

NORTHWEST ARKANSAS LOCAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

Minutes of Meeting September 6, 2023

818 Highway 62-65-412 North, Harrison, Arkansas

A meeting of the Northwest Arkansas Workforce Development Board (LWDB) was held Wednesday, September 6, 2023, in person, via conference call, and via Zoom.

Board members present in person and via Zoom meeting were:

MR. EDDIE BARTLETT, BARTLETT FAMILY DENTISTRY
MS. CHERIE CONNER, NORTH ARKANSAS COLLEGE ADULT EDUCATION
MS. CHERYL DAVENPORT, ADVANCED MARINE PERFORMANCE – Proxy Sarah Brozynski
MS. SONYA EDWARDS, JONES PHYSICAL THERAPY
MR. KEVIN ESTES, DHS SERVICES FOR THE BLIND
MR. AARON JOHNSON, ARKANSAS DIVISION OF WORKFORCE SERVICES
MS. DIANA JOHNSON, NWACC – Proxy Eve Aldredge
MS. CHRISSIE LARCHEZ, HOPE COTTAGES
MR. JASON PATIENCE, WABASH
MR. BO PHILLIPS, COX-RAPID SCALE, HARRISON
MR. ROGER POTTER, ANSTAFF BANK
MS. JENNIFER RAGSDALE, ARKANSAS REHABILITATION SERVICES
MR. KELLEY SHARP, UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS FAYETTEVILLE
MR. HUGH SMITH, SMITH AND TAYLOR TAX
MS. SANDY STOUT, HARPS FOOD
MR. RICKY TOMPKINS, ARKANSAS COMMUNITY COLLEGES
MS. EMILEE TUCKER, O.U.R. EDUCATIONAL CO-OP
MS. TRISH VILLINES, VILLINES ELECTRIC

Board members absent and excused were:

MR. DAVID BELL, DAVID BELL, LLC.
MS. SAMMIE CRIBBS, NORTH ARKANSAS MEDICAL CENTER
MR. WALTER HINOJOSA, NWA LABOR COUNCIL
MS. VICKI JONES, MODERN FENCE
MR. WILSON MARSEILLES, HARRISON REGIONAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
MS. KARLEA NEWBERRY, SIGNATURE BANK OF ARKANSAS
MR. MATT RUSSELL, JACK WILLIAMS VETERAN RESOURCE CENTER

Others present or on Zoom were:

Ms. Susan Sangren, NWAEDD
Ms. Patty Methvin, NWAEDD
Ms. Chelsey Weaver, NWAEDD
Mr. James Moss, NWAEDD
Ms. Karen Henry, NWAEDD
Mr. Jeremy Ragland, NWAEDD
Mr. Joe Willis, NWAEDD
Mr. Nicholas Ryburn, Adult Education
Ms. April Turner, NWAEDD
Mr. Robbie Cornelius, Fayetteville Adult Education
Mr. Nickolas Ryburn, NWTI Adult Education
Mr. Chad Brown, Arkansas Workforce Development Board
Ms. Amy Roberts, North Arkansas College Adult Education
Ms. Katie Causey, NWAEDD
Ms. Rebecca Edwards, ADWS

Mr. Rodney Ellis, Springdale School District
Ms. Tania Overton, NWAEDD
Ms. Eve Aldridge – NWACC
Mr. Tom Ginn – AEDC
Dr. Bently Wallace – ASUMH
Mr. Toliver Myers, Senator Boozman’s Office
Ms. Emily Yates, AEDC
Mr. David Mason, North Arkansas College
Ms. Sarah Brozynski, Baxter Health
Ms. Courtney Traylor, Division of Workforce Services

The meeting was called to order at 11:04 a.m. by CHAIR BO PHILLIPS. MR. PHILLIPS informed the attendees that the meeting was being recorded.

MS. PATTY METHVIN gave the quarterly staff report. MS. METHVIN gave an update on the monitoring appeals. MS. METHVIN explained that there is one issue still pending in the appeal process. The third-party monitoring from 2017 – 2020 has been completed by Hightower Workforce Initiatives. Hightower Workforce Initiatives is currently monitoring for PY2021 and 2022. 2021 monitoring by ADWS was held in April and May of 2022. NWAEDD received the first monitoring response letter in January of 2023 and NWAEDD responded back in February of 2023. There has been no other communication on the 2021 monitoring. 2022 monitoring occurred in April and May of 2023. The first monitoring response letter from ADWS was received in June of 2023. NWAEDD responded within the required 30 days. A second response was received from ADWS in August of 2023. NWAEDD responded back withing the required 15 days.

