

West Central Workforce Development Board Minutes (Unofficial)
December 12, 2019

Smokin Style BBQ, Hot Springs, Arkansas

WDB members present: Karen Breashears, Clayton Caldwell, Larry Carr, Louisa Daniels, Neil Golden, Michael Irwin, Dean McDaniel, Margot McLeod, Alan Nolan, Ron Parker, Bill Weston and Scott White

WDB members absent: Kathryn Baxter, Johnathan Bibb, Kevin Bingham, Greg Black, Raymond Chambers, Aleah Duff, Kelli Embry, Amy Ford, Jimmy Hart, Steve Hubbard, Kyle Jones, Mike Lipton, and Barry Owens

WCAPDD staff present: Margaret Dearmon, David Moore, Ravonna Nichols, and Dwayne Pratt

Guests: Bill McLeod, Tom Pittman, Mason Robinson, Bill Ritter, Cindy White-Hamilton and Laura Lee Willard

Mr. Carr declared a quorum and called the meeting to order at 10:31 a.m.

Mr. Weston gave the invocation.

Agenda Item 1 – Chair Comments - ACTION

Mr. Carr asked guests to introduce themselves.

Mr. Carr reported that there were several new members to the board. As he read the names, he asked them to introduce themselves and tell who you are representing.

Mr. Carr notified the board of the passing of Mr. Walker last month. Mr. Carr said he was a great board member. He was always very vocal and supportive of what we are doing. Mr. Carr said that he just wanted to recognize him here this morning.

Mr. Carr directed members' attention to the minutes of the August 8, 2019 meeting. He asked if there were any additions or changes to the minutes. **Hearing none, a motion to accept the August 8, 2019 minutes, as presented, was made by Ms. McLeod, seconded by Mr. McDaniel, the motion carried unanimously with none opposed.**

Mr. Carr stated that the next agenda item was the approval of excused absence. Mr. Carr said that we have one from our last meet from Mr. Bibb for a business conflict. He sent an email that morning, but not before staff left for the meeting. Mr. Carr asked for a motion to approve Mr. Bibb's excused absence for the August meeting. **Ms. Breashears motioned, seconded by Mr. Daniels to approve this excused absence, the motion carried unanimously with none opposed.** Mr. Carr said the following people have requested an excused absence for the meeting today: Kathryn Baxter, Kelli Embry and Amy Ford. Mr. Carr asked for motion to approve the excused absences as presented. **Ms. Breashears motioned, seconded by Ms.**

Daniels to approve excused absences as presented, the motion carried unanimously with none opposed.

Mr. Carr reported that the PY-19 Monitoring visit has just been completed. There is no report on that at this time. Mr. Carr said that he just wanted to give the members a FYI that it has been done and hopefully have a report at our next meeting. Mr. Carr also reported that the Department of Labor (DOL) is coming to our area to do a monitoring of our area here, which has not been done before. They have been to other areas in the state. It will take place after the first of the year.

Mr. Carr stated that all members need to redo their disclosure statement. Mr. Carr said to make sure that if you are serving on any board or organizations you are serving on that you think isn't a conflict, please list them. We need to make sure that there is no conflict of interest. Please make sure you complete it today and give it to Ms. Dearmon.

Mr. Carr said the other thing he needed to discuss was documentation. He said that Margaret has been sending emails out to get documentation that you are qualified to sit on this board. That is part of our governance. If you have no conflict please put N/A. Mr. Carr stated that the three things that you can submit are: **Employment letter on letterhead and signed by the CEO that specifies:** Optimum policy-making or hiring authority or Demonstrated experience and expertise; **Current Resume;** or **Organization Chart.**

Mr. Carr said another FYI to give an update on the National Dislocated Worker Grant that we applied for the disaster relief because of the flooding that took place this summer in Conway and Perry Counties. We were rewarded right around \$597,000. We received \$366,000 of that so far. It is for 20 workers that will work with cleanup crews. That grant is ongoing and as we move along, we should receive the balance of that money.

Mr. Carr went over the budgets in the packet. He said the budgets are a little different than in the past because of the consolidation of the service provider into the Planning and Development District. Mr. Carr asked if there were any questions on any of the budgets and there were none.

Agenda Item 2 – Committee Reports

Executive Committee: Mr. Carr stated that at the last meeting we had several policy changes and other items that we were going to have to address at a certain time. We didn't have time at our last board meeting to discuss them all. He said he called an Executive Committee meeting on November 21st once everything was put together. All the policies were sent out to the Executive Committee members to review. Some of the policies are not really changes, it's the updates. A few of them are things that we have been doing, but we didn't have a written policy for the needed procedures. All the policies are in your packet. I am not going to go over all of those and hopefully you all had time to go over them. In addition, if you notice there is a Youth Standing Committee approval of policies in the packet and those were also included at this meeting. The minutes for the Executive Committee teleconference are in the packet. We are bringing this to the board for ratification. Mr. Carr stated that the policies went into effect as

soon as we approved them. The Executive Committee has that authority because of the time constraint to get these done. Mr. Carr asked if anybody had any questions on the policies that were presented to you, there were none. Mr. Carr stated he needed a motion to ratify the Executive Committee's approval. **Ms. Breashears motioned to ratify policies as present, seconded by Mr. Nolan, the motion carried unanimously with none opposed.**

