

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 - DRAFT

Friday, December 10, 2021 at 11:30 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 11:36 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.

Rev. Nicholas Olsen said the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag and gave the invocation; Mrs. Julie Moore called roll; and Mrs. Randel Elliott operated and monitored the Zoom Teleconference.

Members in Attendance: Julie Bass, Michael Chamlee, Kirk Dickson, Mary Duncan, Ty Graham, Matt LaFisca, Shirley Marcus, Joni Nelson, Travis O'Brien, Bruce Roberts, David "Rocky" Rockett, Jayda Spillers, Clifton Starks, Matt Wheeler and Marshette Williams.

Members Not in Attendance: Leighton Allen, Michael Barrett, Eugene Fremaux II, Brandon Hillman, Brent Moreland, Patricia Trim, and John "Chuck" Vaughan III.

Staff Attending: Nada Attaway, Mark Colwick, Robin Dunlop, Latosa Hall, Lloyd Jackson, Julie Moore, Nicholas Olsen, Candle Sattler, Craig Sheppert, and Chardia Veal

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 71082
(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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Other Guest Attending: Tammy Aguilera, Veronica Bell, Robin Berry, Bruce Busada, Bridgette Clark, Randel Elliott, Jacques Lasseigne, Jr., and Elizabeth Williams.

Approval of Minutes from the September 24, 2021, 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 September 24, 2021, Meeting Minutes, with a second by 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 LDWA 70 WIOA Policies

- Chairperson Wheeler reminded the Board that there were four policies emailed out to everyone prior to the meeting.
- Chairperson Wheeler stated the four policies that needed to be voted on were the LWDA 70 Youth Incentives Policy, the revised Youth Policy, the revised Work Experience Policy, and the revised CDC Policies and Procedures Manual.
- Chairperson Wheeler stated that the Youth and Work Experience Policy was mostly adding State language to stay in compliance with the regulations.
- Chairperson Wheeler stated that the Youth Incentives Policy was new and clarified specific amounts of money that can be given to youths as incentives, which he was very happy to see.
- Chairperson Wheeler asked Mrs. Sattler to explain to the Board the changes that were made to the CDC Policies and Procedures Manual.
- Mrs. Sattler stated that the main changes were changing a full-time employee as someone working at least 28 hours a week, a holiday was added, along with small HR changes, including having to have reimbursements turned in within 30 days, outlining the rules for using company vehicles, etc.
- Mr. Starks asked Mrs. Sattler what holiday was added.
- Mrs. Sattler answered that Juneteenth was added once it was declared a state holiday by the Governor.
- Mr. Starks stated that he read the policies and was very impressed with the youth policy, he stated it was very detailed and he agreed with it.
- Chairperson Wheeler asked if anyone else had any comments about the policies and no one did.
- Mr. Clifton Starks made a motion to approve the LWDA 70 Youth Incentives Policy, to approve the revised Youth Policy, approve the revised Work Experience Policy, and adopt the revised CDC Policies and Procedures Manual. 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 in their booklets to view the budget and operating statement.

- Mrs. Sattler stated that as of October 31st the total expenditures was a little over a million, leaving a balance of over 4.6 million.
- Mrs. Sattler asked the Board to turn to page eight in their booklets to view the breakdown of all the training expenditures, including Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth.
- Mrs. Sattler asked if anyone had any questions and no one did.

