

**Workforce Solutions Deep East Texas  
Board Meeting Minutes  
415 S. First Street, Suite 110B, Lufkin, TX 75901  
January 17, 2023**

**I. CHAIR KELLI MARSHALL CALLED THE BOARD MEETING TO ORDER AT 2:36 P.M.**

**MS. MARSHALL 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 VIDEO-CONFERENCING 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, KELLI MARSHALL, WAS PHYSICALLY PRESENT.**

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

**Members Present:** Joe Clyde Adams, Lisa Balty, TJ Colwell, Tyane Dietz, Tim Ditoro, Robert Fitzpatrick, Phyllis Grandgeorge, Ethan Herr, Staci Hodges, Eddie Hopkins, Kotosha Jeffery, Gene Lee, Kelli Marshall, Ellen Mills, Marisa Phillips, Randall Roberts, Rich Scott, John Allen Slocomb, John White

**Members Absent:** Rebekah Burkhalter, James Gentry, Wayne Haglund, Anita Humphreys, Malcolm Ifoezeh, Garvey Jackson, Laurie King, Matthew Lowery, Quincy Martindale, Jessica Rogers

**Board Staff Present:** Mark Durand, Joelle Harkins, Anna Holderberg, Debb Homman, Lauren Phipps, Misty Woodard

**Visitors:** Scott Amey, Jessica Blair, Kevin Bradford, LaTreaser Cartwright, Rhonda Cartwright, Monica Peters-Clark, Christina Ward

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

Ms. 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:**

Mark Durand introduced the Board's newest Texas Rising Star (TRS) Mentor, Joelle (JoJo) Harkins.

**II. Public Comments**

None

**III. Discussion/Action: Approval of Minutes – December 13, 2022**

Motion: Robert Fitzpatrick made the motion to approve the minutes as presented.  
Second: Gene Lee  
In Favor: All  
Oppose: None  
Abstain: None  
Motion: Passes

**IV. Information Item**

**A. 2023 Workforce Board Meeting Schedule**

The Board was provided a copy of the 2023 Workforce Board Meeting schedule in their packets.

**B. February Board Meeting Date Change**

Mr. Durand noted the upcoming February Board meeting has been rescheduled for February 28, 2023.

**V. Board Members Comments on Activity in their Respective Areas**

Ms. Lisa Balty mentioned the Nacogdoches newspaper published an article on the front page regarding the High Demand Job Training Grant. Ms. Balty also shared her excitement from a consumer side of how Lufkin is growing with various new businesses.

**VI. Executive Director's Report**

**A. Contracts/Agreements**

The Board entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with San Augustine Independent School Districts for the Workforce Career and Education Outreach Specialist program (WCEOS), making that the 22<sup>nd</sup> MOU with an independent school district (ISD) for the WCEOS program. Mr. Durand noted the Board will not enter into any more MOUs for the WCEOS program at this time so WCEOS staff can be effective with their current ISDs and not become overloaded. The Board entered into a partnership with the Nacogdoches Chamber of Commerce to host "Gateway to the Future" by providing \$2,000 in financial support to assist with this youth event that served the eight (8) Nacogdoches ISDs and approximately 800 students.

**B. Performance**

Mr. Durand reported TWC released a revised version of the September 2022 Monthly Performance Report (MPR), which is the latest performance scorecard. Deep East Texas is exceeding 10 measures, meeting 7 measures, and missing 6 measures. Missing measures at the beginning of the year is not unusual. The Board and contractor staff have action plans in place to meet these measures.

**Child Care:**

There are currently 42 Texas Rising Star (TRS) providers. TWC conducted a virtual meeting with Boards to explain the newly changed billable calculation rate that will change the days of reporting from 262 to 260 days annually.

**Workforce:**

The September 2022 MPR reflected six (6) missed measures. Two (2) of the measures are related to median earnings. The expectation depends upon TWC's wage report, but projection is to meet these measures in March 2023. Two (2) measures are related to Measurable Skills Gain. These two (2) measures are both expected to be met in December 2022. The Employed/Enrolled Quarter 2 Youth Credential had one (1) in-school participant that received the credential after the exit date period and is counting negatively. Based on the performance period, this measure may not be met this program year. Board and Contractor staff are reviewing all possibilities to try and meet this measure by end of the year.

**C. Contacts and Coordination Efforts**

Mr. Durand and other Board staff represented Workforce Solutions Deep East Texas (WSDet) at various events and projects including the Meet and Greet reception for Speaker Dade Phelan, the

“Gateway to the Future” youth event hosted by Nacogdoches Chamber of Commerce, SFA CARRI, Bright Foundation, and Workforce Solutions, and the Diboll and Pineland Community Awareness Projects. Mr. Durand was selected and served on the DETCOG Regional Economic Development Committee to develop a comprehensive economic development strategy for the region. Mr. Durand also submitted his application for the National Association of Workforce Boards Executive Boot Camp.

