

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, Director of Workforce Development

SEVENTH PLANNING DISTRICT CONSORTIUM WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Friday, September 8, 2023, at 11:30 a.m.

Every Warrior 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 11:33 a.m.

Mr. Brent Moreland said the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag, Rev. Nicholas Olsen gave the invocation, and Mrs. Julie Moore called roll.

Members in Attendance: Chad Bynog, Eugene Fremaux, Teresa Hefner, Brandon Hillman, Matt LaFisca, Laura Lyles, Brent Moreland, Bruce Roberts, Amanda Simpson, Clifton Starks, Wayne Watley, and Matt Wheeler.

Members Not in Attendance: Michael Barrett, Julie Bass, Kirk Dickson, Mary Duncan, Shirley Marcus, Steven Mayeux, Joni Nelson, David "Rocky" Rockett, Renee Sears, Curtis Shepard, Patricia Trim, and Lori Webb.

Staff Attending: Mark Colwick, Chaquana Harper-Wells, Rachel Milner, Julie Moore, Nicholas Olsen, Candle Sattler, Craig Sheppert, and Caleb Stacey.

Other Guest Attending: Robin Berry, Keidrian Kunkel, Jacques Lasseigne, and Barabra Leach (who arrived at 11:37).

American Job Center Locations



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

☐ **Bossier Parish**
4000 Viking Dr., Suite B-1
Bossier City, LA 71111
(318) 741-7363

☐ **Caddo Parish**
125 E. Louisiana Ave.
Vivian, LA 71062
(318) 676-5721

☐ **DeSoto/Red River Parish**
142 Lake Rd.
Mansfield, LA 71052
(318) 871-2391

☐ **Lincoln Parish**
307 N. Homer St., Suite 307
Ruston, LA 71270
(318) 251-5023

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

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

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



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Public Comment

- Chairperson Wheeler opened the floor for public comment, and no one had anything to bring before the Board.

Acknowledgement of LWDB Member Reappointment

- Chairperson Wheeler let the Board know that their Chief Elected Official approved the Reappointment of Mr. Brent Moreland and Mr. Matt LaFisca who both started their new 4-year term on August 1st.

Acknowledgement of Revised Bylaws

- Chairperson Wheeler let the Board know that during LWC's review of LWDB 70's Board recertification, LWC recommended LWDB 70's By-Laws be updated with a few recommendations.
- Chairperson Wheeler stated that the recommendations have been included in the bylaws that were emailed to the board prior to the meeting for their review.
- Chairperson Wheeler stated that the State had reviewed the changes and given their approval to proceed with obtaining signatures and approval.
- Chairperson Wheeler stated that their Chief Elected Official had approved the revised Bylaws but he would be unable to sign that day due to lack of a quorum.

Chairperson Wheeler further explained to the Board that a quorum was not present so they would not be able to vote on the approval of June 2, 2023 Minutes, approval of LWDA 70 American Job Center Certification, approval of revised MOU agreement, approval of renewal option 3 for One-Stop Operator contract, or review and ratify WIOA 2023-2024 budget.

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 9 in their booklets to view the budget and operating statement.
- Mrs. Sattler stated that as of July 31st they had a total revenue of \$5,068,111.00.
- Mrs. Sattler explained that they had spent \$251,875.00 leaving them a balance of \$4,816,680.00.
- Mrs. Sattler asked the Board to turn to page 10 in the booklets to view the Breakdown of Training Expenditures.
- Mrs. Sattler stated they budgeted \$704,507.00 for adults and had spent \$25,361.00 leaving them a balance of \$679,146.00.
- Mrs. Sattler stated they budgeted \$368,684.00 for dislocated workers and had spent \$19,807.00 leaving them a balance of \$348,877.00.
- Mrs. Sattler stated they budgeted \$1,465,835.00 for youth and had spent \$19,567.00 leaving them a balance of \$1,446,268.00.
- Mrs. Sattler went over the training providers and how many participants they had enrolled in each of their programs.
- Mrs. Sattler asked if anyone had any questions.
- Chairperson Wheeler asked how much of their funds were rolled over from the previous fiscal year.
- Mrs. Sattler answered that they carried over 1,463,444.00, and those funds would need to be spent in the current year.

- Mrs. Sattler stated that they had ended up giving around \$91,000.00 of unspent youth funds back.
- Chairperson Wheeler stated that they were able to roll over the majority of the budget but did have to give \$91,000.00 back to the state.
- Mrs. Sattler asked if anyone else had any questions and no one did.

