

The Seventh Planning District Consortium Workforce Development Board

Administrative Office

4000 Viking Dr., Suite A-1, Bossier City, LA 71111 | (318) 632-2022

Matt Wheeler, Chairman | Candle Sattler, Interim Director of Workforce Development

SEVENTH PLANNING DISTRICT CONSORTIUM WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD MEETING MINUTES - DRAFT

Friday, March 5, 2021 at 11:00 a.m.

Warrior Network Center, Bossier City, Bossier Parish, Louisiana

Call to Order, Invocation, and Roll Call:

Mr. Matt Wheeler, Chairperson, of the Seventh Planning District Consortium Workforce Development Board called the quarterly meeting to order at 11:10 a.m.

Chairperson Wheeler referenced the Certification Pursuant to Gubernatorial Proclamation that was in printed form on page five of the Quarterly Report. He stated that the Proclamation was emailed to all the members prior to the meeting and would be signed by him after the meeting. Chairperson Wheeler explained that this Proclamation allowed the Seventh Planning District Consortium Workforce Development Board to conduct their meeting in-person or virtual tele-conference for the purposes of establishing a quorum. He thanked Mrs. Randel Elliott for operating and monitoring the Zoom Tele-Conference during the meeting and asked if there were any questions and there were none.

Mr. Brent Moreland, said the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag; Mr. Nicholas Olsen, gave the invocation; and Mrs. Julie Moore, called roll for the Board members; Mrs. Randel Elliott operated and monitored the Zoom Teleconference.

Members in Attendance: Leighton Allen, Treva Askey, Julie Bass, Michael Chamlee, Nakeeta Demery, Kirk Dickson, Mary Duncan, Brandon Hillman, Matt LaFisca, Shirley Marcus, Brent Moreland, Travis O'Brien, Bruce Roberts, David "Rocky" Rockett, Clifton Starks, and Matt Wheeler.

Members not in Attendance: Jeremy Ashby, Michael Barrett, Eugene Fremaux II, Ty Graham, Dr. Earl W. Meador, Patricia Trim, and John "Chuck" Vaughan III.

Staff Attending: Nada Attaway, Courtney Brooks, Julie Moore, Nicholas Olsen, Candle Sattler, Craig Sheppert, Jack "Bump" Skaggs, and Austin Vaughn.

American Job Center Locations



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Bienville Parish
2434 Manning St.
Ringgold, LA 71068
(318) 894-9173

Bossier Parish
4000 Viking Dr., Suite B-1
Bossier City, LA 71111
(318) 741-7383

Caddo Parish
126 E. Louisiana Ave.
Vivian, LA 71082
(318) 676-5721

Cleiborne Parish
507 W. Main St.
Homer, LA 71040
(318) 927-3338

DeSoto Parish
142 Lake Rd.
Mansfield, LA 71052
(318) 671-2391

Lincoln Parish
307 N. Homer St., Suite 307
Ruston, LA 71270
(318) 251-6023

Natchitoches Parish
303 Bienville St.
Natchitoches, LA 71457
(318) 357-2414

Red River Parish
615 E. Carroll St., 3rd Floor
Coushatta, LA 71019
(318) 932-9570

Sabine Parish
1125 W. Mississippi Ave., Suite A
Many, LA 71449
(318) 256-2698

Webster Parish
902 Lee St.
Minden, LA 71055
(318) 371-3024



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Other Guest Attending: Robin Berry, Bruce Busada, Randel Elliott, Jacques Lasseigne Jr., Ambrielle Rişon, Herman Vital, and Elizabeth Williams.

Welcome of New Board Members and Introduction of Guests

- Chairperson Wheeler informed the Board that the Chief Elected Official had approved the new member, Ms. Ty Graham.
- Chairperson Wheeler stated that Ms. Graham worked for Shreveport Job Corps.
- Chairperson Wheeler also introduced the guest Ms. Robin Berry, who was the One-Stop Operations Manager.