**D. Rules and Legislation Update**

TWC is currently performing a Child Care Improper Payment Review. This monitoring is performed every three (3) years to review payments made to providers. Mr. Durand announced that Governor Abbott appointed Albert Trevino as Commissioner Representing Labor.

**E. Funding**

Mr. Durand noted there was no additional funding in this reporting period.

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

Mr. Durand reported the unemployment rate for November 2022 did not change from October 2022 (4.8%), and is down from the 5.9% unemployment rate for November 2021.

**VII. Committee Reports**

**A. Executive/Finance Committee**

**1. Committee Activity**

**a. Regional Convener Grant**

Mark Durand summarized the new grant opportunity published by the Texas Tri-Agency (23-24 Tri-Agency Grant for Regional Conveners.) The Texas Education Agency (TEA), as the pass-through entity, is the grantee from the U.S. Department of Education (USDE). The purpose of this 12-month grant project is to identify, invest in, and designate a regional convener in each of Texas’ 28 workforce development areas (WDA) who will serve as the WDA’s Tri-Agency regional convener. The role of a designated Tri-Agency regional convener is to oversee the development, implementation, and monitoring of the regional strategy for high-quality career and education pathways into targeted industries across an entire workforce development area. Mr. Durand stated the Board is well-positioned to assume the role of regional convener for the Deep East Texas WDA. This grant will allow for the opportunity to apply for other grants and expand the Board’s services. As required by the grant, the Board will hire one additional FTE to serve as the regional convener lead, and other current staff members will support the project. If awarded, all funding for the additional FTE will be allocated to the grant and percentage of staff time to support the grant can also be allocated to the grant. The Board submitted an application with a budget amount of \$409,631.

**b. Angelina County Workforce Center RFP**

The Workforce Solutions Deep East Texas Angelina County Workforce Center (Angelina WFC) lease with AWC Family Partnership, LTD will terminate May 31, 2023. The Board released a Request for Proposal (RFP) January 4, 2023, to solicit proposals for commercial space for the Angelina WFC. The Board plans to enter into a contract with the selected vendor for a period of not less than ten (10) years. The Angelina WFC is the Board’s one-stop comprehensive center housing workforce, childcare, vocational rehabilitation, veterans and other core services to serve employers and job seekers. The RFP followed the Financial Manual for Grants and Contracts Supplement on Procurement. The RFP solicits space between 11,500 to 20,000 square feet that is compliant with Texas Accessibility Standards (TAS) and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The Board staff plans to submit to the Board at the February 2023 meeting for approval to negotiate and contract with the selected vendor.

**2. Discussion/Possible Action**

**a. Action Item 23-01 Procurement Policy Revisions**

Board Chair, Kelli Marshall, briefly discussed the proposed changes to the Board’s Procurement Policy. In 2020, TWC raised the simplified acquisition threshold from \$150,000

to \$250,000. Boards were not required to make this change locally. After review and discussion, Board staff is requesting to raise the threshold to \$250,000 to align with TWC's procedures. Board staff also requested approval of the addition of Section 13: Pre-Award Considerations, which states, "The Board shall follow all applicable laws, regulations and rules regarding the procurement of goods and services. The Board shall only award contracts to responsible contractors/vendors possessing the ability to perform all award requirements in full compliance with the award terms and applicable laws, rules and ethical standards." This section was added to reiterate the Board will follow current and future laws, regulations, and rules as they relate to procurement.

Motion: The Executive/Finance Committee recommended for approval of the Procurement Policy as presented, but stated for the record that procurements exceeding \$150,000 will continue to come before the Board for approval.

Second: Ellen Mills

In Favor: All

Oppose: None

Abstain: None

Motion: Passes

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

**3. Discussion and Acceptance of Financial Reports**

**a. Financial Reports for November 2022**

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

Misty Woodard provided financial updates for the November 2022. Ms. Woodard referenced the variance narrative. The Board is under budget for personnel salaries/wages due to the Board currently having 16 Full Time Employees (FTE) but budgeted for 19 FTEs. Ms. Woodard reviewed the Contracts Outstanding report, stating no concerns. The Board accepted the November financial reports.

**VIII. Adjourn**

Kelli Marshall adjourned the meeting at 3:23 p.m.

Duly passed and approved on this 14<sup>th</sup> day of March 2023

*Kelli Marshall*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Kelli Marshall, Chair

(Attest)

  
Lauren Phipps, Planning and Policy Specialist