

**Workforce Solutions Deep East Texas
Board Meeting Minutes
415 S. First Street, Suite 110B, Lufkin, TX 75901
May 9, 2023**

I. CHAIR KELLI MARSHALL CALLED THE BOARD MEETING TO ORDER AT 2:33 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, Rebekah Burkhalter, TJ Colwell, Tyane Dietz, Tim Ditoro, Robert Fitzpatrick, Phyllis Grandgeorge, Wayne Haglund, Ethan Herr, Eddie Hopkins, Anita Humphreys, Garvey Jackson, Kotosha Jeffery, Kelli Marshall, Ellen Mills, Benjamin Mott, Marisa Phillips, Randall Roberts, Jessica Rogers, Rich Scott, John Allen Slocomb

Members Absent: Lisa Balty, James Gentry, Staci Hodges, Malcolm Ifoezeh, Gene Lee, Matthew Lowery, Quincy Martindale, John White

Board Staff Present: Mark Durand, Debb Homman, Karen Stubblefield

Visitors: Paul Dunn, Michelle Kennedy, Maribel Soto-Mendoza

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 Maribel Soto-Mendoza, who has accepted the position of Financial Director. Ms. Soto-Mendoza will be training with Misty Woodard, and has an anticipated start date of June 5th.

II. Public Comments

None

III. Discussion/Action: Approval of Minutes – March 14, 2023

Motion: Ethan Herr made the motion to approve the minutes as presented.
Second: John Allen Slocomb
In Favor: All
Oppose: None
Abstain: None
Motion: Passes

IV. Board Members Comments on Activity in their Respective Areas

Ethan Herr mentioned several bills regarding workforce are in movement of the legislative session, highlighting one resolution to urge Congress to consolidate all workforce services. Mr. Durand mentioned elections regarding city councils and school boards that have taken place across the region and the changes that may bring. Benjamin Mott reported a couple new businesses coming to Tyler County.

V. Executive Director's Report

A. Contracts/Agreements

New/amended contracts included Dynamic Workforce Solutions (DWFS) contract amendment 3 moving funding (\$48,902.54) from WIOA Dislocated Worker direct client services to WIOA Adult direct client services; contract executed with Paradigm Works Group (Job Corps) to pay the Board a monthly sum of \$515.25 for space provided in the Workforce Solutions Deep East Texas Angelina County Workforce Center; and contract executed with Consolidated Communications for phone services that cover all six workforce centers for annual cost of \$37,411 for a term of 36 months.

B. Performance

Child Care:

TWC issued a mid-year adjustment target for the average number of children in care due to the increase in the cost of care per day (target average number of children per day for Oct 2022 – March 2023 is 2,277 and April – Sept 2023 will be 2,349). The year-to-date March 2023 average children served per day was 2,338 (102.68%). The projected April 2023 average children served per day is 2,488. There are currently 40 Texas Rising Star (TRS) providers.

Workforce:

The Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) had not released a new Monthly Performance Report. Based on current projections for March, the Board is missing five (5) measures. Three of the measures are Measurable Skills Gains (MSG). These credentials are not earned at the beginning of enrollment. MSG is entered later upon completion of training. Adult MSG is expected to be met in April and Dislocated Worker MSG needs three (3) and Youth needs one (1) to meet the measure. The fourth missed measure is Adult Median Earnings. The goal was increased by \$1,500 from the previous year. As of March, the Board is missing by \$400 but expects to meet the measure by the end of June. The fifth missed measure is Credential Youth. The workforce contractor is working diligently to contact customers, but due to the low number of youth enrollments, this measure possibly may not be met this program year.

C. Contacts and Coordination Efforts

Mr. Durand and other Board staff represented Workforce Solutions Deep East Texas (WSDTE) at various events and projects including the East Texas Health Alliance Health Careers event in Jasper, the Mega Job Fest held at the Lufkin Pitzer Garrison Center, Diboll ISD Career Signing Day, Regional Public Transportation Committee Meeting, and an Employer Initiatives meeting with Southeast Texas Industries, Inc. Mr. Durand attended the National Association of Workforce Boards (NAWB) and Executive Boot Camp meetings in Washington D.C.

