

West Central Workforce Development Board Minutes

December 9, 2021

TEAMS Meeting

WDB members present: Jonathan Bibb, Larry Carr, Tanif Crotts, Aleah Davis, Kelli Embry, Allan George, William Neil Golden, Herman Grayer, Lisa Green, Karen Hofford, Jeremy Hughes, Margot McLeod, Alan Nolan Dr. Lewis Shepherd, Jr., Bill Weston, Scott White

WDB members absent: Greg Black, Karen Breashears, Darla Crump, Neal Harrington, Jimmy Hart, Cynthia Lanphear, Mike Lipton, Wendy Lopez, Nicole McGough, Tammy Passafiume,

WCAPDD staff present: Andrew Coker, Cora Easterday, David Moore

Guests: Kim Darling, Dawn Fitch, Andy Hightower, Mason Robinson, Justin Smith, Lori Strumpf

Ms. Easterday took roll call and turned the floor over to Mr. Carr who called the meeting to order at 10:36 a.m. Mr. Carr gave the invocation.

Agenda Item 1 – Chair Comments

Mr. Carr directed members' attention to the unofficial minutes from the October meeting. He asked if there were any additions or changes to the minutes. Ms. McLeod mentioned that her name was shown as being absent, but she was present at the last. Mr. Moore stated that he would look the records and make the change if necessary. Mr. Carr reported that he received request for excused absences on the following board members: Mr. Harrington, Ms. Lopez, Ms. Passafiume, and Jimmy Hart. Mr. Carr asked if there were anymore that we know of at this time. Mr. Moore stated not at this time. Mr. Carr went over the budgets. Mr. Carr asked if there were any questions or concerns on the budgets and there were none. Mr. Carr stated that the next item on the agenda is the RFP for External Monitoring update. He talked about the timeline of when the proposals are due back to WCAPDD. Mr. Carr stated that he has a couple of items that were not listed under Chair Comments. He reported that we have reassigned some people on the Board committees. We've added a new chair to the Performance and Planning committee. He asked all members to see which committee they are on and look over the brief summary of the committee's responsibilities. Mr. Carr stated that the work of the board is done in the committee meetings. That is really where we plan and do the work. Please be aware of your committee and participate because it is very important. There is a list of the Board member's contact information. Please go over this and make sure your information is correct and let Margaret know if it needs to be updated. Mr. Carr stated that we are required to compete board member orientation and Mr. Moore will be working with Ms. Dearmon to get this done for all new members and any old members who would like to participate. It will be done virtually. Mr. Moore stated that Ms. Dearmon has sent an email to Arkansas Division of Workforce Services to see if they can provide some assistance with the training as well. We are waiting on a response from them. We have all the stuff to put it together, but we haven't gotten it organized yet because we want to do it the most simplest way we can. Mr. Moore reported to Mr. Carr that Mike Lipton just texted and said that he had a business conflict come up and he would like to be excused. The last thing before we vote, Mr. Carr stated that you should have received an e-mail from Margaret on a Letter of Support for a grant proposal that is going through Arkansas Tech University (ATU). He turned the floor over to Mr. Moore to give more information to explain about this letter. Mr. Moore turned the floor over to Mr. Coker who works for WCAPDD. He has been working directly with ATU and I'll let him summarize it for the board. All and all, ATU is asking to partner with the local board where

necessary and all they are asking for is a letter of support to go along with their grant application. Mr. Coker stated the grant is called the Good Jobs Challenge, which is through Economic Development. He hit the highlights of the grant since the summary was in the packet and is to create a regional workforce system in the river valley area. Mr. Coker said it primary deals with easing the frictions of the local labor market in the river valley area so trying to connect students to industries. They have identified six targeted industries there are important for the river valley area economy. Mr. Carr thanked Mr. Coker. Mr. Moore stated that he got a call from Judge Hart that UACCM is also applying for the grant from these funds as well. Mr. Moore stated that he does not have exactly what they are applying for, but Mr. Coker stated that he thought it was through the U of A system, but Judge Hart did request that the local board also approve a letter of support for UACCM for their opportunity to get in this grant. Mr. Coker said that he and his colleague, Vicki Anderson, have been working directly with ATU and their application. We have not worked with UACCM on their application, so we don't know much about it. It is for the same pot of money as the Good Jobs Challenge and is generally the same type of project. There is no problem with the board approving a letter of support for both applications. Mr. Carr thanked both of them. Discussion followed. Mr. Carr asked for a motion to approve the minutes with changes being made, approval of excused absences, and approval of sending support letters to ATU and UACCM. **Mr. George motioned, seconded by Grayer to approve. Ms. Easterday took roll call from each member and the motion carried unanimously with none opposed.**

