

NORTHWEST ARKANSAS LOCAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

Minutes of Meeting June 7, 2023

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

A meeting of the Northwest Arkansas Workforce Development Board (LWDB) was held Wednesday, June 7, 2023, in person, via conference call, and via Zoom.

Board members present in person and via Zoom meeting were:

MR. DAVID BELL, DAVID BELL, LLC. - Proxy Roger Potter
MS. SARAH BROZYNSKI, BAXTER HEALTH
MS. CHERIE CONNER, NORTH ARKANSAS COLLEGE ADULT EDUCATION
MS. CHERYL DAVENPORT, ADVANCED MARINE PERFORMANCE – Proxy Sarah Brozynski
MR. KEVIN ESTES, DHS SERVICES FOR THE BLIND
MR. WALTER HINOJOSA, NWA LABOR COUNCIL
MR. AARON JOHNSON, ARKANSAS DIVISION OF WORKFORCE SERVICES
MS. DIANA JOHNSON, NWACC – Proxy Eve Aldredge
MR. ROSS PARKER, PARKER RENTALS – Proxy Kelley Sharp
MR. ROGER POTTER, ANSTAFF BANK
MS. JENNIFER RAGSDALE, ARKANSAS REHABILITATION SERVICES
MR. KELLEY SHARP, UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS FAYETTEVILLE
MR. RICKY TOMPKINS, ARKANSAS COMMUNITY COLLEGES
MS. EMILEE TUCKER, O.U.R. EDUCATIONAL CO-OP

Board members absent and excused were:

MR. EDDIE BARTLETT, BARTLETT FAMILY DENTISTRY
MS. SAMMIE CRIBBS, NORTH ARKANSAS MEDICAL CENTER
MR. BOB LARGENT, HARRISON REGIONAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
MR. BO PHILLIPS, COX-RAPID SCALE, HARRISON

Others present or on Zoom were:

Ms. Susan Sangren, NWAEDD
Ms. Patty Methvin, NWAEDD
Ms. Chelsey Weaver, NWAEDD
Mr. James Moss, NWAEDD
Mr. Nicholas Ryburn, Adult Education
Ms. April Turner, NWAEDD
Mr. Robbie Cornelius, Fayetteville 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

The meeting was called to order at 11:05 a.m. by VICE CHAIR KELLEY SHARP. MR. SHARP 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. MR. JOE WILLIS was not at the meeting because there was an appeal hearing going on at the same time. MS. METHVIN explained that there were two issues 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 sending a bid for 2021 – 2022 third-party monitoring. 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. 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 last week. NWAEDD will respond back to the letter within the 30-day deadline.

MS. METHVIN informed the Board that the Center Certification team consists of Ross Parker, Cherie Conner, Jennifer Ragsdale, and Kevin Cook. (For information – Cherie Conner and Jennifer Ragsdale were not Board members at the time of Center Certifications). The Team conducted site visits to the Rogers, Fayetteville, Harrison, and Mountain Home offices. The Harrison, Fayetteville and Rogers office received compliments from the Certification Team. Northwest was given a 7-day extension to certify the Mountain Home office since they were moving from one location to another. The Team visited the office 3 days after they moved in. The Team scored the Mountain Home office as “provisional” for several reasons. WIOA was not co-located at the office and there was no office space for them to be co-located in the future. There were no other partners in the center and no sign on the road. These were just a few of the reasons they were marked provisional. The provisional status requires that the Team visit the Center in 3 months to see if they have corrected the issues that were identified by the Team. The Certification Team created a detailed signed documentation outlining all the issues identified.

MS. METHVIN notified the Board that as of June 25th ADWS notified 9 Centers that they would be closing as of the end of June. Northwest’s Mountain Home and Rogers offices were on the list to close. NWAEDD has already moved staff out of the Mountain Home office into our own location. The Rogers NWAEDD staff will move to the Fayetteville office but will maintain a presence in the Rogers area.

MS. METHVIN informed the Board that the State is conducting Board Certifications for each area. Each Board member must have a letter of recommendation on letterhead stating that the person has “optimum policy-making authority”. They are also requiring proof that each business has openings in in-demand occupations.

MS. TANIA OVERTON gave the Business Services Report. The Business Services Coordinator’s written report is included on the agenda. MS. OVERTON shared with the Board one of her success stories. Graze Craze Charcuterie Boards and Catering in Bentonville utilized Northwest’s small business startup resources that Northwest offers. Specifically working with the business’s human resources needs.

MS. SARAH BROZYNSKI gave the Youth Committee report. A written report is included on the agenda. The Youth Committee has met 4 times in 2023. The committee is working on holding 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. BROZYNSKI presented the Youth Committee members for approval of the Board. MR. RICKY TOMPKINS made the motion to approve the Youth Committee members. MR. AARON JOHNSON seconded the motion. The motion passed.

MS. METHVIN presented the One-Stop-Operator Committee members and the Disability Committee members for approval of the Board. MR. KEVIN ESTES made a motion to approve the One-Stop-Operator and the Disability Committee members. MS. EMILEE TUCKER seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Agenda Item 1 – Updated Workforce Budget. MS. CHERIE CONNER made a motion to approve the Updated Workforce Budget. MR. TOMPKINS seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Agenda Item 2 – Transfer of Funds from Adult to DLW

MS. METHVIN explained that WIOA allows for the transfer of up to 100% of funds to be transferred between the Adult and Dislocated Worker Programs. NWAEDD is requesting that up to 75% of the funds from Program Year 2021 be transferred from Dislocated Worker to Adult. MR. ROGER POTTER made a motion to allow the transfer of up to 75% of funds from Dislocated Worker to Adult. MS. CONNER seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Action Item 3 – Policy Changes

MS. METHVIN referred the Board to the overview of policy changes document. MS. Methvin reviewed each policy and the changes that were made. These policy changes were due to ADWS monitoring. MS. TUCKER made a motion to approve the changes to the policies reviewed. MR. JOHNSON seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Action Item 4 – Agreements and By-Laws

MS. METHVIN reviewed the required changes to the CEO/LWDB Agreement, NWA WDB By-Laws and the NWA WDB Governance agreement. MR. TOMPKINS made a motion to approve the changes to these documents. MR. ESTES seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Action Item 5 – One-Stop Operator Report

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

Agenda Item 6 – Eligible Training Provider Programs

MS. METHVIN referred the board to the list of training providers that have been approved. MR. JOHNSON made a motion to approve the ETP list. MS. TUCKER seconded the motion. MS. DIANA JOHNSON and MR. KELLEY SHARP abstained from the vote. The motion passed.

Agenda Item 7 – Minutes of the March 1, 2023, Board meeting

MR. TOMPKINS made a motion to approve the minutes of the March 1, 2023, Workforce Board meeting. MS. CONNER seconded the motion. The motion passed.

The next meeting of the Northwest Workforce Board will be on Wednesday, September 6, 2023.

MR. TOMPKINS made a motion to adjourn. MR. JOHNSON seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 12:30.

DocuSigned by:
Bo Phillips
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Bo Phillips, Chair
9/20/2023
Date