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Workforce Solutions North Texas Board Meeting Minutes October 26, 2023

The Workforce Solutions North Texas Board met at noon on Thursday, October 26, 2023, 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 Area
Marsha Anderson, Rolling Plains Management Corporation
Mary Aranda, Farmers Insurance
Michael Blevins, Tower Extrusions
Lauren Bush, Seymour Economic Development
Billy Clark, Helping Electra's Local People, Electra
Keri Goins, Childcare Partners
Steve Holloway, Wichita Falls Trades and Labor Council
Maria James, Wichita Falls Chamber of Commerce
Kristin Little, American National Bank & Trust, Wichita Falls
Debbie Powell, Texas Workforce Solutions, Vocational Rehabilitation
Crystal Sanders, Texas Workforce Commission
Rhonda Schreiber, Humana
Jim Sjolander, Berend Brothers
Dirk Welch, Midwestern State University
Julie Young, Wichita Adult Literacy

MEMBERS NOT PRESENT:

Tracey Jennings, Attorney
Kenny Miller, Region 9

GUESTS PRESENT:

Ginger Hannah, Equus, Workforce Solutions Center
Darla Silva, Equus, Workforce Solutions Center
Sandi Stahr, Equus, Workforce Solutions Center
Donna Adams, Rolling Plains Management Corporation, Workforce Solutions Center
Leneva Clark, Rolling Plains Management Corporation, Workforce Solutions Center
Dennis Wilde, Nortex Regional Planning Commission
David Dohme, Texas Veterans Commission
Crystal Ojeda, Equus Wichita Falls Center

Texas Workforce Commission, in partnership with 28 local workforce development boards, forms Texas Workforce Solutions. Workforce Solutions North Texas is an equal opportunity employer/program. Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities. Relay Texas: (800)735-2989 (TDD) or (800)735-2988(Voice) or 711



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STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:

Lisa McDaniel, Executive Director

Kendra Ball, Business & Outreach Manager

Sharon Hulcy, Contract Manager

Robin Read, IT Systems Support

Dakota Mize, Community Engagement Specialist

Kayla Crowley, Community Engagement Specialist – Childcare Division

Kristin Little, Madam Chair, called the meeting to order at 12:06 pm. Mrs. Little called roll for the Board members.

Mrs. Little asked for public comment, which there was none.

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

Mrs. Little asked for approval of the consent agenda and the minutes from the August 2023 Board meeting. Billy Clark made the motion to approve (motion passed).

Mrs. Sharon Hulcy went over discussion from the Monitoring Committee Meeting that was held on October 26th. Mrs. Hulcy indicated that the Fiscal Integrity Report completed by Diaz, Smith and Associates was reviewed and explained the reasoning behind these reviews annually to clear our vendors to ensure there are no risks with contracting going forward starting 10/1/2023.

Mrs. McDaniel reviewed the grant spending report and the procurement list and there were no questions asked. Mrs. McDaniel went over the increase in salaries from the personnel cost to the board levels. Mrs. McDaniel also went over insurance costs. TML was going to have a 44% increase, however, the Employer of Record had hired a broker to go out and see if they couldn't find a better option and they did. We are staying with Blue Cross Blue Shield and have an 11% increase.

Mrs. Sharon Hulcy went over the review from the Department of Health and Human Services for the SNAP program they had reviewed and did not find any errors or concerns.

Mrs. McDaniel introduced new board member Penny Miller from My HR Department, and stated that there are two that have been submitted that she is awaiting approval for. Those are Shannon Drury, a representative from Vernon College, and Michelle Wood, the Director of Career and Technology at the CTE for WFISD.

Mrs. McDaniel was notified Wednesday, October 25th, 2023, that as of January 1, 2023, the board will be required to have a local childcare committee.



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Mrs. McDaniel mentioned that we have a new board composition that has been set by the Texas Workforce Commission. HB1615 passed during the last legislature session amended a government code that required each board to expand its membership to include a representative to the childcare workforce. The childcare representative must be a current owner or director of a childcare facility that is licensed by and registered with the Texas Health and Human Services Commission. As of September 1st, boards have 90 days to become in compliance. Mrs. McDaniel explained that we are lucky because Keri Goins fits the criteria and the Texas Workforce Commission has given approval for Ms. Goins to fulfill that roll for our board until her next term expires, which isn't until September of 2025.

