

NORTHWEST ARKANSAS LOCAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD
Minutes of Meeting December 8, 2022
Durand Center, Harrison, Arkansas

A meeting of the Northwest Arkansas Workforce Development Board (LWDB) was held Thursday, December 8, 2022, in person, via conference call, and via Zoom.

Board members present in person and via Zoom meeting were:

MR. BEN ALDAMA, NWACC ADULT EDUCATION
MR. EDDIE BARTLETT, BARTLETT FAMILY DENTISTRY
MR. DAVID BELL, DAVID BELL, LLC.
MS. SARAH BROZYNSKI, BAXTER REGIONAL MEDICAL CENTER
MS. SAMMIE CRIBBS, NORTH ARKANSAS MEDICAL CENTER
MS. CHERYL DAVENPORT, ADVANCED MARINE PERFORMANCE
MR. KEVIN ESTES, DHS SERVICES FOR THE BLIND
MR. WALTER HINOJOSA, NWA LABOR COUNCIL
MR. ROSS PARKER, PARKER RENTALS
MR. BO PHILLIPS, COX-RAPID SCALE, HARRISON
MR. KELLEY SHARP, UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS FAYETTEVILLE
MR. RICKY TOMPKINS, ARKANSAS COMMUNITY COLLEGES

Board members absent and excused were:

MS. AMY JONES, ARKANSAS REHABILITATION SERVICES
MS. JANA KINDALL, ARKANSAS DIVISION OF WORKFORCE SERVICES, proxy Aaron Johnson
MR. BOB LARGENT, HARRISON REGIONAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Others present or on Zoom were:

Mr. Joe Willis, NWAEDD
Ms. Susan Sangren, NWAEDD
Ms. Patty Methvin, NWAEDD
Ms. Chelsey Weaver, NWAEDD
Ms. Tania Overton, NWAEDD
Mr. Taff Grice, NWAEDD
Mr. James Moss, NWAEDD
Mr. Nicholas Ryburn, Adult Education
Ms. Cherie Conner, North Arkansas College Adult Education
Mr. Jeremy Ragland, NWAEDD
Ms. Joyce Akidi, Arkansas Division of Workforce Services
Mr. David Mason, North Arkansas College
Mr. Tom Ginn, AEDC
Ms. April Turner, NWAEDD
Ms. Karen Henry, NWAEDD
Mr. Aaron Johnson, ADWS
Ms. Amy Roberts, North Arkansas College

The meeting was called to order at 11:05 a.m. by CHAIR BO PHILLIPS. MR. PHILLIPS informed the attendees that the meeting was being recorded. MR. DYESS recognized several guests that were in attendance.

MS. PATTY METHVIN gave the quarterly staff report. MS. METHVIN and WIOA staff attended the Arkansas Association of Development Organizations meeting in Hot Springs. The Local Directors also met during the conference to discuss issues in each area. MS. METHVIN and some WIOA staff also attended the annual WIOA Partner meeting in Little Rock. MS. METHVIN met with Emerge Careers a company that is working to upskill incarcerated people out of poverty. This is a pre-release job training program for CDL licensing and has a great track record of reducing recidivisms. MS. METHVIN also met with David Mason from North Arkansas College who is working with the Arkansas Department of Corrections to work with incarcerated people who are within months of being released to provide the MSSC certifications so that when they are released they have these credentials to help find a job. MS. METHVIN informed the board that staff have spent a great deal of time meeting with consultants, etc. to address the three appeals Northwest has with DWS.

MS. TANIA OVERTON gave the Business Services report. She reported that Northwest Business Services has had a successful year, and we are seeing a steady increase in service utilization. Northwest BST (Business Services Team) is analyzing strengths, weakness, opportunities, and challenges to inform decisions and the trajectory moving forward. An emphasis is being placed on assisting small to mid-sized businesses as these areas will benefit most from our traditional service offerings. Northwest BST is targeting work-based learning opportunities with our larger, more established employers. We launched a Work Experience Campaign recently and have received expressed interest from several employers. MS. OVERTON will be touring Business and Industry Training, an electrical, automation, and mechanical trade school next week. MS. OVERTON had an opportunity to attend drug court graduation in September. Northwest is working with courts and the Sheriff's Office to improve second-chance employment and assist employers with developing policies for this population. Northwest BST is also developing outreach strategies to meet the needs of our underserved populations of immigrants, homeless, and foster care individuals. Northwest staff is collaborating with IndeedFlex in the Spring to host an event that will mirror our Circle of Success event to strengthen workforce opportunities and community referrals. Our BST met in Eureka Springs with presenters from the Mountain Home Chamber, NWA Council, and University of Arkansas Global.