Agenda Item 2 – Committee Reports

Youth Standing Committee – Mr. Nolan reported that there are a few policies that we need to talk about and I would like to save time by voting on all of them at the end if it was okay. Mr. Carr said that would be okay. Mr. Nolan stated that the first policy would be the Youth Incentive. Mr. Nolan went over the changes and/or additions to the incentive policy. Discussion followed. The next policy Mr. Nolan went over was the Policy for Defining Measurable Skills Gains (MSG). Discussion followed. Mr. Nolan reported the last policy we discussed was the Work Experience policy. He went over the duration of the work experience that the committee discussed. Discussion followed. Ms. Easterday reported that Mr. Golden's audio isn't working, but he put in the chat that he motions to table this discussion until the next meeting, seconded by Ms. Hofford. Discussion followed. Mr. Carr asked for motion from the committee and Mr. Nolan stated that we make the changes on the youth incentive policy and Defining Measurable Skills Gain as stated and table the Work Experience policy. **Ms. Hofford motioned, seconded by Carr to approve the committee recommendations. Ms. Easterday took roll call from each member and the motion carried unanimously with none opposed.**

Agenda Item 3 – Informational

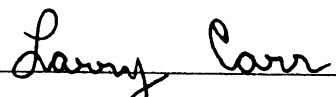
Mr. Carr welcomed Mr. Hightower back as the One Stop Operator. Mr. Hightower stated that Ms. Strumpf was present on the call too. He reported that he felt they were making great stride back in the summer and they are excited to continue it as the One Stop Operator. They are glad to be back and really to be able to increase the momentum. We are ready to launch several initiatives before we left in June, and we are ready to do that again. We met with the center management teams in Russellville and Hot Springs. We will be onsite in January to have those meetings in person and really continue the things we begun. We had discussions around electronic sign-in through the centers so we would have better track of the foot traffic and create some better security of signing in so there isn't papers lying around with people's names and last four of the SSN. We had discussion centered around building a good model for customer feedback so that we can get a strong sense of experience the customers are having in the local areas. We collected and presented to the board some data, but Lori and I are going to kick that into high gear here so we can give you a good picture of what is happening in the local centers. We have been able to identify a few things

and opportunities to really use some technology to help move things forward. There are some technology challenges in the centers that we are going to identify and catalog it for you. We want to hear from you, the board what your priorities are so that we can take strategic priorities that you are setting for the area and make sure we are incorporating them operationally into the centers. I thought you had some good questions on the grant applications discussed earlier. The challenge of any workforce systems is that there are a lot of different entities working in the workforce arena and trying to coordinate so that we can leverage each other through partnership rather than duplicating each other's efforts is always a challenge. Ms. Strumpf said that we did a catchup meeting with virtually with all the center management teams. Some of you may remember that our process is to build and engage partners in the decision-making process around the centers, so we created center management teams in the Malvern, Hot Springs and Russellville and those center management teams under Ms. Easterday's leadership have maintained the meeting process. We will start our first site visit in January, and we have several processes in place. As Mr. Hightower has stated, technology is a big issue. We want to put a data system in place to where we can collect good data for you so you can understand what is happen at each center. We need the staff to be able to attend virtual meetings and many of the staff don't have cameras or audio on their computers, so that is a bit of a challenge. We are looking at doing better customer satisfaction data collection. The groups want to look at doing a common referral system, so we know how many people get referred back and forth and promoting more co-enrollments. Those are a few things we are working on, and we wanted to let you know that we are hitting the ground running. We appreciate all that Ms. Easterday has done to support this six-month process. Mr. Hightower asked if there were any questions or concerns. Mr. Moore reported that we are in the process of updating all of our computer systems throughout our 10-county area. Malvern is complete and so is Hot Springs. The other computer will be updated after the first of the year. Ms. Easterday reported that most of the computer in the centers that don't have video or audio is through ADWS. Mr. Hightower stated that this will be a partner building exercise and we will identify if we want to ask the state for them to help as well. Ms. Strumpf said that if all the computers in the resource rooms are updated, at least we can ask people to go to the resource room or use your staff's computers. It is difficult, just like now, when people's mikes are not working, and we have to manage working onsite and offsite. Ms. Strumpf asked Mr. Carr, as board chair, if there was anything he thinks they need to focus on. Mr. Carr said no because I think you covered what we were expecting, and we are very pleased with what you got started and we have been pleased with what Ms. Easterday has continued during this interim time. We are looking forward to you getting back and bring reports to us. I'm sure we will have some questions and thoughts as we move forward, but we are glad to have you back and running with the program.

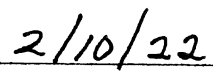
Mr. Carr stated that every meeting we like to open it up for any member to discuss workforce development in their local communities and to open the floor for any new business. He asked if anybody had anything they would like to say. Currently there were none.

Mr. Carr stated that the last thing he wanted to bring before the board was discussion on face-to-face meetings. We would like to get some feedback from the board as to your thoughts on meeting in person. There is a room that has been offered at National Park College or at Smokin In Style. He asked that you contact either him, Mr. Moore or Ms. Dearmon your thoughts on meeting in person. Mr. Carr stated that the next meeting will be on February 10, 2022.

Mr. Carr adjourned the meeting at 11:44 a.m.



Larry Carr, Chair



Date