

Workforce Solutions Deep East Texas
415 S. First Street, Suite 110B
Lufkin, TX 75901
Business Services Committee Meeting Minutes
March 9, 2023

I. CHAIR TYANE DIETZ CALLED THE BUSINESS SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING TO ORDER AT 2:02 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: TJ Colwell, Tyane Dietz, Tim Ditoro, Staci Hodges, Matthew Lowery, Quincy Martindale, Benjamin Mott

Members Absent: Lisa Balty, Wayne Haglund, Eddie Hopkins, Anita Humphreys, Rich Scott

Board Staff Present: Mark Durand, Anna Holderberg, Debb Homman, Lauren Phipps, Karen Stubblefield

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 member, Mr. Benjamin Mott, who will represent the private sector.

II. Public Comments

None

III. Discussion/Action: Approval of Minutes – December 8, 2022

Motion: Staci Hodges made the motion to approve the minutes as presented.

Second: TJ Colwell

In Favor: All

Oppose: None

Abstain: None

Motion: Passes

IV. Information and Briefing Items

A. Child Care Business Outreach Specialist Update

The Child Care Business Specialist's overall goal is to increase capacity of child care placements by fostering relationships with child care providers and assisting them with business development needs. Ms. Holderberg has met with 31 child care providers to date, who all have various needs and issues to address, including start-up operation and struggling to remain open. A common challenge among providers is staffing due mainly to low wages. Ms. Dietz noted the correlation between provider staffing challenges and number of spots open for child enrollment. Ms. Holderberg has met with various partners including Angelina College Small Business Development Center, T.L.L. Temple Foundation and Stephen F. Austin State University Rusche College of Business to assist in bringing awareness of the resources available to the child care providers. Ms. Holderberg will continue to meet and build relationships with the owners/directors over the next months, as well as creating and strengthening partnerships.

B. Panola College/Portacool Skills Development Fund Grant Update

The Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) has awarded a Skills Development Fund (SDF) grant to Panola College to enhance and customize training for Portacool, LLC, 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. The \$883,407 grant award will provide training for 192 new jobs and 278 existing employees. 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.

C. Rapid Response Services

Rapid Response is a flexible, proactive, business-focused strategy designed to respond to layoffs and business closings by quickly coordinating workforce services and providing companies and their affected workers with immediate access to those services and information. Rapid Response teams work with employers and employees to minimize disruptions caused by layoffs through the mobilization of public and private resources. Rapid Response also provides customized services on-site at affected companies to help the companies and workers as quickly as possible. Rapid Response services are activated when one of the following qualifying events is met: an announcement of a permanent business closure, regardless of the number of workers affected; an announcement of a mass layoff; a mass job dislocation in a particular area resulting from a natural or other disaster; or the filing of a Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) petition. The number of Rapid Response reports for 2022 was eight (8), affecting 92 total workers. The number of Rapid Response reports to date for 2023 is two (2), affecting 31 total workers.

D. 2023 Teacher Externship Update

Karen Stubblefield provided an update on the development of the 2023 Teacher Externship program. The Board received \$69,940 in grant funds effective March 1, 2023 for the externship. To date, 13 independent school districts (ISDs) across nine (9) counties have nominated 36 teachers. The Board has received 20 teacher applications, 15 of which are complete. Board staff have been sending reminders and communicating with remaining teachers to submit their applications.

E. NAWB Video Link

Ms. Tyane Dietz presented a video provided by the National Association of Workforce Boards (NAWB) for Board Members to share when explaining to individuals and employers what exactly a workforce board does and offers. (link: <https://youtu.be/juAXERBRolM>)

V. Discussion and Possible Action

A. Action Item 23-07 Measure What Matters

Ms. Dietz explained “Measure What Matters” as a report that details what parents, teachers, and businesses view as important measures for student success. Ms. Dietz states it is important to focus on the information that comes from Measure What Matters and Raise Your Hands Texas when tracking what does, and does not, properly report student success. Ms. Dietz further stated Texas teachers and ISDs are supportive of these methods of tracking what student success means.

No action taken. Measure What Matters was for informational purposes only.

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 the first quarter of FY23 (Q1), 132 new employers were registered in Work in Texas. Job orders totaled 1,147 for Q1. The number of referrals were 3,490. The percent of job orders filled for Q1 was 16% of all postings and 25% of staff postings. The number of job fairs and recruiting events total 112 for Q1, with an end of year goal of 92. From these events, 111 hires were reported. Ms. Peters-Clark reviewed the various community events that have recently taken place, including the Career Connection in San Augustine and Houston counties, the Angelina College Health Careers Career and Education Fair, and the Youth Career Summit in San Jacinto County. Shakia Roberts reported on WIOA training completion and placements. The total number of WIOA training participants were 68. Of those 68 participants, 31 are still attending training, 28 completed training and nine (9) did not complete training. Of the 28 participants that completed training, 14 (50%) have been placed in employment. Ms. Roberts 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 continues to offer job search assistance to the customer to help in finding employment.

VII. Take Up Other Action, As Needed
None

VIII. Adjourn

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

Duly passed and approved on this 8th day of June 2023



Tyane Dietz, Chair

Attest



Lauren Phipps, Planning and Policy Specialist