Acknowledgment of LWDB Members Resignation

- Chairperson Wheeler informed the Board that the Chief Elected Official had accepted the resignation for previous Board member, Mr. Victor McGee.

Nomination and Approval of New Vice-Chairperson

- Chairperson Wheeler reminded the Board that at the previous meeting they had decided to hold off on electing a new Vice-Chairperson to give the Board members time to review who was eligible for the position and who they would like to nominate.
- Chairperson Wheeler opened the floor for discussion and nominations.
- Mr. Starks asked what the role of the Vice-Chairperson encompassed.
- Chairperson Wheeler answered that the main duty was to fill in when the Chairperson was absent, but also the Vice-Chairperson would be expected to participate when they would meet to go over proposals or agreements, and other things of that nature.
- Mr. Starks stated that he wanted to nominate Mr. Bruce Roberts.
- Chairperson Wheeler stated that he believed Mr. Roberts did not want to accept the nomination but asked Mr. Roberts to confirm.
- Mr. Roberts answered that he thought about it and if that was what the Board wanted he would be glad to accept the nomination.
- Chairperson Wheeler stated that people were allowed to self-nominate, and asked if there were anymore nominations.
- No one else had any nominations.
- Chairperson Wheeler asked for a motion to approve Mr. Bruce Roberts as the new Vice-Chairperson.
- Mr. Clifton Starks made a motion, which was seconded by Mr. Matt LaFisca.
- With no further discussion, the motion was called and approved unanimously by all the Board members. There were no abstentions or oppositions.

Approval of Minutes from the December 4, 2020 Workforce Development Board Meeting

- Chairperson Wheeler informed the Board that the minutes were emailed out to all the Board members to be reviewed before the meeting.
- Chairperson Wheeler asked if anyone had any questions or changes to bring forward and there were none.
- Mr. Clifton Starks made a motion to accept the December 4, 2020 Meeting Minutes, with a second by Mr. Bruce Roberts. With no further discussion, the motion was called and approved unanimously by all the Board members. There were no abstentions or oppositions.

Approval of Memorandum of Understanding

- Chairperson Wheeler stated that the memorandum was sent out to the Board before the meeting.

- Chairperson Wheeler talked about how Workforce Development had been working with the One-Stop Operator in completing the Memorandum of Understanding for the Bossier Parish Comprehensive American Job Center.
- Chairperson Wheeler stated that the Board needed to approve the MOU contingent upon minor modification that may need to be made after being submitted for review to each partner.
- Chairperson Wheeler asked the Board if they had any questions about the MOU that was sent out previously and no one did.
- Mr. Clifton Starks made a motion to approve the Memorandum of Understanding contingent upon minor modification that may need to be made after being submitted for review to each partner. Mr. Matt LaFisca Seconded the Motion and with no further discussion, the motion was called and approved unanimously by all the Board members. There were no abstentions or oppositions.

Budget and Operating Statements

- Chairperson Wheeler asked Mrs. Sattler to discuss the budget and operating statements.
- Mrs. Sattler asked the Board to turn to page seven and eight in their booklets to view the budget and operating statements chart.
- Mrs. Sattler stated that as of January 31st their total expenditures for training was \$829,000 leaving roughly \$2.9 million.
- Mrs. Sattler informed the Board that they could review page eight in their booklets where there was a break down of each programs funding stream.
- Mrs. Sattler stated that all the directors had been working with LWC on drafting a waiver for DOL for 50/50 in-school/out-of-school youth labor, to hopefully help spend more youth funds.
- Mrs. Sattler asked the Board to view page 14 and 15 in their booklets to go over the WIOA performance measures.
- Mrs. Sattler went over the second quarter results for each program.