Mrs. Kendra Ball, Business and Outreach Manager, informed everyone that we need to make sure we are following our by-laws. Every board member is supposed to serve on at least one committee. She is working to put together some information, so everyone understands what committee they are working on. She has been doing research on what other boards are doing that are expected to be presented soon.

Mrs. Ball has also been working on a grant application for a Teacher Externship grant. We have applied, as well as other boards across the state. We want to facilitate 25 teacher externships during the Summer of 2024 so teachers can get placed with an employer and then take that education into the classroom for the 2024 Fall school year. They will not announce until January 2024 and the grant would start in February. More information to come.

Mrs. Crystal Ojeda, Center Director, went over the September 2023 workforce report. Mrs. Ojeda indicated for the year ending September 30th, the centers had served 10,713 customers. She also said that for the month of September, there were 51 total entered employments, 276 employers served and a total of 623 services given to employers. She states that they are still serving every county throughout the year and hosting a job fair to make sure we are available to all job seekers. She also went over event results for recent job fairs and hiring events. She indicated that during the 9th Annual Jobs Y'all Youth Career Expo, we hosted 1,155 8th graders, 97 teachers and 20 schools at Region 9.

Donna Adams, Childcare Program Director, then gave updates from the Childcare program. As of 10/2/23 there are 255 families and 504 children on the waitlist with the estimated wait time being 4 months. She stated that they have outreached 6 families and there are 249 families on current waitlist left to outreach. Mrs. Adams stated that at the end of September the total number of children placed in care was 1,496 with a total of new referrals from 12 families and 22 children. She states that the office is outreaching about 8 clients per week. She also stated that we currently have 89 contracted providers and of those 49.44% are accredited with Texas Rising Star. Mrs. Adams mentioned Beyond the Page, it serves to enhance the quality of the caregivers and strengthen literacy skills through a wide variety of supplemental materials.

Mrs. Kayla Crowley, Community Engagement Specialist for Childcare, shared that she and Keri Goins with Childcare Partners, have met with the Superintendent for Vernon ISD to expand Childcare Partners to Wilbarger county in the old elementary facility that was closed. One daycare center in Wilbarger county, Discovery Days has closed, so we are hoping to open a new facility for them in Wilbarger county. There is also a new center opening here in Wichita Falls and another in Young county. Mrs. Crowley encouraged all to check our Facebook page every Monday through Friday and share as the more we get the word out the more likely we are to see growth.



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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. GulfMark is shutting down two different locations, affecting Electra and Bowie. Denny's in Wichita Falls on Kemp is closing for remodeling to open a Hawaiian Brothers and Marcos Pizza near Sheppard Airforce Base is also closing.

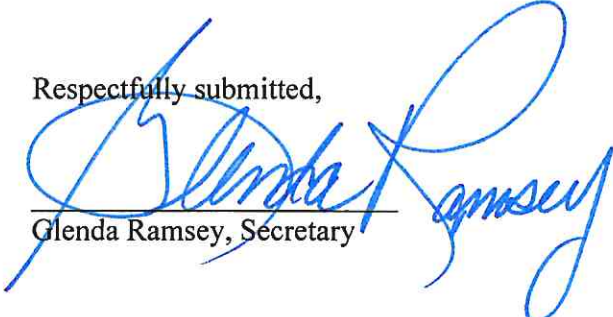
She indicated that she learned about Gene's Tasty Burger closing in July and attempted to reach out to provide rapid response services but the business was already closed when we learned about it. The Center reports that they have seen a few staff coming in for assistance and center staff are just completing those one-on-one. Mrs. Ball also informed everyone that she is working with a local manufacturing company who is very slow right now and trying to prevent layoffs. Mrs. Ball has provided information to connect them with TWC for shared work and other options to prevent layoffs. This was a confidential listing for possible layoffs in September.

Ms. Toni Alonso informed everyone about the Community in Schools fund-raiser to be held in December on the 15th at the Women's Forum. This event allows for you to have a lunch and decorate Gingerbread houses and all proceeds benefit Communities in Schools.

Mrs. McDaniel did mention that the December board meeting may be an activity for board members in lieu of the regular board meeting since concern was that they may not have a quorum being so close to the Christmas Holiday but that more information will be coming.

Mrs. Little announced the next board meeting was scheduled for December 15th, 2023, and the meeting was adjourned at 1:11 pm.

Respectfully submitted,


Glenda Ramsey, Secretary