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Workforce Solutions North Texas Board Meeting Minutes April 25, 2024

The Workforce Solutions North Texas Board met at noon on Thursday, April 25, 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 Area
Michael Blevins, Tower Extrusions
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
Chelsea Lewis, Lewis Learning Center
Kristin Little, American National Bank & Trust, Wichita Falls
Anthony Louis, Pratt & Whitney
Kenny Miller, Region 9
Debbie Powell, Texas Workforce Solutions, Vocational Rehabilitation
Glenda Ramsey, Harper Perkins Architects
Mileasha Rizan, Work Service Corporation
Crystal Sanders, Texas Workforce Commission
Rhonda Schreiber, Humana
Jim Sjolander, Berend Brothers
Dirk Welch, Midwestern State University
Linda Whitaker, Archer Supply
Julie Young, Wichita Adult Literacy
Michelle Wood, WFISD CTE

MEMBERS NOT PRESENT:

Marsha Anderson, Rolling Plains Management Corporation
Mary Aranda, Farmers Insurance
Lauren Bush, Seymour Economic Development
Tracey Jennings, Attorney
Penny Miller, My HR Department
Scotty Sproles, NOV Fiber Glass Systems

GUESTS PRESENT:

Ginger Hannah, Equus, Workforce Solutions Center
Darla Silva, Equus, Workforce Solutions Center

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Sandi Stahr, Equus, Workforce Solutions Center
Donna Adams, Rolling Plains Management Corporation, Workforce Solutions Center
Tiffany Jones, Rolling Plains Management Corporation, Workforce Solutions Center
Shana Ferguson, Nortex
Crystal Ojeda, Equus Wichita Falls Center
Cynthia Humphrey, Equus Wichita Falls Center
Tim Short, Wichita Falls Mayor

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:

Lisa McDaniel, Executive Director
Kendra Ball, Business & Outreach Manager
Karen Fite, Technology Manager
Robin Read, IT Systems Support
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 12:02 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 February 2024 Board meeting. Billy Clark made the motion and Dirk Welch seconded. (motion passed).

Mrs. Lisa McDaniel, Executive Director, discussed the approval for selection RFQ for a real estate broker that we had requested on March 7, 2024. We had two individuals apply for that position, one was EXP Commercial from Houston, TX and Strategic Reality, LLC from Wichita Falls, TX. We had an evaluation team review their proposals on behalf of Workforce Solutions North Texas. The point system was to look at their experience, licensing, memberships, and references. The decision was to go with Strategic Reality Services, LLC of Wichita Falls, TX, that had the best score. This was a result of our 2023 TWC monitoring finding, the lease we had done with the board office, the landlord did not write a new lease, they had just extended it so having a broker on file now will help to assist us with those things moving forward. Glenda Ramsey made motion to approve the broker as suggested by the monitoring committee, and Billy Clark seconded. (motion passed).

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Mrs. McDaniel then discussed that earlier this week the monitoring committee had met about the TWC audit resolution status from May of 2023. On April 22, 2024, we received the SNAP report findings and they have approved and closed the report for last year. We have even had our own program monitors do more evaluation. They felt comfortable with the plans that the board and staff had made. That is closed and final.

The DSA Financial and Program Report, that is for the fiscal year 2024, was reviewed. There has been a turnover in our WIOA program, but Equus is continuing to train new staff. There is also going to be continuing monitoring on the local levels by both contractors, Rolling Plains and Equus. The TWC Monitors will be here May 6, 2024, for this year's report. No questions asked.

Mrs. McDaniel then announced that the 2023 Annual Report is completed and will be mailed within the next several weeks. She also included that the Teacher Externship Program is off and running to a great start. We have 25 teachers across the surrounding areas including Archer City ISD, Burkburnett ISD, Chillicothe ISD, Henreitta ISD, Holliday ISD, Vernon ISD WFISD, Windthorst ISD and Region 9 Education Service Center who will all be placed with local employers for a week during Summer 2024. They will learn from the industries and take it back to the classroom through with a lesson plan and then a field trip or visit from employer in the fall. Each educator who completes all requirements will then receive a \$1000 stipend. Mrs. McDaniel explained this will be a great way to give first-hand experience and knowledge to both educators and employers within their respective fields of expertise.

