

NORTHWEST ARKANSAS LOCAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

Minutes of Meeting March 3, 2021

A meeting of the Northwest Arkansas Workforce Development Board (LWDB) was held Wednesday, March 3, 2021, via Zoom.

Board members present on the Zoom meeting were:

MR. BEN ALDAMA, NWACC ADULT ED.
MR. EDDIE BARTLETT, BARTLETT FAMILY DENTISTRY
MR. DAVID BELL, DAVID BELL, LLC.
MS. SARAH BROZYNSKI, BAXTER REGIONAL MEDICAL CENTER
MS. CHERYL DAVENPORT, ADVANCED MARINE PERFORMANCE
MR. JOHN DYESS, ALTRONIC RESEARCH, INC.
MR. KEVIN ESTES, DHS SERVICES FOR THE BLIND
MR. WALTER HINOJOSA, NWA LABOR COUNCIL
MS. AMY JONES, ARKANSAS REHABILITATION SERVICES
MS. JANA KINDALL, AR DIVISION OF WORKFORCE SERVICES
MR. BOB LARGENT, HARRISON REGIONAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
MR. ROSS PARKER, PARKER FARMS AND RENTALS
MS. BILLIE REED, REED CONSULTING
MR. KELLEY SHARP, UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS FAYETTEVILLE
MR. RICKY TOMPKINS, NWACC

Board members absent and excused were:

MS. ERIN POE, TEC STAFFING
MR. BO PHILLIPS, COX-RAPID SCALE, HARRISON

Others present were:

Ms. Susan Sangren, NWAEDD
Ms. Patty Methvin, NWAEDD
Ms. Karen Henry, NWAEDD
Mr. Joe Willis, NWAEDD
Mr. Jeremy Ragland, NWAEDD
Ms. Chelsey Weaver, NWAEDD
Mr. Taff Grice, NWAEDD
Mr. Nicholas Ryburn, Adult Education
Mr. James Moss, NWAEDD
Mr. Tom Anderson, Arkansas Workforce Development Board
Ms. Cherie Conner, Adult Education North Arkansas College
Ms. Nadine Sewak, NWAEDD
Ms. Rose Sparrow, NWAEDD
Ms. Mary Beth Hatch, North Arkansas College
Ms. Melba Miller, NWAEDD
Ms. Hannah Henderson, Office of Senator Boozman
Ms. Rebecca Ratliff, NWAEDD
Dr. Megan Bolinder, NWACC
Mr. Robbie Cornelius, Fayetteville Adult Education
Ms. Kelsey Kelton, AEDC
Ms. Melissa Bray, North Arkansas College

Ms. Teri Garrett, Office of Representative Womack
Dr. Randy Esters, North Arkansas College
Ms. Nell Bonds, North Arkansas College
Ms. Mary Anne Caldwell, Arkansas Rehabilitation Services
Ms. Janie Wheeler

The meeting was called to order at 11:00 a.m. by CHAIR JOHN DYESS. CHAIR DYESS addressed the need for the Zoom call meeting due to the on-going concern from COVID-19. CHAIR DYESS informed the attendees that the meeting was being recorded and that each vote will be conducted through a role call vote.

MS. PATTY METHVIN gave the quarterly staff report. MS. METHVIN congratulated MS. BEVERLY YOUNG on her retirement and thanked her for her years of service with NWAEDD. MS. METHVIN informed the Board that Arkansas Division of Workforce Services (ADWS) is converting to a new reporting system. The staff has been working to prepare for the transition. MS. APRIL TURNER worked with ADWS to test the system and to train the staff. MS. APRIL TURNER, MR. JAMES MOSS, and MS. KAREN HENRY provided a Data Validation training for the NWAEDD staff. The Department of Labor along with ADWS provided Governance training for the Arkansas Workforce Board, Local Boards and Chief Elected Officials. MS. METHVIN shared with the Board that NWAEDD has two new Apprenticeship/Pre-Apprenticeship grants with Tyson Foods as the Apprenticeship Sponsor and Employer. One grant is for four Springdale High School participants who will be training in Industrial Maintenance with Business and Industry. The second grant is for 21 participants who will be training in Industrial Electrical Instrumentation with NWTI. MS. METHVIN shared with the Board that all the Apprenticeship and Pre-Apprenticeship grants will end either March 30 or April 30 depending on the grant. MS. METHVIN informed the Board that NWAEDD is scheduled for program and fiscal monitoring by ADWS from April 5th to the 9th. This will be a desk monitoring instead of an in-person monitoring. All the requested documents were sent to ADWS in October of 2020 per their request.