Program Manager's Report

- Chairperson Wheeler asked Mr. Olsen to give the program managers report.
- Mr. Olsen asked the Board to turn to page 13 in their booklets to view his report.
- Mr. Olsen stated that the Businesses Services was focused on reading through the Regional Plan and discussing the further development of a strategic plan that past quarter.
- Mr. Olsen stated that in October, LWDA 70 Management accepted an invitation to go to Ayers Career College for a tour and a discussion on how to better strengthen their partnership.
- Mr. Olsen explained that the meeting with Ayers was successful and talked about some of the things that were discussed in the meeting.
- Mr. Olsen stated that in November the WIOA staff participated in various online trainings and discussions with the Department of Labor (DOL) and the Louisiana Workforce Commission (LWC).
- Mr. Olsen explained that they met with Ms. Sharon Fields-Lair from LWC to discuss transitioning into serving In-School Youth.
- Mr. Olsen talked about how DOL granted a provision allowing 50% of youth funds to be spent on In-School Youth instead of 25%.
- Mr. Olsen stated the provision was effective until June 30, 2022, and also mentioned LWC can request a waiver for 2022/2023 also.
- Mr. Olsen stated that they were waiting for a response from LWC for answered on several questions posed with Ms. Fields-Lair to be able to fully implement In-School Youth services.
- Mr. Olsen asked if anyone had any questions or comments.
- Chairperson Wheeler asked how would the Youth Policy, that the Board just approved, work along side the new In-School Youth waiver.
- Mr. Olsen answered that the goal of In-School Youth was to hopefully keep them from leaving school, so they could provide services to In-School Youth like childcare if needed, help with transportation, also the same incentives for good grades and passing classes.
- Chairperson Wheeler stated that was what he was wondering, if In-School youth would also receive incentives for grades and more even though they were already in school.
- Mr. Olsen answered yes.
- Chairperson Wheeler asked if the city passed a similar waiver.
- Ms. Clark answered that they did have a similar policy in place.
- Chairperson Wheeler asked if it was also new or if they already had it previously
- Ms. Clark answered that they already had it in place but they did recently revise it to include more incentives.
- Chairperson Wheeler asked who on the WIOA staff would be working to bridge the gap with the local school districts.
- Mrs. Sattler answered that the youth staff would.
- Chairperson Wheeler asked if they would have more access to the schools now.

- Mr. Jackson answered that they would have more access now and had already started working with the schools.
- Chairperson Wheeler asked if anyone else had any questions or comments and no one did.

Assistant Program Manager's Report

- Chairperson Wheeler asked Mrs. Dunlop to present the Assistant Program Managers Report.
- Mrs. Dunlop asked the Board to turn to page 14 in their booklets to view her report.
- Mrs. Dunlop talked about how Ms. Remedies and Ms. Clarke who were career specialist were moved to program specialist.
- Mrs. Dunlop explained that Ms. Remedies and Ms. Clarke were pretty much already doing the jobs of a program specialist so that was the reason for a title change.
- Mrs. Dunlop mentioned that they also had a new hire, Mr. Brad Roberson, who was hired to fill the Webster/Claiborne career specialist position, located in Minden.
- Mrs. Dunlop continued to talk about eligibility and how they hired Mrs. Jamie Brown as their new eligibility coordinator.
- Mrs. Dunlop complimented Mrs. Brown on how efficient she had been in her new role and how eligibility's back log was almost completely caught up.
- Mrs. Dunlop talked about training and how they have weekly team meetings via Zoom and how they had a virtual training session on performance measures in November.
- Mrs. Dunlop mentioned how Ms. Sharon Fields-Lair from LWC visited them and the Youth Team in November to discuss In-School Youth opportunities.
- Mrs. Dunlop went over the performance measures for each category, Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth.
- Mrs. Dunlop went over a chart that she handed out to everyone about the Ben D. Johnson Center (BDJ).
- Mrs. Dunlop talked about how out of 29 participants in the BDJ program 16 students were either unsuccessful or dropped out, and 15 successfully completed the program.
- Mrs. Dunlop explained that of the 15 students that completed only 1 was currently earning a self-sufficient wage of \$24,744.
- Mrs. Dunlop compared the current wages for the 16 students that had not completed the BDJ program and the 15 students that did, and the wages were very similar, not showing much of a difference.
- Mrs. Dunlop went over the total cost that WIOA has spent towards the BDJ center, which was around \$227,000.
- Mrs. Dunlop mentioned that they asked the State for some more idea's on how to continue working with the BDJ without issuing more ITA's and asked that the Board possibly approve doing RFP's if the State did come back allowing that.
- Chairperson Wheeler mentioned that with only one person having a self-sufficient wage after finishing the BDJ program, he was curious if anyone had any information on job openings in that area to see why more participants have not found jobs.
- Chairperson Wheeler stated that most food services around his area were advertising around \$10.00 an hour for entry level positions, and did not see why participants graduating from BDJ, who should have some training making them not entry level, were not finding employment.
- Mrs. Berry stated that she goes to Natchitoches every weekend and currently saw a sign saying McDonalds is hiring for an assistant manager starting at \$11.00 an hour, which is pretty minimal for an assistant manager.

