with at least one ISD in all 12 counties in the Deep East Texas workforce development area. Mr. Parry report 130 career support workshops have been presented to students across the region as of November 30th for the current program year, with 2,571 engagements. Two Virtual Reality (VR) Career Exploration Events have been held; one at the Central High School College/Career Fair and one at the Jasper High School and DETCCA Career Fair, with more events scheduled in the spring. Board Member, Tyane Dietz, asked if the VR headsets provide training to the participants or does it only serve to expose participants to the various occupations. Mr. Parry responded that some of the VR jobs show basic steps for that specific occupation. Ms. Dietz emphasized the need to outreach 7th grade youth, in addition to 8th grade and above. Mr. Parry responded that he and the other Workforce Career and Education Outreach Specialist, Josh Fleming, do meet with some 7th graders. Mr. Parry noted the addition of the second WCEOS, Mr. Fleming, in September 2022, has already resulted in growing awareness of the program, with non-scheduled teachers and faculty requesting the program be offered to their classes. As a result, additional student engagements have been made in four (4) ISDs: Crockett, Diboll, Huntington, and Newton.

C. Panola College/Portacool Skills Development Fund Grant

Portacool is a major employer located in Shelby County. Due to the high demand for coolers, the company is expanding by building a new facility to manufacture the media parts for the coolers and expects employment growth between 20 and 30 percent. Portacool has purchased additional land adjacent to their existing facility and plans to start construction in early spring 2023. Panola College has submitted the Skills Development Fund (SDF) for \$840,882 to train Portacool employees 21,072 hours. The cost per trainee will not exceed \$2,000. The SDF will

be utilized to customize training for each department to improve defects by at least 40%, which in turn will improve profit margins. The SDF will also utilize funding and training to increase management skills of Team Leads. Panola College will build new capacity in customized business transformation courses that will assist Portacool. The courses will upskill the current employees utilizing Panola College courses and SkillUp Deep East Texas (Metrix Learning) courses.

D. P-Tech Grant Partnership Diboll ISD/Angelina College/Workforce Solutions

Diboll ISD is submitting its Pathways in Technology Early College High Schools (P-TECH) Renewal Application, a \$400,000 one-time grant, in partnership with Workforce Solutions Deep East Texas (WSDet), Angelina College and Lockheed Martin. Diboll High school offers P-TECH opportunities in the area of Engineering. This partnership will serve 50 students in the 9th grade who can earn associate degrees in Electronics Technology or Drafting and Design Technology; post-secondary level 1 and level 2 certificates and industry certifications related to electrical technology, drafting and design, welding, robot operator, structural steel, and AutoCAD. Students who graduate from the Diboll High School P-TECH program will enter the workforce with proven, in-demand skill sets, making them top candidates in their chosen industry.

V. Discussion and Possible Action

A. Action Item 22-31 Request to Submit Application for 2023 Teacher Externship

TWC issued a Request for Application (RFA) on November 17, 2022, announcing the RFA 32023-00101 Externships for Teachers program to Local Workforce Development Boards (Boards) to outreach and collaborate with Texas Schools and Employers to provide Externships for Teachers. Boards have until December 27, 2022 to submit a plan to provide Teachers with an Externship that gives them an opportunity to engage in industry-related activities and learn how classroom content is applied in the industry sector. The grant start date is estimated to be April 2023. The second Workforce Solutions Deep East Texas Teacher Externship was successfully held June 13-17, 2022, in response to employers who said there was a disconnect between workplace expectations and the qualifications of individuals entering the workforce. The employers emphasized the need to address the skills gap in manufacturing, health care, automotive, utilities and information technology industries. Twenty-seven CTE teachers from 11 ISDs and 25 businesses participated. In their program evaluations, 100% of teachers and employers said they would recommend the program to their peers. Among the immediate positive outcomes from the experiences were: skill-specific lessons for the classroom, internships, job opportunities, mock interviews, employers speaking at schools, and student tours during the upcoming school year. Teachers also heard employers talk about the need for soft skills such as reliability, accountability, communication, empathy, attendance, professional behavior, listening, decision-making, productivity, and problem-solving. Soft skills, the key to workplace success, were also referred to as employability skills, work-readiness skills and job-readiness skills. The Board's 2021-2024 Strategic Plan emphasizes enhancing the alignment between education and industry. During this twelve-month grant, the goal is to place 30 teachers with area businesses in Demand Industries. The grant application request is not to exceed \$60,000.