Agenda Item #1: Updated Workforce Budget

MS. METHVIN shared the updated Workforce Budget to the Board. A motion was made by MR. ROSS PARKER and seconded by MR. EDDIE BARTLETT to approve the updated Workforce Budget.

Agenda Item #2: Report of the One Stop Operator Procurement Task Force (OSO-TF).

MS. JANIE WHEELER reported to the Board that the One Stop Operator Task Force met on December 15, 2020 to discuss and select a facilitator. The Task Force selected MS. JANIE WHEELER to facilitate the process. All Task Force members and the Facilitator signed confidentiality statements. CHAIR DYESS and MS. WHEELER reviewed and signed the facilitator agreement. At the second meeting of the OSO-TF the draft RFP was reviewed and discussed as well as the evaluation tool. On January 24, 2021, the RFP was published in the NWA Democrat Gazette statewide edition. And ad also ran January 31 and February 7. The RFP was also sent to NAWDP and ADWS for posting. January 25 the RFP was released, and emails sent to Board members, partners, and bidders list notifying of the RFP. January 25 – February 1 the OSO-TF received requests for the RFP from Economic Opportunity Agency, Ozark Opportunities, Odle Management, ResCare-Bright Spring, In the Door, Goodwill of Arkansas and NWAEDD. On February 18, an email to all requestors was sent extending the deadline to submit from February 17 to February 23 due to COVID and an extreme winter storm. At the February 24 meeting MS. WHEELER reported that no responses were received. The Task Force discussed the possible reasons and probable next steps. The OSO Task Force asked that the Board accept and approve the work of the Task Force to date and allow the Task Force to continue to re-procure the One Stop Operator.

A motion was made by MR. DAVID BELL and seconded by MR. BARTLETT to accept and approve the work of the Task Force and to allow the Task Force to continue to re-procure the One Stop Operator. A roll call vote was taken by MS. METHVIN. The motion passed.

Agenda Item #3: 2020 Regional and Local Plan Draft/Addendum to Local Plan

MS. METHVIN presented the draft 2020 Regional and Local Plan for the Board to review. The Local Plan Review Committee consists of Billie Reed – Youth Committee, Amy Jones – Arkansas Rehabilitation, Bo Phillips – Local Board, Cherie Conner – Adult Education, Jana Kindall – DWS, Kevin Estes – Services for the Blind, Mayor Doug Sprouse – NW CEOs, Susan Sangren – One Stop Operator. The Review Committee has been asked to submit any changes or suggestions to MS. METHVIN.

MS. METHVIN also shared the Addendum to the Local plan for the Out of School Youth Waiver. ADWS requested and was granted a waiver of the requirement in WIOA that 75% of youth funds be spent on Out of School Youth. The addendum to the local plan is a request for Northwest to also be granted this waiver. If approved the waiver will allow Northwest to spend 50% on Out of School Youth and 50% on In School Youth. Northwest has a very strong In-School youth program and want to have the flexibility to grow that program while continuing to serve Out of School Youth.

A motion to approve the Addendum to the Local Plan for the Out of School Youth Waiver was made by MR. PARKER and seconded by MR. RICKY TOMPKINS.

A roll call vote was taken by MS. METHVIN. The motion passed.

Agenda Item #4: NW Supportive Services Policy

MS. METHVIN reported to the Board that the Supportive Services Policy needs to be amended to include language for participants who are transitioning to new employment. There are times when a participant completes training and has gotten a job and must wait up to three weeks before receiving their paycheck. The additional language in the policy will allow Northwest to continue to provide supportive services when needed. Career Advisors will get approval from Operations Manager in advance.

A motion was made to approve the changes to the Supportive Services Policy by MR. BOB LARGENT and seconded by MR. BELL.

A roll call vote was taken by MS. METHVIN. The motion passed.

Agenda Item #5: One Stop Operator Report

MS. SUSAN SANGREN gave the One Stop Operator Report. A motion was made to approve the One Stop Operator report by MR. PARKER and seconded by MR. BELL.

A roll call vote was taken by MS. METHVIN. The motion passed.

MR. BOB LARGENT made a motion to approve the consent agenda. MR. BEN ALDAMA seconded the motion.

A roll call vote was taken by MS. METHVIN. The motion passed.

MS. METHVIN reminded the Board to review the draft of the 2020 Local Plan and make suggestions. The next meeting of the NW Workforce Board will be June 2, 2021.

MR. BARTLETT moved to adjourn the meeting. MR. BELL seconded the motion. The motion passed and the meeting adjourned at 11:35 a.m.



John Dyess, Chair