
Workforce Solutions North Texas Board Meeting Minutes

August 26, 2021, 12:00 PM

I. Call to order

Jim Sjolander, serving as Chair in the absence of Lee Ritchie, called the Workforce Solutions North Texas Board Meeting to order at 12:00 PM on August 26, 2021.

II. Roll Call

Members present (in person or via Zoom): Marsha Anderson, Ben Bell, Leslie Chalmers, Billy Clark, Taylor Davis, Keri Goins, Darren Francis, Synthia Kirby, Anthony Louis, Kristen Morris, Michelle Nelson, Debbie Powell, Glenda Ramsey, Crystal Sanders, Rhonda Schreiber, Jim Sjolander, Dirk Welch, and Julie Young.

Jim Sjolander noted a quorum of members present.

Members not present: Toni Alonzo, Roy Cheney, Steve Halloway, Lee Harvey, Tracey Jennings, Brandon Litteken, Rodney McCleskey, Lee Ritchie Jr., and Mileasha Rizan.

Guests present: Kendra Ball, Ebonie Batts, Leneva Clark, Moneisa Downs, Shana Drury, Karen Fite, Josie Gonzalez, Honorable Judge Woodrow Gossom Jr., Ginger Hannah, Sharon Hulcy, Lisa McDaniel, Crystal Ojeda, Brenda Roland, Darla Silva, Lyka Walton, and Dennis Wilde.

Declaration of Conflict of Interest (COI)

Glenda Ramsey and Keri Goins declared conflicts of interest with the actionable childcare agenda items and will abstain from voting on these matters.

III. Consent Agenda

- Motion made by Billy Clark and seconded by Synthia Kirby to accept the consent agenda items. A vote was requested for each line item and votes cast were as follows:
 - *Child Care Policy – Temporary Waiver Initial Job Search*; 14 in favor, 3 abstained, 1 did not cast a vote. Abstaining were Marsha Anderson, Glenda Ramsey, and Keri Goins. Julie Young did not cast a vote.
 - *Child Care Policy – Eligibility Income Level 85% SMI*; 15 in favor, 3 abstained. Abstaining were Marsha Anderson, Glenda Ramsey, and Keri Goins.
 - *RFP#2021-007 Fiscal Monitoring contract award*; 15 in favor, 3 abstained. Abstaining were Anthony Louis, Keri Goins, and Crystal Sanders.

IV. Items for Discussion and Possible Action

- **Committee Reports**
 - Sharon Hulcy provided the procurement list for review.
 - Brenda Roland, WSNT Student HireAbility Navigator, gave a report of the Youth Advisory Committee.

- The 8th Grade Youth Career Expo highlights careers and training available beyond high school. This virtual event will be held on September 28th.
- The 14th Annual Youth Transition Fair and Disability Mentoring Day in partnership with Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) and several other community partners will be held virtually on October 14th, 2021. This is a career event for 11th and 12th graders with disabilities transitioning from high school.
- Crystal Ojeda gave an update about the Summer Earn and Learn (SEAL) Program for students with disabilities which ran from June 14-July 30, 2021. VR provides student referrals, and the workforce center staff pair the students with a worksite that aligns with their career goals. Twenty-two students were paired 20 different worksites.

V. Executive Director Report

Lisa McDaniel updated the Board on the following:

- **Grant Spending Report** – The board will be applying for additional grants to support workforce development in the next month. This will help our job seekers and employers. New childcare initiatives have come through to help economic recovery.
- **Co-location with Vocational Rehabilitation and Update** – The Letter of Intent was signed per July special meeting approval. Lisa McDaniel will meet with the landlord and building broker at the Galaxy Center on August 27 to look at plans before meeting with the architect. Lisa McDaniel was also asked by the Texas Workforce Commission to find the TWC UI tax staff a landing spot to meet with employers. The tax staff are working from home indefinitely and this would provide a place for them if an in-person meeting is necessary. UI tax will be financially responsible for this space they are requesting. The space would be a conference room that is not being utilized at this moment. Jim Sjolander asked if it would be helpful to have someone with Lisa McDaniel at this meeting. Lisa McDaniel declined but emphasized that this is only a preliminary discussion of space needs and that the board members will be kept informed through each step of the process. She also expressed her desire to have board member(s) involvement/presence once everything is past the preliminary phase.
- **Texas Association of Workforce Boards (TAWB)** – Lisa McDaniel and Sharon Hulcy attended the annual TAWB meeting in San Antonio, TX. This event is a networking event for board directors and chairmen that is focused on helping employers across the state keep apprised of in demand topics.
- **The Executive Directors Council (EDC)** – This group of Workforce Solutions Executive Directors from around the state meets bi-weekly to discuss hot topics and collaborate and share best practices.
- **Workforce Conference** – November 17-19, 2021 in Houston. Lisa McDaniel offered an invitation for any board member who wants to attend. The session schedule and additional conference information will be provided as it becomes available. Early bird discount expires at the end of September, so let Lisa McDaniel know asap if attending.

VI. Updates

- Workforce Center Director, Crystal Ojeda, reports that all staff are back in person working.
 - In-person and hybrid job readiness workshops resumed June 14. Participant attendance: 66 in June; 46 in July; and 20 in August.

JOB FAIRS / HIRING EVENTS:

- June 21-25 hosted a virtual “Job Fair Week” highlighting jobs from different high-demand industries each day. Forty-two employers participated, 466 job seekers registered, and 266 job seekers attended the virtual event.
- July 1, North Texas State Hospital Hiring Event - This event was held simultaneously at both the Wichita Falls and Vernon locations. There were a total of 49 job seekers who attended.
- July 8, Hosted an in-person job fair for MTC (Lindsey State Jail) at the workforce center in Wichita Falls.
- July 27 - Public Service Job Fair at Vernon College in Wichita Falls, there were 16 employers present and 117 job seekers attended.
- August 18 – Hosted a Drive-Thru Job Fair in Seymour, TX - 63 employers and 4 job seekers participated.
- The Choices program outreach has been great. Case managers participated in 10 outreach events within the 11 counties and made 24 potential participant contacts. This is good for the rural communities to make sure that they know there are options to help them.
- Leneva Clark with Childcare reported on new grant funds for the Initial Job Search (IJS). This grant went into effect July 1. The temporary waiver allows for families who do not meet the participation hour requirements or who are job-seeking to obtain 3 months of child care at \$0 cost while looking for employment. To date, they have had 24 families apply for IJS childcare. The Service Industry Recovery (SIR) grant went into effect on August 1. SIR childcare is designed to rapidly enroll children of workers in TWC-specified service industries.
- Kendra Ball reported on unemployment and rapid response activities. Unemployment has fluctuated from July 2019 to July 2021. The unemployment rate continues to improve and for July 2021, the rate is at 5.4%. We have worked with three companies this year who have announced closures including Georgia Pacific, Notre Dame Catholic School, and Tranter. Ball filed a trade petition on behalf of Tranter and we received notice that it has been certified. This Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) petition will allow for additional support and assistance for those who have lost employment due to their jobs shifting outside the U.S. Additional employment services will be provided to workers at Tranter including a resume workshop and a career fair tentatively scheduled for October.

VII. Announcements – Next board meeting is October 28, 2021.

VIII. Adjournment

Jim Sjolander adjourned the meeting at 1:02 PM on August 26, 2021.

Please refer to Board packet for additional updates, success stories, and photos of the great work being done in the community.

Submitted by,

Ebonie Batts
Administrative Specialist