- Chairperson Wheeler agreed and said his main concern with BDJ is they are providing a certificate for food safety, and he did not see a correlation with that certificate and a job that requires it.
- Mrs. Dunlop agreed and stated the certificate that BDJ is offering is a food handler certificate, not a manger certification, so it was just an entry level certificate, that most restaurants do not even require for entry level positions.
- Chairperson Wheeler mentioned that they were previously told at other Board meetings that the BDJ program was taking participants that had zero soft skills and could not even work an entry level position and help them become employable by any employer.
- Chairperson Wheeler stated that did not seem to be the case with the numbers Mrs. Dunlop had present.
- Chairperson Wheeler stated that he wanted to make sure they were spending WIOA dollars in the best way, and the BDJ did not seem to be able to create employable candidates.
- Chairperson Wheeler did state that the BDJ was important for the Natchitoches community, and WIOA was their main source of funding, so the Board needed to figure out where their responsibility lied, with the community or the participants.
- Chairperson Wheeler asked if the BDJ program was providing appropriate education for the \$6,000 tuition fee, he stated that he believed participants could receive more valuable education for that amount than an entry level serve safe food certificate.
- Mr. Busada mentioned possibly getting employer support or job verification from the area, by getting reference letter stating they require the certificate BDJ is offering to hire employees for their company.
- Mr. Starks agreed and stated that if the employers from the area got involved, it would be a great help.
- Mr. Busada asked again who at the State they had talked to about it.
- Mrs. Sattler answered Ms. Sharon Fields-Lair and Ms. Andrea Morrison.
- Mr. Roberts said he believed they needed to be looking beyond the figures on paper and needed to be looking to get people jobs and a livelihood.
- Chairperson Wheeler agreed and stated that last year they had the excuse of Covid for not having people employed with jobs, and now in this year they still don't seem to have the jobs.
- Chairperson Wheeler stated there did not seem to be a clear path between funding and participants finding a job.
- Chairperson Wheeler mentioned that he did agree with waiting for the states answer on another solution with BDJ but also did not want to fix problem A with problem B and thinks WIOA might not be the long-term solution for them.
- Chairperson Wheeler asked for the Boards opinions on the issue.
- The Board agreed to wait for the states response before they make any decisions.
- Chairperson Wheeler added he would like to see a report from BDJ on how they plan to fix the issues that they talked about moving forward.
- Mr. Starks stated he agreed with that.
- Chairperson Wheeler asked if anyone else had any comments and no one did.

Business Service's Representative Report

- Chairperson Wheeler asked Mr. Colwick to give the Business Service's Representative Report.
- Mr. Colwick introduced himself and took some time to say how much he enjoyed being on the WIOA team and was excited to excel in his roll.

- Mr. Colwick mention that his first duties when he was hired was to research and study the WIOA program, learn the policies, and attend job fairs and training.
- Mr. Colwick explained that he took a look at his previous OJT contracts and noticed that there was a trend of businesses wanting OJT contracts, but they did not seem to have many participants to place in those positions.
- Mr. Colwick stated that he was working on fixing that issue by trying to identify participants who were graduating that might be interested in and OJT contract.
- Mr. Colwick stated that he was happy to report that they obtained a signed OJT contract with Trust Technology Consultants and have a participant that is being placed with them the next week.
- Mr. Colwick asked if anyone had any questions, and no one did.

