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## **Workforce Solutions North Texas Board Meeting Minutes February 8, 2024**

The Workforce Solutions North Texas Board met at noon on Thursday, February 8, 2024, at Workforce Solutions North Texas, 4309 Jacksboro Hwy., Entrance 5, in Wichita Falls, in the Lonestar conference room.

### MEMBERS PRESENT (via in person or zoom):

Toni Alonzo, Communities in Schools Greater Wichita Falls  
Marsha Anderson, Rolling Plains Management Corporation  
Michael Blevins, Tower Extrusions  
Lauren Bush, Seymour Economic Development  
Keri Goins, Childcare Partners  
Steve Holloway, Wichita Falls Trades and Labor Council  
Maria James, Wichita Falls Chamber of Commerce  
Anthony Louis, Pratt & Whitney  
Penny Miller, My HR Department  
Michael Nelson, United Regional  
Kristin Little, American National Bank & Trust, Wichita Falls  
Glenda Ramsey, Harper Perkins Architect  
Debbie Powell, Texas Workforce Solutions, Vocational Rehabilitation  
Crystal Sanders, Texas Workforce Commission  
Rhonda Schreiber, Humana  
Jim Sjolander, Berend Brothers  
Scotty Sproles, NOV Fiber Glass Systems  
Julie Young, Wichita Adult Literacy  
Michelle Wood, Wichita Falls ISD CTE

### MEMBERS NOT PRESENT:

Mary Aranda, Farmers Insurance  
Billy Clark, Helping Electra's Local People  
Tracey Jennings, Attorney  
Kenny Miller, Region 9  
Mileasha Rizan, Work Services Corporation  
Dirk Welch, Midwestern State University

### GUESTS PRESENT:

Ginger Hannah, Equus, Workforce Solutions Center  
Sandi Stahr, Equus, Workforce Solutions Center  
Leneva Clark, Rolling Plains Management Corporation, Workforce Solutions Center

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David Dohme, Texas Veterans Commission  
Crystal Ojeda, Equus, Wichita Falls Center  
Sherry Dunn, Texas Veterans Commission  
Shana Ferguson, Nortex Regional Planning Commission  
Cynthia Humphrey, Equus, Wichita Falls Center  
Xochitl Pruitt, Region 9  
Darla Silva, Equus, Wichita Falls Center  
Keith Umphress, Jack County Judge

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:

Lisa McDaniel, Executive Director  
Kendra Ball, Business & Outreach Manager  
Sharon Hulcy, Contract Manager  
Josie Gonzales, Childcare Contract Manager  
Dakota Mize, Community Engagement Specialist  
Kayla Crowley, Community Engagement Specialist – Childcare Division  
Sydney Clement, Administrative Assistant / EO Officer

Kristin Little, Madam Chair, called the meeting to order at 12:05 pm. Mrs. Little called roll for the board members.

Mrs. Little asked for any public comments and there were none noted.

Mrs. Little asked if there were any declaration of conflict of interest and there was none noted.

Mrs. Lisa McDaniel, Executive Director, was notified as of January 29th, we were out of compliance being short one private sector board member since they had increased our number to 27 board members as of December of last year. However, there is paperwork that has been submitted to the Texas Workforce Commission for a new board member, they could not get that member on the docket before today's meeting, but they are on the docket for the 20<sup>th</sup> of February. We are having to wait for the commissioner to approve the final board member, therefore, we will not vote for the October board meeting minutes today. No questions asked.

Mrs. Sharon Hulcy, Contract Manager, discussed the 2023 TWC Monitoring Audit Resolution we received January 29th, from the Texas Workforce Commission Monitoring Report, that was the visit from last year, the findings that were found was that our data validation that is for our information that's put into our system to make sure everything matches our supporting documents was reviewed. They reviewed 180 elements and only six issues were found. The second finding was that our leases need to be properly procured; however, the procurement was not the issue, it was the "process" of the lease itself for the board office building. The finding was that the lease for the board office was "extended", and a brand-new lease was not done by the landlord. We have submitted a plan to Audit Resolution to go out for RFQ for Broker services in late spring of this year to assist us in looking for space. A new lease for the board office will be procured and in place by May of 2025.



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Audit Resolution accepted the board's response of corrective action, and the finding was closed. No questions asked.

Mrs. Sharon Hulcy then discussed the report for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Employment and Training Monitoring report. It has been addressed that the board should strengthen its controls to ensure that the form HI822 ABAWD Work Requirement Verification and form H1817 SNAP Information Transmittal program requirements are followed. Texas Workforce Commission sub-recipient monitors will be back in May 2024.

Mrs. Hulcy then went over the Board Procurement List for the rolling 12 months as well as the Grant Spending Report. No questions asked.

Mrs. McDaniel, Executive Director, then introduced our new board members. Michelle Wood, Director of Career and Technology at Wichita Falls ISD. Scotty Sproles retired, United States Air Force, with NOV Fiber Glass Systems. Chelsey Lewis, owner and operator of the Lewis Learning Center in Graham, TX will be on the docket for 2/20/24 to be approved by the Commissioner. Sydney Clement is our new Administrative Assistant in our board office and is in training to become our EO Officer. Penny Miller, My HR Department, will be retiring this year as well as leaving the board and we wish her nothing but the best in her retirement and her next adventure.

Mrs. McDaniel went on to discuss that during the 2023 Workforce conference that she and several members of our staff went to in November, we were awarded another Business Service Award of \$50,000 for our continued efforts with Vocational Rehabilitation Integration. This award recognizes boards who excel in the collaboration and integration between the Workforce Career Center and VR division. Mrs. McDaniel has been working with the center to see what items we will need for the center and the funding must be spent by 12/31/24.