Update on Performance Measures

- Mrs. Sattler informed the Board that they could view pages 16 through 19 to view a breakdown of each program's performance from the period October 1, 2020 to December 31, 2020.
- Chairperson Wheeler asked Mrs. Sattler if the previously mentioned 50/50 wavier was to service in-school students.
- Mrs. Sattler confirmed yes, and they currently only helped out-of-school youth, but this new waiver would allow them to also help in-school youth.
- Chairperson Wheeler asked what the goal was of helping in-school youth and asked if it was to make sure they stayed in school.
- Mr. Olsen answered that the proposed in-school assistance would target lower income individuals to help finish school.
- Chairperson Wheeler mentioned that catching youth participants early, that were still in school, sounded good because then they could continue on in the WIOA program even after school and heading into the workforce.

Program Manager's Report

- Chairperson Wheeler asked Mr. Olsen to give his presentation for the Program Manager's report.

- Mr. Olsen stated that they were finally fully staffed and that it had been a challenge not being fully staffed previously, causing them to not be able to serve their participants as quickly as they would have liked.
- Mr. Olsen stated that he was very confident in their new staff and praised their recently hired staff that had been doing a phenomenal job.
- Mr. Olsen talked about how he held weekly meetings on the computer using Microsoft Teams to make sure everything was running smoothly, and it had been a great resource.
- Mr. Olsen mentioned how they were having issues with turning in ITA's on time, but they had recently resolved that issue and everyone was doing better.
- Mr. Olsen asked if anyone had any questions for him and no one did.

Business Service's Representative Report

- Chairperson Wheeler asked Mrs. Brooks to present her report to the Board.
- Mrs. Brooks thanked Mr. Olsen for the praise in his previous report and stated she had really enjoyed working in WIOA so far.
- Mrs. Brooks asked the Board to turn to page 10 in their booklets to view her report.
- Mrs. Brooks stated that the last quarter she had mostly focused on bringing awareness to the OJT program and apprentice options since it was clear most businesses had no clue those options were available.
- Mrs. Brooks mentioned all the ways she had been getting the word out there about the programs including social media, flyers, and going to meet with businesses in person.
- Mrs. Brooks talked about how they recently partnered with the Bossier Chamber of Commerce and how they created a PowerPoint presentation that was presented to many businesses.
- Mrs. Brooks spoke about how, during the holiday season, businesses were not really hiring, but now that it was a new year hiring had started to ramp up.
- Mrs. Brooks went over the active contracts and processing contracts with the Board and went into detail about each company she had been working with.
- Mrs. Brooks asked if anyone had any questions.
- Chairperson Wheeler asked how the overall unemployment rate for Louisiana was doing.
- Mr. Craig Sheppert answered that recently it had been steadily declining but was still not at the pre-pandemic rate.
- Chairperson Wheeler talked about how he believed the stimulus packages were working against them because people were not returning to work because they wanted to keep filing unemployment.
- Mrs. Brooks agreed but mentioned that there were a lot of people who did want to return to work, because that's all they knew, and enjoyed working so she believed the OJT program would continue to grow.
- Mr. Jacques Lasseigne mentioned how companies were getting frustrated because employees were not wanting to return to work full-time, only part-time, to still be able to collect some unemployment.
- Mr. Lasseigne agreed that the unemployment and stimulus packages were working against the workforce.
- Mr. Starks asked where the company Benteler Steel stood with its unemployment rate at the time and if they could use the OJT program.
- Mrs. Brooks answered that to utilize an OJT contract the company could not have any layoffs in the last 120 days or have sent a request to return to work and employees had not returned.
- Mrs. Brooks stated that Benteler Steel was still in the 120 days, so she was not able to fulfill an OJT contract with them at that time.
- Chairperson Wheeler asked if there was any way around the layoff rule.

- Mrs. Brooks answered that if company's had lowered employees hours instead of laying off she could help them, but once they laid off employees there was no loop hole around the layoff rule.