Planning and Performance Committee: Mr. Carr turned the floor over to Ms. McLeod to give the report on behalf of Ms. Baxter. Ms. McLeod reported that the committee had a teleconference last week to discuss and approve or disapprove program applications that were submitted. There were 12 providers that submitted applications and out of those there was only one that did not fall into the category of either out of the area or such as programs that the board does not approve in the past. The only one we approved was Arkansas Tech University Ozark Campus for Business Technology/Human Resources. Mr. Carr asked if there were any questions on the recommendations and there were none. **Mr. Caldwell motioned, seconded by Mr. Weston to approve as presented, the motion carried unanimously with none opposed.**

Agenda Item 3 – Informational

Mr. Carr turned the floor over to Lancaster to give her Business Engagement report. Ms. Lancaster reported that she has done outreach to all 10 counties in the West Central area. She said she is diligently working with the One Stop Operator, WIOA Core Partners. We are working to develop our Business Service Team and working on a reporting system to be able to better represent what we do and how we outreach to these areas. We have held 13 hiring events and job fairs. There have been more than 250 individuals served from those job fairs. At this time, we have had more than 40 new job orders. By new, they are not previously done, and they are not reposted. They are new or newly developed. Mr. Carr thanked her for what she is doing. He understands that it takes time to get that all up and going. He told her he appreciates what she is doing. Mr. Carr stated that we have started including this information in our board meetings because it is very important, and Business Engagement is something that we really need to focus on. We are trying to do a better job in getting to our businesspeople and engaging them. Ms. Lancaster also reported on the number of contacts made each month. For all 10 counties- August -171; September -160; October- 240 and November- 172. Those are all businesses. Sometimes they are repeat customers.

Mr. Carr turned the floor over to Mr. Pratt to give away some door prizes that were purchased door prizes out of local funds not with non-federal dollars. Names were drawn and prizes handed out.

Agenda Item 4 – Lunch with Speaker

Mr. Carr introduced and turned the floor over to Laura Lee Willard from Single Parent Scholarship Fund as the guest speaker for today's meeting. Ms. Willard explained that the Single Parent Scholarship fund is a non-profit statewide and is the only organization of its kind. We give out over 1.5 million dollars in scholarships each year to single parents who are going back to school. She is over nine counties, which is Garland, Clark, Dallas, Grant, Hot Spring, Howard, Montgomery, Pike and Saline. She reported on the number impacted in 2019. Garland

County gave out 68 scholarships to the tune of \$53,995. We are giving these scholarships to single parents to help them pay for tires, internet, childcare or books or laptop, or tuition. Our program is really a get out of poverty program because we are providing a little financial incentive to help overcome financial obstacles to stay in school. The percentage of our single parents, some of them come in at the beginning and go to school part-time and they are raising their children and working full-time and they are managing their lives. They may be with us four to six years and applying every semester that they are going to school We have a very high graduation rate and the numbers are changing and the last I checked, 85% of our students graduate and 90+% get a job above poverty wages. When they go to school and stay in school and graduate and get a job above poverty wages, they are bringing their children with them, so this is a program that affecting both generations. The single parent scholarship fund and are really run by volunteers on the ground. There is a lot to do in terms of reviewing scholarships. The qualifications for our scholarship are that they have to have at least a 2.0, they are attending an accredited school, they have to meet the financial need, they have to provide their official transcripts and proof of enrollment, and complete the online application. We are always looking for volunteers to help us, if you are interested. Discussion followed. Mr. Carr thanked Ms. Willard for coming and speaking to the board.

Mr. Carr reported that Dean McDaniel is fixing to retire, so this will be his last meeting with us. Mr. Carr told Mr. McDaniel that he appreciates all he has done on this board and the work you have done. We will miss you.

Mr. Carr turned the floor over to Mr. Weston. Mr. Weston said that sometimes we don't realize the impact that we have by being on this board. I have a close friend who has a son who was incarcerated. He got out last week and one of the stipulations was that he had to get a job. Well of course, nobody wants to hire a somebody who has been in prison. What Larry said and what David reminded me of yesterday, is that we are here to serve those who are hard to serve. We connected him with the workforce development, and it is giving him an out to really get back in. He is a good boy with some bad decisions. It made me be proud to be a part of the board.

Mr. Carr asked if anybody else had anything else they want to share. Mr. Moore stated, especially for the new members, we always have a guest speaker at our meetings. A lot of times, our guest speakers are success stories and you will hear that from time to time. A lot of times they are not here is because they are a success and are at work, so they can't be here. Eventually you were hear one over time. That kind of hits home with what you are here for, once you get around all the bureaucracy and helping people. Mr. Carr said that sometimes it's not all about all the documents and all these measures we have to meet, it is really in the little things that we do to help people get to work and make a difference in their lives. It is always very rewarding. Sometimes we lose sight of that.

Mr. Mason asked if he could say something. Mr. Carr turned the floor over to him. He introduced Scott Sikora. He is the truck driver instructor at COTO. He said he wanted to mention that College of Ouachitas is about to go through a major change at COTO. Effective January 1, 2020, we will be Arkansas State University – 3 Rivers. We are aligning with the state university system, which will increase the opportunities for our students, our community and it's a win-win situation.

Mr. Carr adjourned the meeting at 11:44 a.m., on a motion made by Mr. Weston, seconded by Ms. McLeod, and carried unanimously with none opposed.

Larry Carr
Larry Carr, Chairman

6/8/20
Date