Youth Report

- Chairperson Wheeler mentioned that the Youth Report was not on the agenda but asked if the Youth Team had anything they wanted to report on.
- Ms. Veal stated that their current endeavors were to find different ways to get into schools and serve In-School Youth while still making the same strides for Out-of-School Youth.
- Ms. Veal mentioned they were still working on partnering with difference businesses and working on increasing their enrollment.
- Ms. Veal asked if anyone had any questions.
- Chairperson Wheeler asked how access to the school system in Natchitoches Parish was.
- Ms. Veal answered that she had reached out to the school counselors and some said they know about the WIOA program and mentioned it to their students, and then some stated they did not know about it.
- Chairperson Wheeler asked if they had any In-School enrollees in Natchitoches Parish at that time.
- Ms. Veal answered no that they did not have any In-School enrollees at all at that point.
- Chairperson Wheeler stated he was asking because Natchitoches was their poorest parish, and economics always tied to education.
- Chairperson Wheeler explained that he believed they needed to target their poorer parishes with the In-School Youth policy to really make a difference.
- Mr. Starks asked if they are targeting students that were graduating high-school or still in school.
- Mr. Olsen answered that the state had a policy that had a limitation on Out-of-School youth, which said if a youth graduates in May, then they weren't considered Out-of-School till October, which is different from the Federal policy.
- Mr. Olsen stated that it was hard for them to grab those students that just graduated that did not know yet what they wanted to do once they graduated.
- Mr. Olsen mentioned that they did ask the State for clarification so they could start immediately working with the kids who graduated that had not applied for college or started working yet.
- Mr. Olsen explained that they were still waiting on a response from the State on that question along with the answer about options for the BDJ program.
- Mr. Busada asked Mr. Olsen who he had asked at the State.
- Mr. Olsen answered he had posed the questions to Ms. Andrea Morris and Ms. Sharon Fields-Lair who stated she was taking the question back to discuss.
- Mr. Busada stated that he would follow up with the State.

- Mr. Roberts asked if the request for the waiver was just verbal or was it in writing.
- Mr. Olsen answered that it was in writing and also requested verbally.
- Mr. Olsen stated that when they met with the Department of Labor (DOL) and LWC he posted in writing in the chat and DOL answered that had to be a state choice so he sent a private message to Andrea Morris and she stated she would follow up.
- Mr. Lafisca asked about the waiver that the DOL granted to expand millions to the WIOA Youth Program, and if it would help reach the students that had just graduated.
- Mr. Olsen answered that it would be a benefit for youth that were already accepted into college but had financial barriers, so that money would help them and hopefully keep them from dropping out.
- Mr. Starks asked if they were currently reaching out to High-School Dropouts.
- Mr. Olsen answered that they were trying but it is difficult because they are not sure how to find and locate them.
- Mr. Olsen stated they have met with the school boards and are working on trying to find them, but the hardest part for them is they can not spend money on advertising to try and reach the youth.
- Chairperson Wheeler asked Mr. Jackson what the timeline would be for having the In-School Youth Program set up once he signed the new Policy that the Board already approved that day.
- Mr. Jackson answered that he was already going out to schools and asking about it and the schools will eventually send a list of youth that he can reach out to and inform about the program.
- Chairperson Wheeler mentioned that he believed the new In-School Youth Waiver was a great thing and he was excited for the impact that he believed it was going to have.
- Chairperson Wheeler asked that by the next meeting they have an update on the process of how they are finding the In-School Youth, and the impact it has made.
- Mrs. Berry suggested getting with the school principals to let them know about the programs WIOA offers, so it can get on the faculty meeting agendas.
- Chairperson Wheeler agreed and stated he knew a teacher personally who had taken in a student, so he agreed teachers are close to students and that could be their way in to reaching the students.
- Mr. Olsen stated that Mr. Jackson and Ms. Veal had been doing a great job with getting out into the schools and as soon as they heard about the In-School Youth Waiver they got out into the community and were really working hard and he wanted to make sure the Board knew that.

Program Monitor Report

- Chairperson Wheeler asked Mr. Sheppert to give the monitoring report.
- Mr. Sheppert asked the Board to turn to page 19 in their booklet to view the Program Monitor Report.
- Mr. Sheppert talked about how they began using a portion of their WIOA Youth funds to provide daily stipend payments for participants attending adult education and vocational training activities.
- Mr. Sheppert stated that Mrs. Hines and himself conducted an audit of the stipend payment system and found that the documentation in each participant's file supported the payment of daily stipends.
- Mr. Sheppert said that he estimated an expenditure of \$52,570 in WIOA Youth funds were spend on the 34 participants that they monitored for stipend payments.
- Mr. Starks asked how much the stipend payments were for each student.