Program Manager's Report

- Chairperson Wheeler asked Mr. Olsen to give the program manager's report.
- Mr. Olsen asked the Board to turn to page 13 in their booklets to view his report.
- Mr. Olsen talked about how he continued conversations with the reentry community leaders trying to find entry points for WIOA and individuals who were getting ready to exit the prison system.
- Mr. Olsen stated he participated in a couple round table discussions with AJ Solutions, the Probation Office, Rochester Institute for Entrepreneurship, and local entrepreneurs.
- Mr. Olsen stated they were continuing to explore avenues of how to connect the youth of their rural region to entrepreneurial training and employment opportunities.
- Mr. Olsen talked about how they were also discussing opportunities for people coming out of the prison system, including those with sex offense backgrounds.
- Mr. Olsen stated they had hired two new Youth Business Services Representatives, new hire Caleb Stacey and Natalie O'Rourke who was previously a youth program specialist.
- Mr. Olsen explained that they were excited to have their new program specialist, giving them two very skilled program specialists.
- Mr. Olsen talked about the important role of a program specialist, being able to help management, make sure no one was dropping the ball, and be supportive to all WIOA staff.
- Mr. Olsen let the Board know that one of their employees, Mrs. Brenda Clarke, had passed away very suddenly.
- Mr. Olsen talked about how Mrs. Clarke had worked for them for almost 50 years and was greatly missed.
- Mr. Olsen asked if anyone had any questions, and no one did.

Assistant Program Manager's Report

- Chairperson Wheeler asked Mrs. Chaquana Harper-Wells to give the assistant program manager's report.
- Mrs. Harper-Wells asked the Board to turn to page 15 to view her report.
- Mrs. Harper-Wells stated that she included a chart in her report that showed the performance measures for the entire previous fiscal year.
- Mrs. Harper-Wells explained that the only category that they did not hit their goal was in measurable skill gains, but the state notified them they were not counting those for their FY 22-23.
- Mrs. Harper-Wells asked the Board to view the reports on pages 16 and 17, which had all the data they received from HiRE.
- Mrs. Harper-Wells went over the demographics of the WIOA participants that they had enrolled in the current program year.
- Mrs. Harper-Wells stated they had 71 adult/dislocated worker enrollments and 43 youth enrollments.

- Mrs. Harper-Wells went over what made all the participants eligible and why some were determined not eligible.
- Mrs. Harper-Wells took a moment to brag about their staff, stating that their applications for both adult and youth had increased, so they were doing a great job getting the word out.
- Mrs. Harper-Wells went over the youth program specialist's updates, and talked about the outreach they were doing and how many participants they were working with.
- Mrs. Harper-Wells went over all the youth participant demographics in detail.
- Mrs. Harper-Wells asked if anyone had any questions.
- Chairperson Wheeler asked why some of the rural communities did not seem to have any participants, or just very few.
- Chairperson Wheeler stated he knew the rural areas had a lower population but thought they should have more participants than they did.
- Mrs. Harper-Wells answered that the rural areas American Job Center's did have a decent amount of foot traffic, and she knew there were a few applications for those areas in the eligibility log, but they hadn't been deemed eligible yet.
- Mrs. Harper-Wells stated they expected an increase in youth applications in the next quarter due to them hiring youth business representatives, who were going to go out into the community and get the word out even more.
- Chairperson Wheeler asked what the physical access looked like for the rural centers, including office hours and availability.
- Mrs. Harper-Wells answered their office hours were the same as all the centers, 8:30am to 4:30pm, with closing for an hour lunch, except Bienville which was only open on Tuesdays.
- Chairperson Wheeler asked if every parish that they served had in-person access for the participants.
- Mrs. Harper-Wells answered yes.
- Mrs. Sattler stated that they did have to merge a couple centers including DeSoto/Red River, and Claiborne/Webster.
- Chairperson Wheeler asked if merging the centers meant that the people of one parish would have to travel to the other to be able to meet with a WIOA employee in person.
- Mrs. Harper-Wells answered they were able to virtually meet with anyone when needed, and also offered traveling to meet a potential participant if needed.
- Chairperson Wheeler stated that the reports show they had low enrollment in areas that do not have easy access to an American Job Center and wanted to know what they planned to do to fix that.
- Mrs. Harper-Wells answered that the solution was really based on case-by-case scenario, some people prefer virtual so they would make that work, and some applicants wanted one-on-one meetings, and in that case the career specialist would set up a meeting with them.
- Chairperson Wheeler asked if someone applied for SNAP or unemployment, how WIOA was connected to that, and if they had a presence in those offices.
- Mrs. Sattler answered that Mrs. Robin Berry, their One-Stop Operator met with community partners very often and made sure to get the word about WIOA out into those areas.
- Mrs. Berry stated that she will go to those community partners and speak with their employees about the WIOA program, as well as leave flyers for people who walk into their centers.