Motion: Lisa Balty made the motion to approve the request to submit application for the 2023 Teacher Externship as presented.

Second: Staci Hodges

In Favor: All

Oppose: None

Abstain: None

Motion: Passes

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

None

VI. Reports

A. Business Services Initiatives

Monica Peters-Clark reported on Employer Relationships, and how workforce staff are fostering those relationships to increase employers' utilization of workforce services. Ms. Peters-Clark reviewed the goals and results, starting with the number of new employers in Work in Texas for October and November. A total of 82 new employers were registered in Work in Texas in October and November, with an End of Year (EOY) goal of 400. Job orders totaled 338 for October and 334 for November. The number of referrals for October were 1,299 and November were 689, with a Quarter to Date (QTD) goal of 4,670. The percent of job orders filled as of the date of this report for October was 3% and 8% for November. Ms. Peters-Clark ran an actual to-date report, and the current numbers reflected 91 jobs filled (14% QTD fill rate). The number of job fairs and recruiting events total 85 QTD, with an EOY goal of 92. From these events held over the course of two months, 95 hires were reported. Ms. Peters-Clark reviewed the various community events that have taken place since October. The Hiring Red, White & You! Statewide Hiring Event resulted in the attendance of 51 employers, 131 job seekers, and 19 veterans. From this event, 39 hires were reported. Workforce staff held regional Hiring Red, White & You! recruiting events at the local workforce centers, which resulted in 7 additional reported hires. Ms. Peters-Clark reported on the success of the Deep East Texas College and Career Academy Youth Career Summit (YCS) which reached 581 students across seven (7) ISDs. Ms. Dietz said it would be great to replicate the YCS with other counties. Mr. Durand responded that YCS events are scheduled in San Jacinto County and Nacogdoches County for the spring semester. Ms. Peters-Clark reported on the number of services provided to employers for October and November. A total of 4,994 services were provided to 2,204 employers for the QTD. These services may include, but not limited to, referrals, outreach, orientation, job fairs, site recruitment, interview rooms, job development, subsidized/unpaid agreements, and labor market information. Shakia Roberts reported on WIOA training completion and placements. The total number of WIOA training participants were 40, which includes carry over from the last program year. Of those 40 participants, 26 are still currently attending training, 12 completed training and 2 did not complete training. Of the 12 participants that completed training, 2 (14%) have been placed in employment. Ms. Roberts explained that several participants recently completed training and are in the process of being placed in employment. Ms. Roberts further explained there is typically one (1) or two (2) months between the date a customer completes training and the date the customer is scheduled to take the test to receive certification, especially those participants enrolled in CDL licensing. Ms. Roberts mentioned that if a customer does not complete training, workforce staff still assist the customer with finding employment. Ms. Roberts provided a list of upcoming graduates, which indicated several participants are graduating in the current month (December 2022) from the LVN program.

VII. Take Up Other Action, As Needed

Ms. Dietz thanked the Board Members, Board staff and contractor staff who attended the 2022 TWC Annual Conference. Ms. Dietz also acknowledged Tim Ditoro and Angelina College (AC) for all the opportunities and successes that have come from the partnership with Workforce Solutions Deep East Texas. AC was recognized at the 2022 TWC Annual Conference, and has set the standard for community colleges across the state. Ms. Dietz then thanked the contractor staff for their efforts in reflecting relevant data from employers and their needs. Contractor staff was asked to follow up with employers in the region and find out what is keeping these employers from expanding and what is giving them "heartburn." Once contractor staff gather this information

and present it to the Board, the Board Members connected with economic development and colleges can strategize on how to address those issues.

VIII. Adjourn

Tyane Dietz adjourned the Business Services Committee Meeting at 3:02 p.m.

Duly passed and approved on this 9th day of March 2023



Tyane Dietz, Chair

Attest



Lauren Phipps, Planning and Policy Specialist