- Mr. Sheppert answered that stipend payments had changed on how much they paid during the timeframe of those 34 participants.
- Mr. Sheppert stated that each participant was paid on a different scale, and he had that information but not on him at the moment, but that they now had a more uniform way to pay participants in the future.
- Mr. Sheppert offered to go get the information on exactly how much was spent on each participant and Mr. Starks stated that he did not need to do that, that he answered his question.
- Mr. Sheppert updated the board on the WIOA Federal regulation that required 20% of youth funds be used for work experience.
- Mr. Sheppert stated that they identified three WIOA Youth participants active in paid work experience positions and reviewed them.
- Mr. Sheppert explained that the participants stated they had no complaints, and the supervisors were pleased with the participants job performance.
- Mr. Sheppert shared that two of the Youth participants were expected to be retained as regular employees by their worksite after completing their work experience assignments.
- Mr. Sheppert stated that the DOL now required TAA participants to be co-enrolled in the WIOA dislocated worker program.
- Mr. Sheppert explained that DOL believed that is a TAA participant was co-enrolled in the WIOA Dislocated Worker Program had a better chance to complete their TAA and move on to employment, which he agreed with.
- Mr. Sheppert talked about how they identified how many participants they had in the TAA program in their region, which was 19.
- Mr. Sheppert said they found out how many of the 19 TAA participants were already enrolled in the WIOA Dislocated Worker Program, which was 10.
- Mr. Sheppert said the other 9 were enrolled in TAA before they knew about also enrolling in WIOA so they sort of fell through the cracks.
- Mr. Sheppert stated the came up with an enrollee process for TAA so he believed they would do better in the future with having TAA participants co-enrolled.
- Mr. Sheppert talked about how they monitored Diesel Driving Academy (DDA) and the 13 participants they had sent to them.
- Mr. Sheppert explained that of the 13, 8 ended up graduating from the DDA, and of those 8, 3 have already received employment using their CDL.
- Mr. Sheppert asked if anyone had any questions, and no one did.

One-Stop Operator Report

- Chairperson Wheeler asked Mrs. Berry to give her One-Stop Operator Report.
- Mrs. Berry talked about how her goals the previous quarter was increasing collaboration of partners, obtaining additional partners, increasing services offered in the American Job Centers (AJC), and creation of standard operations procedure manual for the One-Stop Centers.
- Mrs. Berry stated they have increased referrals due to the increase in partner collaboration, including the collaboration with the Department of Children and Family Services.
- Mrs. Berry stated that they were currently modifying the MOU for the Infrastructure Agreement.
- Mrs. Berry explained that the Infrastructure Agreement is a document used to identify shared partner costs of the AJC.
- Mrs. Berry stated that invoicing for the costs would occur in the next quarter.

- Mrs. Berry continued to go over the trainings that they coordinated and delivered, and also events that they attended or coordinated.
- Mrs. Berry went over the One-Stops goals for the new year, including implement the Workforce Development Board strategic priorities and policy directive at the centers, further the interaction of community partners, and assist the Board's outreach efforts.
- Mrs. Berry asked if anyone had any questions, and no one did.

Personal Financial Disclosure and Ethics Training

- Mrs. Sattler went over the personal financial disclosure and ethics training.
- Mrs. Sattler informed the Board they could view the information about the annual personal financial disclosure on page 28 of their booklet and that the Board was required to file it before May 15th and if anyone did not get that done, they really needed to get that done ASAP.
- Chairperson Wheeler explained the ethics training that was found on page 29 in their booklets and reminded the Board to complete by the end of the year, or December 31st.

Other Business

- Chairperson Wheeler stated that the next meeting was scheduled to be on March 4, 2022.
- 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 1:11 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 December 10, 2021. A quorum of members was present.



 Julie Moore

Passed and approved on this 19 day of March, 2022



 Seventh Planning District Consortium
 Workforce Development Board

Chairman

 Title