- Chairperson Wheeler stated that it didn't make sense that in most rural areas the number of people on government assistance was higher, but their enrollment numbers in WIOA was lower.
- Mrs. Sattler pointed out that they were viewing data from only two months into their first quarter, and they expected the numbers to increase.
- Mr. Olsen stated that it would be helpful if anyone on the Board who had access to those partner companies would be willing to take some flyers to those places or speak to them about WIOA.
- Mrs. Harper-Wells asked if anyone else had any questions and no one did.

Business Service's Representative Report

- Chairperson Wheeler asked Mr. Colwick to give the Business Service's Representative Report.
- Mr. Colwick asked the Board to turn to page 27 in their booklets to view his report.
- Mr. Colwick talked about how during the summertime their activity usually slowed down due to school being out, but that was not the case with them at that time.
- Mr. Colwick stated that they had been out in the community, really engaging with potential participants and doing a lot of outreach.
- Mr. Colwick talked about Ardagh Group closing and having a rapid response meeting with the employees about being potential dislocated workers in the WIOA program.
- Mr. Colwick talked about the many job fairs he had attended in the past quarter and went into detail about those.
- Mr. Colwick stated that he went to the Inaugural Grambling State University Workforce Development Meeting which included all the Workforce Boards that were located along the I-20 corridor.
- Mr. Colwick stated that Grambling had reached out to the workforce boards and held a meeting to learn how WIOA could provide workforce training along with work-based learning opportunities.
- Mr. Colwick talked about how he attended the BPCC fiber broadband open house for the fiber optic broadband initiative, and explained how that could affect them.
- Mr. Colwick let the Board know that the Youth Business Service Representatives included a report in the booklet.
- Mr. Colwick asked if anyone had any questions.
- Chairperson Wheeler asked if Mr. Colwick had any meetings planned for the new mill that was going up in Plain Dealing.
- Mr. Colwick answered no, but he had been contacted by a librarian who wanted to have a job fair for that, but it was not feasible.
- Mr. Colwick asked if anyone else had any questions, but no one did.

Program Monitor Report

- Chairperson Wheeler asked Mr. Sheppert to give the monitoring report.
- Mr. Sheppert asked the Board to turn to page 28 in their booklets to view his report.
- Mr. Sheppert stated that Mrs. Milner and he conducted a monitoring visit for Diesel Driving Academy (DDA).
- Mr. Sheppert stated that DDA was one of their major training providers and had been for a long time, which was determined by the number of ITAs they issued them.
- Mr. Sheppert explained that their last monitoring visit to DDA was conducted in November of 2021, so they felt it was time to visit them again.

- Mr. Sheppert talked about how they met with DDA on July 11th to see if there had been any changes in their Class A, 4-week, CDL program.
- Mr. Sheppert talked about how they also wanted to know the status of seven WIOA participants who had started training at DDA in March.
- Mr. Sheppert stated that five of the seven participants completed training and obtained their CDL, and the other two participants were expected to take their final tests in a couple of weeks.
- Mr. Sheppert talked about how Mrs. Milner and he were able to interview the two participants still in the program and the two participants reported that they were very satisfied with their training.
- Mr. Sheppert stated that later in August they checked in again on those seven participants and found out that all seven had graduated and found CDL-related jobs.
- Mr. Sheppert talked about how on January 20th WIOA entered into an On-the-Job Training (OJT) agreement with Moffit Enterprises.
- Mr. Sheppert explained the OJT was for two participants, one was for a store manager, the other was for a kitchen manager.
- Mr. Sheppert stated that on July 15th Mrs. Milner and he conducted a monitoring visit for those two participants, and during the visit they were informed that the participant that was hired for the store manager position had resigned.
- Mr. Sheppert talked about how both participants were required to have a laptop computer and were provided with a laptop with WIOA funds, to help them with their online training they were required to complete.
- Mr. Sheppert stated that the remaining participant had some concerns about the online training and Mr. Olsen had come up with some corrective action for that concern.
- Chairperson Wheeler asked how someone not enrolled in an OJT contract who worked their would be able to complete training.
- Mr. Sheppert answered that the employees are required to complete online training through a website, so he assumed they would also be required to complete that, even if they were not enrolled in the WIOA program.
- Chairperson Wheeler asked what happened with the computer that was purchased for the participant who quit.
- Mr. Sheppert answered that it remains as property of the participant.
- Chairperson Wheeler asked if it was required for someone to complete training online to work for their company, why wouldn't the company provide the means to do that.
- Mr. Olsen answered that they also asked those questions, and the store told them that it was required for people being trained in management roles to have access to their own computer to be eligible for the position.
- Chairperson Wheeler stated that he had never worked anywhere where a computer was required for the job, but not supplied by the employer.
- Mr. Olsen agreed, he said they also felt it was strange, but it was required for the job, the employer was not going to provide it, so it was needed and deemed necessary, therefore WIOA provided it.
- Ms. Simpson asked if the computer belonged to the participant that quit or to WIOA.
- Mr. Olsen answered it belonged to the participant.
- Chairperson Wheeler asked if there was a way, they could adjust the approval process for supportive service items like this, to make sure they were not paying for laptops for participants who could decide to quit and then be able to keep the laptop.
- Mr. Sheppert answered that was determined by what local policy said about those types of situations.

