
Workforce Solutions North Texas Board Meeting Minutes

November 4, 2021, 12:00 PM

I. Call to order

Chairman, Lee Ritchie Jr., called the Workforce Solutions North Texas Board Meeting to order at 12:00 PM on November 4, 2021.

II. Roll Call

Members present (in person or via Zoom): Toni Alonzo, Billy Clark, Keri Goins, Steve Halloway, Tracey Jennings, Synthia Kirby, Anthony Louis, Kristen Morris, Michelle Nelson, Debbie Powell, Lee Ritchie Jr., Mileasha Rizan, Crystal Sanders, Jim Sjolander, and Julie Young.

Chairman, Lee Ritchie Jr. noted a quorum of members present.

Members not present: Marsha Anderson, Leslie Chalmers, Taylor Davis, Darren Francis, Lee Harvey, Brandon Litteken, Glenda Ramsey, Rhonda Schreiber, and Dirk Welch.

Guests present: Kendra Ball, Ebonie Batts, Michael Blevins, Leneva Clark, Moneisa Downs, Shana Drury, Leslee Escobedo, Scott Essary, Karen Fite, Josie Gonzalez, Janis Heebner, Sharon Hulcy, Lisa McDaniel, Crystal Ojeda, Xochitl Pruit, Brenda Roland, Darla Silva, and Lyka Walton.

III. Declaration of Conflict of Interest (COI)

None declared.

IV. Approval of Minutes

- Billy Clark made the motion and Jim Sjolander seconded to accept the minutes from the August board meeting.

V. Items for Discussion and Possible Action

- **Update from Nominations Committee** – Motion made by Tracey Jennings and seconded by Billy Clark accepting the Election of New Board Officers – Kristin Morris as Chair, Rhonda Schreiber as Vice-Chair, and Glenda Ramsey as Secretary. 14 in favor, 1 did not cast a vote. Debbie Powell did not cast a vote due to technical difficulties.
- **Update from Outreach Committee** Kendra Ball introduced MedCerts as an out of state online training provider. The Outreach Committee met October 14, 2021, to discuss the benefits of having MedCerts as an additional provider for our students. Kendra Ball stated this would provide the students with more options for resources with training for their career choice. Approving MedCerts to our local out of state training providers will benefit the WIOA students. – Motion made by Billy Clark and seconded by Michelle Nelson to approve adding MedCerts as an out-of-state provider on the ETPL.
 - Add MedCerts to local Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) 13 in favor, 1 abstained, and 1 did not cast a vote. Crystal Sanders abstained, and Debbie Powell did not cast a vote due to technical difficulties.

VI. *Committee Reports*

A. **Monitoring Committee**

- Sharon Hulcy provided a review regarding the Fiscal Integrity Evaluation review. This review was completed by Diaz, Smith, and Associates and they have determined the entities in the review population are materially in compliance with the requirements of TWC. Sharon Hulcy stated there were no actions that need to be taken on this reporting. They will be completing the financial review on the sub recipients by mid-January.
- TWC Audit is scheduled for the week of April 11th
- Sharon Hulcy provided the procurement list for review.

B. **Youth Advisory Committee**

- The 14th Annual 2021 Jobs Y'all Transition Fair was held October 13th and 27th. On October 13th there were 44 registered students and on October 27th there were 21 registered students. The focus was to address postsecondary goals and to prepare students to access the supports and services necessary to reach their desired outcomes.

C. **Executive Director Report** – Lisa McDaniel updated the Board on the following:

- **Board Member Update:** The two proposed board members are Linda Whitaker from Archer County with Archer Supply Company and Whitaker Lawn Service in Archer City, TX. and Michael Blevins from Young County with Tower Extrusions in Olney, TX. The new board members are on the docket for approval from the Texas Workforce Commissioners.
- **Grant Spending Report** – The report shows several grants that have ended as of September and new grants that started as of October 2021.
- **2022 Preliminary Budget** – Lisa McDaniel explained the budget for 2022 is a preliminary and the final will be ready for the December meeting. Julie Young asked how this budget will sustain after the Covid grants expire. Lisa McDaniel stated the monies are not covid-related funds, these are program allotted funds. She explained the increase in the budget is for the expansion in hiring a Child Care Contract Manager staff at the board level as well as other new positions at the board level. Lisa McDaniel points out that the board has spent monies in attorney fees that were not anticipated and budgeted for last year. Lisa McDaniel ensured the board that she will be trying to get more funds to outweigh the cost. Julie Young asked what the Skills Training is under Skills Development. Lisa McDaniel explains the monies were a special initiative grant that the board wrote and obtained from TWC that directly helped to train and upskill workers. This grant expired at the end of September. Kendra Ball explains that they submitted a grant application that will be awarded in January for teachers and externships that is in the Skills Development category. Jim Sjolander asked for explanation regarding the fiscal agent fee. Lisa McDaniel explained that the fiscal agent receives 1% of the grant as a handling expense.
- **Big Blue Update** – Big Blues attorney filed a brief with the appellate court and a hearing is set for 11/30/21. There will not be any oral arguments at this time. Big Blue's attorney could object and demand an oral argument; however, the boards attorney does not think their attorney will ask for that. The finalization of this case could be issued by the middle of 2022 for a decision.
- **Update on Co-Location** – Lisa McDaniel reported that she has a meeting with the representative from the Regional Vocational Rehabilitation office to do a preliminary walk through for the proposed space for them at the Galaxy Center this afternoon. Lisa McDaniel stated that she has met with the architect for first draft of plans as well as the building owner and tentatively set a date of August 2022 to move in. Mrs. McDaniel emphasized that this is a very tentative date and more than likely would be pushed out farther. The architect says there will be several drafts on the plans before finalization. A concern that can hinder the move-in date is the supply and demand for products and materials for the reconstruction. Lisa McDaniel met with the Executive Director and Treasurer for Adult Literacy to discuss space for their organization. They would like to have an approximately 5,000 square feet for their area, and Mrs. McDaniel explained that much space is not available. Mrs. McDaniel states that she is going to continue to meet with them to offer a space for them within the Workforce Center but isn't sure that will come to fruition. Lisa McDaniel expressed her vision of

