

Workforce Solutions - Deep East Texas
415 S. First Street, Suite 110B
Lufkin, TX 75901
Operations Committee Minutes
February 22, 2023

I. CHAIR ROBERT FITZPATRICK CALLED THE OPERATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING TO ORDER AT 2:02 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, Marisa Phillips, Randy Roberts, John White

Members Absent: Phyllis Grandgeorge, Malcolm Ifoezeh, Jessica Rogers

Board Staff Present: Mark Durand, Debb Homman, Aubrey Jones, Sarah Milligan, Lauren Phipps, Karen Stubblefield

Visitors: Scott Amey, Jessica Blair, LaTreaser Cartwright, Rhonda Cartwright, Michelle Kennedy, 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 – December 8, 2022

Motion: Joe Clyde Adams made the motion to approve the minutes as presented.

Second: Randy Roberts

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

IV. Information Items

A. Workforce Career and Education Outreach Program Update

The Workforce Career and Education Outreach Specialists (WCEOS) have engaged with almost 5,000 students to date with many visits to go. WCEOS currently serve 42 campuses with a goal of 45 by September 2023. Twenty-one organizations have partnered with WCEOS, including Angelina College, Stephen F. Austin State University (SFASU), Lamar Institute of Technology, juvenile probation offices across the region, Nacogdoches County Chamber of Commerce, and several business and industry leaders. Several types of workshops and events have been conducted for the fiscal year, including 260 career support workshops, 11 subject matter expert workshops, and three (3) virtual reality career exploration events, with many more scheduled. WCEOS are working with at least one (1) school district in all 12 counties, exceeding the goal of 20 agreements. Out of 20 regions statewide, WCEOS ranked #1 in number of students exposed to pre-apprenticeships and registered apprenticeships; #1 in students/participants exposed to work-based learning; #2 in number of students exposed to career readiness workshops; and #3 in career support workshops.

B. Student HireAbility Update

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 educates individuals with disabilities and employers/organizations on the benefits of hiring individuals with disabilities. Ms. Jones has worked diligently to connect with youth partners to better serve in-school and out-of-school youth. Through data collection, it was determined that many people and organizations do not know what Workforce Solutions Deep East Texas offers. As a result, a key initiative of Ms. Jones and others is educating every one of the services the Board offers. Ms. Jones has been working with the Angelina Coalition to outreach the region's homeless population, as well.

V. Discussion/Possible Action

No actions brought before the committee.

VI. Board Reports

A. Workforce Center Report

Ms. LaTreasier Cartwright, Project Director, started the report by sharing an employer success story. Ms. Cartwright informed the Board that targets have not yet been received from the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC), so the performance measures report is based on their own targets and previous TWC targets. For the first quarter of Fiscal Year 2023 (FY23), workforce staff expect to meet 12 of the measures and do not expect to meet three (3) measures. For six (6) measures, there was no indication of what the target will be. Jessica Blair reported on the rural services strategies and outreach efforts for first quarter of FY23. Workforce staff continue to visit all counties including counties that do not have a workforce centers. Staff outreach the public by providing rural services at locations such as libraries, probation offices, and housing authority offices. Mr. Durand asked Ms. Blair to share how staff are outreaching the public other than being present across the region. Ms. Blair responded through flyers and text messaging services provided through Engage by Cell. Ms. Blair reviewed the Metrix Learning data, reporting 37 new users registered in first quarter of FY23 for Metrix Learning courses, which are offered free of charge, and two (2) new customers registered for Metrix paid certification (Amazon AWS Solution Architect and Microsoft Office Specialist), which is paid for and sponsored by TWC. 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. The top three (3) reasons for foot traffic in first quarter of FY23 was to utilize the resource room, for virtual services, and customers needing assistance with employment. Shakia Roberts reviewed the WIOA enrollment report, with a total of 64 enrollments between Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Out-of-School Youth for first quarter of FY23. Rhonda Cartwright summarized the Choices enrollment numbers and activities for first quarter of FY23. Ms. Cartwright reported still meeting performance for Choices measures.

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 2,349 average children served versus the actual average served monthly of 2,240 for December 2022 (95% of target). The number of children enrolled was 2,441 as of today's date. Ms. Kennedy explained the difference between the number of enrollments and average per day. Ms. Kennedy reported 131 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 97 Provider Agreements with 85 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 41 TRS providers. Ms. Homman reported that all CCS contracted providers must now become TRS centers. As a result, TRS staff have visited or communicated with all entry-level designation providers. One (1) provider has decided not to pursue TRS certification. TWC has extended the deadline for providers to become TRS certified to September 30, 2024. Ms. Homman also reported that annual assessments for TRS centers are underway, with about ¼ of assessments already completed.

VII. Adjourn

Chair Robert Fitzpatrick adjourned the Operations Committee Meeting at 3:07 p.m.

Duly passed and approved on this 6th day of June 2023


Robert Fitzpatrick, Chair

Attest


Lauren Phipps, Planning and Policy Specialist