MS. METHVIN informed the Board that she has been working with ADWS to get the Northwest Workforce Board Certification completed. Many of the Workforce Boards in the State are having difficulty with the ADWS requirement that the recommendation letter state that the nominee for serving on the Board have “Optimum Policy Making Authority”. Northwest has also had issues with this which has lead to two Board members having to resign.

MS. METHVIN gave the Business Services Report. The Business Services Coordinator’s written report is included on the agenda. MS. METHVIN shared with the Board that MS. TANIA OVERTON resigned as Business Services Coordinator and MS. METHVIN will be taking over her responsibilities in addition to her current role. MS. METHVIN reviewed some of the highlights of the written report.

MS. EMILEE TUCKER gave the Youth Committee report. A written report is included on the agenda. The Youth Committee has met 5 times since the last Board meeting. The committee is working on hosting two Youth Summits entitled “See it AND Be It: Come Experience Your Next Job”. The vision of the conference is to get those students at the end of their high school careers and our out-of-school youth to come into a conference setting to figure out more about themselves and how to get them into the workforce.

MS. CHERIE CONNER presented the One-Stop Operator Report. A written report is included on the agenda. MS. CONNER reported that the committee met once to set up goals for the future. The committee will meet again at the Business Services meeting on September 27th.

MS. JENNIFER RAGSDALE presented the Disability Committee Report. A written report is included on the agenda. MS. RAGSDALE reported that the committee has met once and is working on streamlining the referral process. The committee will meet again at the Business Services meeting on September 27th.

A motion was made to approve the committee reports by MR. EDDIE BARTLETT and seconded by MR. KELLEY SHARP. The motion passed.

Agenda Item 1 – Updated Workforce Budget. MS. METHVIN explained to the board that NWAEDD has absorbed \$500,000 in funding cuts over the last two years. The District has served a large number of participants more recently and will have to adjust the number of participants served due to the funding cuts. Also, there was a delay in receiving funds from ADWS. MR. BARTLET made a motion to approve the Updated Workforce Budget. MR. KEVIN ESTES seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Agenda Item 2 – 2024 Northwest Board Budget

MS. METHVIN presented the 2023 Workforce Board budget for approval. The budget only includes 6 months' worth of salary for the Business Services Coordinator since MS. OVERTON resigned. MR. KELLY SHARP made a motion to approve the 2024 Northwest Board budget. MR. ESTES seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Action Item 3 – 2024 Northwest One-Stop Operator Budget

MS. METHVIN went over the One-Stop Operator budget. There were no major changes to this budget from the previous year. MR. ROGER POTTER made a motion to approve the Northwest One-Stop Operator budget. MS. EMILEE TUCKER seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Action Item 4 – Election of Officers

MS. METHVIN directed the board to the list of business members currently serving on the board and explained that the Board Chair must represent a business. MR. ESTES made a motion that the following officer be elected:

Chair	Bo Phillips
Vice Chair	Kelly Sharp
Secretary	Roger Potter

MR. EDDIE BARTLETT seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Action Item 5 – One-Stop Operator Report

MS. SUSAN SANGREN reviewed the One-Stop Operator report. MR. POTTER made a motion to approve the One-Stop Operator report. MS. TUCKER seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Agenda Item 6 – Eligible Training Provider Programs

There were no eligible training provider programs for approval. ADWS is working on getting performance information updated by the providers before the programs can be approved.

Agenda Item 7 – Minutes of the June 7, 2023, Board meeting

MR. ESTES made a motion to approve the minutes of the June 7, 2023, Workforce Board meeting. MR. AARON JOHNSON seconded the motion. The motion passed.

MS. METHVIN spent some time going over an overview of the Northwest Arkansas area and the roles and responsibilities of the C.E.O.'s and the Local Workforce Board. The Board was provided the Chief Elected Officials Membership guide created by ADWS.

The next meeting of the Northwest Workforce Board will be on Wednesday, December 5, 2023.

MR. SHARP made a motion to adjourn. MR. JASON PATIENCE seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 12:45.

DocuSigned by:

Bo Phillips

Bo Phillips, Chair

2/17/2024

Date