Monitoring Report

- Chairperson Wheeler asked Mr. Sheppert to give the monitoring report.
- Mr. Sheppert asked the Board to turn to page 11 in their booklets to view the monitoring report.
- Mr. Sheppert went over their relationship with the Ben D. Johnson Center in Natchitoches and the five participants progress that were in that program.
- Mr. Sheppert stated that according to the Executive Director of the Center three of the five participants were expected to graduate from their food and service hospitality training program.
- Mr. Sheppert explained that of the two not expected to graduate, one had dropped out and returned home, and the other participant had just stopped showing up.
- Chairperson Wheeler asked Mr. Sheppert if he had to give Ben D. Johnson a letter grade on their value to the workforce program, what would he grade them.
- Mr. Sheppert answered that the content of their training was good, but the problem was the dropout rate was high.
- Mr. Sheppert went on to explain that when they looked into the dropout rate it was because most participants came from many barriers, so that was expected.
- Mr. Olsen stated that he did have some concerns with the program and was working with the director to work on communication with participants and with the WIOA program.
- Mr. Olsen also mentioned that they will continue to review their progress with the Ben D. Johnson program, and eventually, if performance did not improve, they might make the decision to end that relationship.
- Mr. Brent Moreland asked if the Ben D. Johnson Center had any relationship with the University in Natchitoches.
- Mr. Olsen answered that he did not believe so and that Ben D. Johnson was working on developing those relationships.

One-Stop Operator Report

- Chairperson Wheeler asked Mrs. Berry to give her One-Stop Operations Manager Report.
- Mrs. Berry introduced herself and gave a brief summary of how she previously worked for WIOA as an account executive but as of January 2021 was the Operations Manager for the One-Stop Operator.
- Mrs. Berry went over the projects she and Mrs. Sattler had been working on, including the Memorandum of Understanding.
- Mrs. Berry went into detail of the MOU and how it had been submitted and was just waiting on approval.
- Mrs. Berry also mentioned how she created a resource guide that would help partners understand the services that were offered and was waiting on approval for that.
- Mrs. Berry talked about a few things she had planned to do in the future, including creating and maintaining a monthly newsletter.
- Mrs. Berry asked if anyone had any questions for her and no one did.

Personal Financial Disclosure and Ethics

- Chairperson Wheeler asked Mrs. Sattler to go over the personal financial disclosure and ethics.
- Mrs. Sattler informed the Board they could view the information about the annual personal financial disclosure on page 32 of their booklet and that the Board was required to file it before May 15th.
- Mrs. Sattler explained the ethics training that was found on page 33 in their booklets and reminded the Board to complete by the end of the year, or December 31st.

Other Business

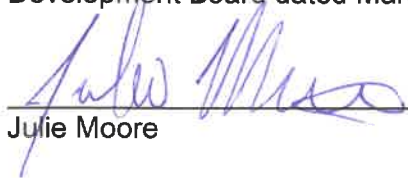
- Chairperson Wheeler asked if Mrs. Mary Duncan would comment on General Dynamics releasing a press release that they were going to have new jobs coming into their area.
- Mrs. Duncan answered yes, they had a call center on Benton Rd. and on East Texas that they were always hiring for.
- Mrs. Duncan also said because they were able to effectively work remotely, they had gained some new award contracts from the government.
- Mrs. Duncan talked about how they would be having an ongoing hiring event.
- Chairperson Wheeler asked since the jobs are working remotely if they will be hiring people outside of the Shreveport/Bossier area, and possibly expanding to their other regions.
- Mrs. Duncan answered yes, but at that moment just in Lincoln and Red River Parishes.
- Chairperson Wheeler asked if anyone had any other business to bring before the Board and no one did.

Adjournment:

There being no further business, Mr. Wheeler adjourned the meeting at 12:12 p.m.

I. Certification

I, Julie Moore, Operations & Communications Manager, do hereby certify that the above and foregoing are the Minutes of the Seventh Planning District Consortium Workforce Development Board dated March 5, 2021. A quorum of members was present.



Julie Moore

Passed and approved on this 30th day of June, 2021



Seventh Planning District Consortium
Workforce Development Board

Chairperson
Title