Mrs. McDaniel informed everyone that, was notified on January 26th that we were 1 of 11 boards awarded the teacher externship grant that was discussed at the board meeting in October. We are very pleased and excited to be able to partner with Region 9 to place 25 teachers into externships during the Summer of 2024. This program and supporting partnerships will ensure teachers are equipped with relevant knowledge of high-demand, high-growth industries. We will outreach to the ISD Superintendents, Region 9, and CET Directors to ensure they receive this information to spread the word to those who want to apply. We will be recruiting by March 1<sup>st</sup>. The application for applying is in the process of being developed and a landing page is also being developed at this time on our website. More information to come.

Mrs. McDaniel announced coming Friday, March 1<sup>st</sup>, the Texas Workforce Commission will host the Texas conference for employers at the Delta Hotel by Marriott Convention Center here in Wichita Falls, TX. This is going to be a seminar where employers can send their staff to help them learn about state and federal employment laws. Speakers are assembled to guide employers through ongoing matters of concern and will be able to answer any questions regarding their business. We are partnering with TWC to help host and sponsor this event. You will be able to register on our website and social media event calendar if you and your team would like to attend.

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Mrs. McDaniel announced that we hosted Texas Workforce Commission Office of Employer Initiatives event, on January 26th where they had discussed different grant opportunities to apply for. There is a “jet” grant specifically for college or high schools to help them buy equipment. Mrs. Kendra Ball had said the office of Employer Initiatives are focused on training. If your employees need training on a new piece of equipment, Texas Workforce Commission has grants you can apply for, for that training, Mrs. Kendra Ball also informed everyone that our new liaison would be able to help you with the application if needed. The application process for these initiatives start on March 1 and run through May 31, 2024.

Mrs. McDaniel discussed this year’s Summer Earn and Learn goal is to help 22 students. We exceeded our goal last year by helping 32 students instead. Our Youth Transition Fair is scheduled to be taking place on March 5 & 6, 2024 at the MPEC in Wichita Falls, TX for high school students with disabilities. This will help them for life after high school. Historically, we have only offered this to juniors and seniors. This year we have expanded to offer it to 9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> graders. More information to come.

Kayla Crowley, Community Engagement Specialist for Childcare Division, along with Keri Goins, from Childcare Partners, announced the Childcare Partners and Vernon ISD have partnered to open a daycare facility to be open by May 1<sup>st</sup>. There is already a waiting list and this is a much-needed facility to help fill the children who need care in this community and surrounding areas. There are going to be two infant rooms, one 1- 2year old transition room, two toddler rooms, two 3-year-old rooms and one 4-year-old room.

Kayla Crowley also informed us that one of our contracted at - home daycare owners is moving her daycare to a larger facility in Graham, TX and she is also purchasing another facility to take care of more infants and children from 18 months to 2 years old. Ms. Crowley also spoke about the Childcare Advisory Committee that the Texas Workforce Commission has required all boards implement. This childcare advisory group will meet at least quarterly to discuss different issues or ideals regarding our childcare community. It will be called the “Childcare Advisory Council” and will require specific representatives within our community and our 11 counties to participate.

Ms. Crystal Ojeda, Equus, Wichita Falls Center, announced we had 66 total that had entered for employment in the month of January. Ms. Ojeda stated that there was a huge turnout at the November Hiring Red, White and You job fair. Ms. Ojeda stated we had 65 employers, and 64 job seekers attended. She shared a success story from the 2023 Montague County job fair. Josh Coffey, who had never worked before coming to Workforce Solution North Texas, had several barriers that made finding the right job a challenge until he met Dr. Barlow with the Bowie Pet Clinic. Dr. Barlow had stated she felt a connection with Josh, as Dr. Barlow’s father had the same barriers to employment once before. Josh loves his job, especially the animals. He is now living on his own and his entire demeanor has changed. She also informed the board that we have partnered with the University of Texas grant, to become a host center for adaptable equipment. Our employers in the area and staff members provide this technology and equipment for those with disabilities.

Leneva Clark, WFS Childcare, then gave updates from the Childcare program. They have hired two new client services specialists to join their team, Rachel Henson, and Molly Kitner. They now have three designated

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specialists, TRS Mentor, Rhonda Gibbs is our HHSC-Early Childhood Intervention Specialist, TRS Mentor, Mary Havens is now our Infant-Toddler Specialist, TRS Mentor, Allyson Harlost is our secondary ITSN Specialist and our TRS Provider Services Specialist Liaison is Linda Crabtree as well as our TECPDS (Texas Early Childhood Professional System) Specialist.

As of February 2, 2024, there are 229 families and 430 children waiting on the waitlist for childcare services. The estimated wait time for childcare services currently is 4 months – 1 year. As of January 2024, we have placed 1,453 children in childcare and have had 38 families and 58 children as new referrals. Childcare client services are also out-reaching 40 clients every week. Provider Services had chosen to give 204 books and supplements in the first quarter to “Beyond the Page” which is a Texas Rising Star caregiver to build and strengthen the literacy skills for children in our community.

Mrs. Kendra Ball went over the Rapid Response report to give everyone an update. We have had a handful of other business closes and layoffs since our last meeting. Karate Bar and Bistro downtown Wichita Falls had closed before we were notified, Dental Planet had had layoffs early January and referred their employees to WFSNT, B Cocoa Artisan Chocolates in downtown Wichita Falls will be closing their doors May 31, 2024, and Sweet Boys Diner in Bowie, Texas closed its doors on January 26, 2024. The total number of employees impacted on layoffs/closures for the YTD 2023 was 484.

Mrs. Little announced the next board meeting will be on April 25, 2024, and the meeting was adjourned at 1:09 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Glenda Ramsey". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end of the name. It is positioned to the right of the typed name "Glenda Ramsey, Secretary".

Glenda Ramsey, Secretary