housing a staff person from Rolling Plains, and a staff from Health and Human Services within the Workforce Center for our customers to have access to all resources in one building. Lisa McDaniel has been working with Leslee Escobedo from Child Care to provide them with more office space that is needed also to expand the Childcare office. Jim Sjolander asked if the court does not rule in our favor in the lawsuit and we commit to the landlord at the Galaxy Center could we be affected from a monetary aspect regarding liability or double committed on building space. Lisa McDaniel replies that we have already won the lawsuit, there are no financial monies involved, she will contact our lawyer to get more information.

- **Service Industry Recovery Funding** – Lisa McDaniel explained this is an initiative within the childcare program for a year of childcare at no cost if the parent works in food service, retail, or arts/entertainment/recreation. Families do need to meet income guidelines to qualify for this program. The center has a target to place 478 children by March 2022, therefore they will be advertising heavily on social media, and continuing with numerous outreach efforts to meet this target.
- **TWC State Conference** – Kendra Ball will be representing our organization on the Pursuit of Advanced Training in High-Demand Skills (PATHS) for Texas Retail Grant panel discussion. Kendra Ball will be addressing the middle skills gap and support retention for retail employers.

D. **Workforce Solutions Workforce Center** – Crystal Ojeda reports during the month of September they served over 1,700 job seekers, placed 48 job seekers into employment, and provided 167 services to employers. Crystal Ojeda's team hosted a drive thru job fair on October 14th they had 7 job seekers. They also hosted the 7th Annual Job's Y'all Career Expo for 8th graders to present occupations and define what the occupation requires. There were 18 sessions and 314 students attended from 7 schools. The 10th Annual Hiring Red, White, and You! event is today at the Sikes Lake Center. There are 45 employers that have signed up for this event. This month's success story is from Meri Gherbermichael who completed her education and obtained her RN license in May 2021. Crystal shared that her team continues to maintain excellent customer service with the positive survey results they receive.

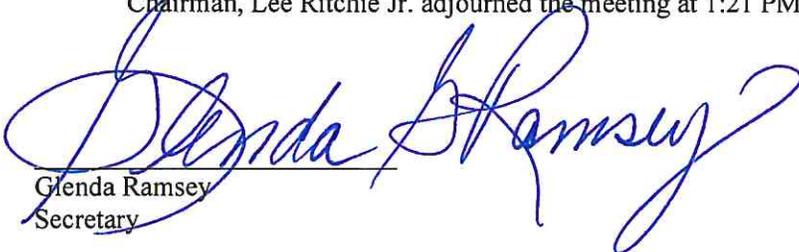
E. **Workforce Solutions Child Care** – Leslee Escobedo reports that her team reached their goal of 98.32% for the year. Child Care still currently has no waiting list. Through out the year the applications submitted for services have tripled. Mrs. Escobedo states as of September the Child Care office has received 1,326 applications and 530 have been eligible for services. Mrs. Escobedo shared a chart showing the rate increase for providers. Leslee Escobedo spoke on the Child Care Initiative grant and shared about her advertising efforts to ensure the word gets out regarding this grant and stated they did meet with news channels to start the commercials for advertising this program.

F. **Unemployment and Rapid Response** – Kendra Ball reported the unemployment rate is decreasing, yet there is still work to be done. She reported Jack, Montague, and Wilbarger County have trended down but are still higher than the North Texas and Texas rates. Mrs. Ball gave an update on Rapid Response and the Board is still working with Tranter to provide rapid response services who is scheduled to be closing their plant at the end of December. Kendra Ball is hopeful that we will be able to help the employees. She reports that Heff's closed but they plan to reopen. Efforts to assist employees at Georgia Pacific is still on schedule.

VII. **Announcements** – Next board meeting is December 9, 2021.

VIII. **Adjournment**

Chairman, Lee Ritchie Jr. adjourned the meeting at 1:21 PM.


Glenda Ramsey
Secretary