

**Workforce Solutions - Deep East Texas
415 S. First Street, Suite 110B
Lufkin, TX 75901
Operations Committee Minutes
December 8, 2022**

I. CHAIR ROBERT FITZPATRICK CALLED THE OPERATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING TO ORDER AT 10:01 A.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, Phyllis Grandgeorge, Ethan Herr, Marisa Phillips, Jessica Rogers

Members Absent: Malcolm Ifoezeh, Randall Roberts, John White

Board Staff Present: Mark Durand, Anna Holderberg, Debb Homman, Aubrey Jones, Charles Jones, 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:

Mark Durand introduced the Board's newest staff member, Anna Holderberg, who was hired as a Child Care Business Specialist.

II. Public Comments

None

III. Discussion/Action: Approval of Minutes – October 6, 2022

Motion: Jessica Rogers made the motion to approve the minutes as presented.

Second: Ethan Herr

In Favor: All
Oppose: None
Abstain: None
Motion: Passes

IV. Information Items

A. SNAP E&T Participants Granted “Good Cause”

The Board’s Workforce Services Coordinator, Sarah Milligan, reported on correspondence the Board received from the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC), which states due to issues related to the Texas Health and Human Services Commission’s (HHSC) Consolidated Work Notice, the United States Department of Agriculture Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) is requiring that all Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) recipients be granted good cause for noncompliance with Employment and Training (E&T) requirements until further notice, effective November 15, 2022. The Board will continue to receive SNAP E&T referrals from HHSC; however, participation in the SNAP E&T program is voluntary. Staff must not include information in outreach materials about sanctions or penalties for non-cooperation. HHSC anticipates approving the resumption of normal operations in April of 2023; however, this date is subject to change pending resolution of the Consolidated Work Notice issue. Jessica Rogers, a Board Member who works at HHSC, stated this information was shared with HHSC staff earlier in the week.

V. Discussion/Possible Action

No actions brought before the committee.

VI. Board Reports

A. Workforce Center Report

Ms. LaTreasar 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 strategies and outreach efforts for October and November 2022 through staff presence across all counties, including counties without Workforce Centers, by staff visiting libraries, probation offices, and various other public locations. Ms. Blair noted having the most success is at host locations where the host location staff help spread the word of the Workforce staff’s outreach efforts (via social media and other means), like the San Augustine Career & Education Center. Ms. Blair reviewed the Metrix Learning data, reporting eight (8) new users registered in October for Metrix Learning courses, which are offered free of charge, and one (1) new customer registered for Metrix paid certification (Amazon AWS Solution Architect), which is paid for and sponsored by TWC. In November 2022, 21 new users registered for courses, with one (1) new customer registration for Metrix paid certification (Microsoft Office Specialist). The courses offered through Metrix Learning cover a vast scope of topics from basic skills, to how to properly handle difficult situations, and other topics to increase employability knowledge and skills. As employers are becoming aware of Metrix Learning, they are looking at ways to utilize the courses with their staff. Ms. Blair reviewed the Greeter Report for Foot Traffic and Job Seeker Services provided. Foot Traffic accounts for each visit made by individuals to a workforce center, including multiple visits by one individual. For November the total foot traffic for all workforce centers in the Deep East Texas region was 1,624 and the total job seeker services provided was 3,210. Shakia Roberts reviewed the WIOA enrollment report, with a total of 11 enrollments for October and 21 enrollments for November. Ms. Roberts shared the Individual Training Account (ITA) enrollment numbers, with one (1) WIOA Dislocated Worker enrolled for October and a total of seven (7) WIOA Adult enrollments for November. Mr. Durand reviewed the WIOA Training Completion and Placements report and explained the time lapse that typically occurs between completion of training and testing/certification. Rhonda Cartwright summarized the Choices enrollment numbers and activities for October, with 27 participants enrolled. Support services totaled \$1,731.89, and may include gas to and from work or items necessary for work (work boots, jeans, etc.). LaTreasar Cartwright compared performance measures for PY’22, PY’23, and October 2022. One measure is not meeting performance, the Measurable Skills Gain (MSG) Adult measure, which has a goal of 76.80% and was at 41.70% for October 2022. Ms. Cartwright said management is working with case managers to ensure data is

correctly entered and staff is working diligently to meet this measure. Ms. Cartwright informed the Board of a few changes regarding targets.

B. Child Care Services Report

Michelle Kennedy reported on the Child Care Services (CCS) Performance Data, noting the Year-to-Date (YTD) target goal of 2,099 average children served YTD and actual was 2,017, for 96% of target served. The FY'2023 target is 2,349 average per day. Ms. Kennedy explained the difference between the number of enrollments and average per day. Ms. Kennedy reported 164 children still enrolled in Service Industry Recovery (SIR). SIR ends in March 2023 but a significant number of SIR children have already transferred over to regular CCS low-income enrollment. Ms. Kennedy reported a total of 94 Provider Agreements with 82 agreements in the Deep East Texas (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 43 TRS providers. 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. Twenty-One of the 39 entry-level designation providers have received visits from TRS staff. Of those 21 providers, 20 have agreed to become TRS. The one (1) provider that has not agreed to become TRS only has one (1) CCS child in care. The provider will not return staff's phone calls or give an answer as to whether the provider will become TRS or not.

C. Student HireAbility Report

The Board's Student HireAbility Navigator, Aubrey Jones, emphasized her efforts to outreach the underserved communities, such as those with physical and/or intellectual disabilities and previously incarcerated individuals. Ms. Jones reported on the success with the Communities in Action meetings that are held monthly with the Alcohol and Drug Abuse Council (ADAC). These meetings allow for Workforce Solutions Deep East Texas and ADAC to inform each other of what opportunities and events are available for cross-referral purposes. Mr. Durand thanked Board Member and Executive Director of ADAC, Phyllis Grandgeorge, for the partnership opportunity. Ms. Grandgeorge noted the success of the partnership, including the co-location of ADAC within the Workforce Solutions Deep East Texas Polk County Workforce Center.

VII. Adjourn

Chair Robert Fitzpatrick adjourned the Operations Committee Meeting at 10:56 a.m.

Duly passed and approved on this 22nd day of February 2022


Robert Fitzpatrick, Chair

Attest

Lauren Phipps, Planning and Policy Specialist