Agenda Item #1 – Updated Workforce Budget

MS. METHVIN presented the Updated Workforce Budget. A motion was made to approve the Updated Workforce Budget by MR. EDDIE BARTLETT and was seconded by MR. BEN ALDAMA. The motion passed.

Agenda Item #2 – Title 1 Program Provider

MS. METHVIN explained that the Chief Elected Official's agreement authorizes the Northwest Arkansas Economic Development District, Inc. to act as grant subrecipient and fiscal agent on their behalf. The Northwest Workforce Board will also need to authorize NWAEDD to act as Title 1 program provider for the Northwest area in addition to other grants as appropriate. A motion was made to authorize NWAEDD to act as Title 1 Program Provider for Northwest in addition to other grants as appropriate by MR. RICKY TOMPKINS and seconded by MR. BARTLETT. The motion passed.

Agenda Item #3 – Exceeds Room Rate

MS. METHVIN explained that the National Association of Workforce Board Forum 2023 is in Washington D.C. March 24 through March 28. Mr. Bo Phillips is attending to represent the Board. The conference is

being held at the Washington Hilton Hotel. The room rate is \$423.00 per night plus taxes and fees which exceeds the federal lodging per diem rate. A motion to approve exceeding the federal lodging per diem rate was made by MR. PARKER and seconded by MR. DAVID BELL. MR. PHILLIPS abstained from the vote. The motion passed.

Agenda Item #4 – Annual Report

MS. METHVIN explained that the local board is required to provide an Annual Report each year. The addition of the Business Services Coordinator has made the biggest impact on the services Northwest is able to provide. Northwest added the TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families) Work Experience grant and is working to find additional participant for that grant. A motion to approve the changes to the Northwest Supportive Services policy was made by MR. PARKER and seconded by MR. KELLEY SHARP. The motion passed.

Agenda Item #5 – NW WDB Supportive Services Policy

MS. METHVIN explained that the proposed Supportive Services Policy included additional language “including any past due amounts”. This is to clarify that Northwest can pay past due bills for participants while they are enrolled in WIOA programs if those past due bills will keep the participant from being able to participate. Example: The participant will be evicted if their rent is not paid. These payments will only be for special circumstances and will require approval by the Operations Manager. A motion to approve the changes to the NW WDB Supportive Services Policy by MR. PARKER and seconded by MR. SHARP. The motion passed.

Agenda Item #6 – Northwest Infrastructure Funding Agreement

MS. SUSAN SANGREN shared with the Board that the IFA determines how the Local Board and partners will fund the infrastructure costs at each Workforce Center in Northwest. A motion was made to approve the Northwest Infrastructure Funding Agreement by MR. BARTLETT and seconded by MR. BELL. The motion passed.

Agenda Item #7 – Transfer of Funds

WIOA allows for the transfer of up to 10% of funds to be transferred between the Adult and Dislocation Worker programs. NWAEDD is requesting that up to 75% of the funds from Program Year 2021 be transferred from DLW to Adult. A motion was made by MR. TOMPKINS and seconded by MR. ALDAMA.

Agenda Item #5 – One Stop Operator Report

MS. SANGREN presented the One Stop Operator Report. A motion to approve the One Stop Operator Report was made by MR. BARTLETT and seconded by MR. PARKER. The motion passed.

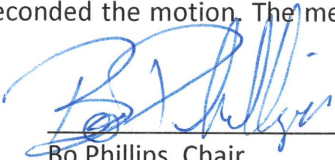
Agenda Item #6 – Eligible Training Provider Programs

MS. METHVIN explained that ADWS recommended that anyone working for one of our Eligible Training Providers recuse themselves from voting on the Eligible Training Provider Programs. The list of Eligible Training Providers was provided in the packet. A motion was made to approve the Eligible Training Provider Programs presented was made by MR. PARKER and seconded by MR. AARON JOHNSON (proxy for MS. JANA KINDALL). MR. BEN ALDAMA and MR. KELLEY SHARP abstained. The motion passed.


Agenda Item #7 – Minutes of September 7, 2022, NW WDB Board Meeting

MR. BARTLETT made the motion to approve the minutes of the Northwest Workforce Development June Board meeting. MR. SHARP seconded the motion. The motion passed.

MR. BELL made a motion to adjourn. MR. SHARP seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 11:47 a.m.



Bo Phillips, Chair



Date