D. Rules and Legislation Update

Mr. Durand mentioned various legislative items, some of which will directly affect the Board, including HB 3203 relating to the sunset review of Local Workforce Development Boards. Ms. Dietz added a legislative update, stating HB 42 passed the day prior.

E. Funding

Additional funding for this reporting period included: TWC Grant 1723SNE001 amended to provide a supplemental allocation of \$25,440, for a total grant award amount of \$328,636 to serve Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) participants with employment and training. Middle Skills Employment Supplies Grant 1723WOS was amended to allow no more than 10% of the funds to be expended for administrative costs.

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

Mr. Durand reported the March 2023 unemployment rate of 5.0% decreased from the month prior, with the February 2023 rate being 5.5%. The 2022 annual unemployment rate was released, with a rate of 5.0% (a significant decrease from the 2021 rate of 6.9% and the 2020 rate of 8.1%). Mr. Durand also reported on the efforts by Board staff to increase outreach via social media, which has resulted in a significant increase in people reached through social media and WSDet website traffic.

VI. Committee Reports

A. Executive/Finance Committee

1. Committee Activity

a. EO Review Report

Ms. Marshall reported The Texas Workforce Commission Equal Opportunity Compliance Department (EOCD) is required to conduct annual Equal Opportunity (EO) monitoring reviews in accordance with federal and state EO monitoring requirements. The EOCD issued a Document Analysis List to the Board. In response to the Document Analysis List, the Board's EO Officer, Lauren Phipps, provided the EOCD with documentation regarding various topics, including organization information, assurance obligations, policies, procedures, internal monitoring, affirmative outreach, communication and prohibited discrimination. The EOCD determined there were no findings or areas of concern.

b. Child Care Quality Texas Rising Star Supplemental Plan

Ms. Marshall summarized the projected spending versus actual expenditures of CCQ funds from November 1, 2021 through March 31, 2023. Actual spent of CCQ funds totaled \$365,247.10 versus budgeted amount of \$418,447.

2. Discussion/Possible Action

a. Action Item 23-09 Regional Convener Grant Budget Proposal

The Texas Regional Pathways Network (TRPN) was launched in 2019 to support Governor Abbott's Tri-Agency Workforce Initiative, through which the Texas Education Agency, Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board and Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) are working collaboratively to increase economic prosperity in Texas by linking education and industry. With a vision that all Texans are prepared to contribute to an inclusive and competitive Texas economy, the TRPN aims to build regional talent pipelines into in-demand industries that will spur economic growth across the state and ensure all Texans have the skills and credentials needed for economic advancement. 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. The Board approved the submittal for the grant. Workforce Solutions Deep East Texas was selected to receive the grant. As a result, the Board will hire two (2) additional full-time employees (Regional Convener Lead and Work-Based Learning Lead). Current staff members and workforce contractor staff will support the project. Mr. Durand explained that additional compensation is included in the funding amount for staff working on this grant to avoid commingling of workforce funding and TEA funding. Board staff requested approval to accept the grant for \$539,250.

Motion: The Executive/Finance Committee recommended for acceptance of the Regional Convener Grant Budget Proposal as presented.
Second: Tyane Dietz
In Favor: All
Oppose: None
Abstain: Rebekah Burkhalter, Tim Ditoro, Ethan Herr, Eddie Hopkins, Randy Roberts
Motion: Passes

Board members, Rebekah Burkhalter, Time Ditoro, Ethan Herr, Eddie Hopkins, and Randy Roberts abstained from voting on Action Item 23-09 due to a possible conflict of interest.

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

3. Discussion and Acceptance of Financial Reports

a. Financial Reports for February and March 2023

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

Mr. Durand provided financial updates for February and March 2023. Ms. Marshall and Mr. Durand referenced the variance narrative and reviewed the Contracts Outstanding report, stating no concerns.

VII. Adjourn

Chair Kelli Marshall adjourned the meeting at 3:25 p.m.

Duly passed and approved on this 20th day of June 2023



Kelli Marshall, Chair

Attest



Lauren Phipps, Planning and Policy Specialist