- Mr. Moreland stated he didn't think policy needed to be adjusted for all cases, because some jobs required things like tools for someone to be able to work for them and WIOA can provide tools for the participant, and the participant was able to keep those tools because they would be expected to have their own tools in all future jobs in that same field.
- Chairperson Wheeler agreed and thought it was just a strange situation with the laptop.
- Chairperson Wheeler asked for everyone to move on to the next item on the agenda.

One-Stop Operator Report

- Chairperson Wheeler asked Mrs. Berry to give the One-Stop Operator report.
- Mrs. Berry asked the Board to turn to page 30 in their booklets to view her report.
- Mrs. Berry stated that she has been busy with outreach, events, and employer engagements.
- Mrs. Berry talked about how she included a list of all the things she had been up to during the previous quarter in her report, and she went over a few of the items in detail.
- Mrs. Berry stated that the ANECA financial education class had really taken off and was a big success.
- Mrs. Berry talked about all the outreach events and job fairs that she had planned for the new quarter.
- Mrs. Berry went over her Rapid Response projects that she had been working with, and talked about how she was just informed a bossier company, custom print product, was closing and gave their employees a 60-day notice.
- Mrs. Berry asked if anyone had any questions, and no one did.

Personal Financial Disclosure and Ethics Training

- Mrs. Sattler went over the ethics training on page 41 in their booklets and reminded the Board to complete it by the end of the year.
- Mrs. Sattler informed the Board they could view the information about the annual personal financial disclosure on page 40 of their booklet and that the Board was required to file it before May 15th.
- Mrs. Sattler asked if anyone else had any questions and no one did.

Other Business

- Chairperson Wheeler let the Board know that the WIOA Modified Local Plan was approved, and a copy of the approval letter was sent to every board member.
- Chairperson Wheeler informed the Board that they had received their closeout letter for fiscal year 2021 monitoring.
- Chairperson Wheeler talked about how they had received a letter from LWC and the WIC Leadership in the mail that week regarding LWDA 70's subsequent designation.
- Chairperson Wheeler stated during PY 20 and 21 LWDA 70 failed performance for two consecutive years for performance indicators Youth - Employment Rate 2nd Quarter After Exit and Youth - Median Earnings 2nd Quarter after Exit and returned unspent WIOA Youth funding for five (5) consecutive program years, totaling \$1,102,807, representing program years (PY) 2016 - 2020.
- Mrs. Sattler stated she had submitted an initial response and was in the process of drafting an official corrective action plan and would meet with the State in a couple weeks to present it.

- Mrs. Sattler stated that because they did not have a quorum present, they were not able to vote on the One-Stop Operator contract extension which needed to be renewed by the end of October.
- Mrs. Sattler asked if anyone would be opposed to having the next quarters meeting in October instead of December to get that done, and no Board members had any issues with that.
- Mrs. Sattler let everyone know that a new conflict of interest form is on everyone's table and they needed everyone to fill one out, it was something that all Board members were required to do every fiscal year.

Adjournment:

There being no further business, Chairperson Wheeler adjourned the meeting at 12:36 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 September 8, 2023. A quorum of members was not present.


Julie Moore

Passed and approved on this 20 day of October, 2023


Seventh Planning District Consortium
Workforce Development Board

Chairman
Title