TWC approved the Childcare Workforce Strategic Plan 2023-2025 Plan which includes goals and action plans for implementation to be done by each Workforce Board. Mrs. McDaniel explained that we have formed a Childcare Advisory Council to meet this requirement. She went on to explain the purpose of this council is to discuss obstacles relating to childcare for North Texas and to provide input and guidance to the Workforce Solutions North Texas Board. The childcare advisory council will meet at least quarterly and be held in person and virtually as well as recorded and posted. The council will consist of the following members: licensed childcare centers participating in TWC's Childcare Services (CCS) program, licensed or registered childcare homes participating in CCS, families currently or formally served by CCS, Board CCS contractors, board members and/or board staff and other childcare stakeholders that represent the interest of the children and/or the families served. Ms. Kayla Crowley, Community Engagement Specialist – Childcare Division, has also been asked to attend the Texas Association for the Education of Young Children (TAEYC) in our local area. They are currently working on the chapter application to get one in our region. She also will be attending our region's Early Childhood Coalition meetings. Ms. Crowley continues to outreach providers who have shown an interest in TRS. We have had two new centers open in our rural areas, Kingdom Kids in Seymour, TX and Wagner Nursery and Academy in Graham, TX. CCP in Vernon, TX is scheduled to open there new location on May 15th.

Mrs. McDaniel discussed Board Committees. According to the Workforce Solutions North Texas Bylaws, each board member should serve on at least one committee. Each committee should consist of at least five or more board members including a committee chair. A google poll will be sent out to each board member to get interest for which committee each board member would like to be included in.

Mrs. McDaniel went on to announce that board members Michelle Nelson and Penny Miller have both retired and a new member from United Regional Healthcare System is on the docket for May 28th at TWC for approval by the commissioners. We currently do not have representation on board from Clay, Cottle, Hardman, Foard, Montague, and Wilbarger counties. An email has been sent to the CEO's asking for assistance.



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Mrs. McDaniel stated that the TWC Annual Conference is scheduled for December 4 – 6, 2024, at the Gaylord Texan Resort & Convention Center in Grapevine. Hotel reservations fill quickly, and if you are interested in attending, everyone was encouraged to reach out as soon as possible.

Ms. Crystal Ojeda, Equus Project Director, spoke about employment placements for February and March. There were 98 placements in February and 70 went to work and 100 placements in March and 93 went to work. She went on to discuss that 17 schools, and 172 students attended the March 2024 Transition Fair where we had 14 sessions and 27 resources for the students. Staff attended Vernon College in February for the JET grant award for \$142,500, for the Vernon College Truck Driving Program.

Ms. Ojeda stated the success story this month was about Ms. Tammy Meyer who had come to Wichita Falls when her husband received a permanent change of station (PCS) with the Air Force. With the frequent moves required in the military it was hard to find employment. She had a background in working with animals and an ongoing education to become a veterinarian when that was to be put on hold for relocation. Military Family Support Liaison, Hazel Anderson, completed a job development for Tammy with VCA Callfield Animal Hospital and after reviewing her resume she was hired as a veterinary assistant.

Ms. Donna Adams, Rolling Plains Childcare Director, announced program updates. She indicated that they have hired an Infant/Toddler specialist, Ms. Shelly Donaldson for the TRS Provider Service Team who was previously in Client Services as a caseworker and Nannette Holms from the billing department at childcare. Their office is currently taking applications for two Client Services Specialist. As of April 18, there are 263 children on the waiting list for childcare. The estimated wait time for childcare services is between two to four months. At the end of March, they have placed 1,496 children in care and have had 37 new family referrals and 36 children. This year the provider service team hosted their first childcare provider fair on March 23rd. It was a resource for providers in our area looking to increase enrollment, hire more staff, and/or promote their facility. Four children were placed in care that following Monday. The Provider Service team also got to choose a theme for this year's Texas Rising Star, Beyond the Page, the theme is "Learning Engagement through Music" where we had 204 books and supplements given in the 2nd quarter to our providers.

Mrs. Kendra Ball, Marketing and Outreach Manager, announced the Rapid Response report. There has been a total of 44 layoffs/closures since January 2024.

Mrs. McDaniel announced the next board meeting will be on June 27, 2024, and the meeting was adjourned at 12:58 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Glenda Ramsey".

Glenda Ramsey, Secretary

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