

West Central Arkansas Workforce Development Board

Lisa Greene, Chair

The meeting of the West Central Arkansas Workforce Development Board meeting was held on Thursday, February 8, 2024, at University of Arkansas Community College at Morrilton and via TEAMS.

Members Present In-Person: Brent Black, Kim Darling, Kelli Embry, Ben Freeny, Allan George, William Golden, Herman Grayer, Lisa Greene, Neal Harrington, Jimmy Hart, Jeremy Hughes, Tammy Passafiume, Mason Robinson, Gary Troutman, and Venorris Webb-Delesline

Members Present via TEAMS: Greg Black, Karen Breashears, Patti Brown, Darla Crump, Cynthia Gleghorn, Ron Magby, and Bryan Smith

Members Absent: Tanif Crotts, Jessica Gunn and Johnny Harris

Staff: Margaret Dearmon, Cora Easterday, Dwayne Pratt, and Prestley Smith

Guests: Martha Boyer, Andy Hightower, Kyle Norris, Thomas Pittman, Tayna Plunkett, Bill Ritter, Tammy Rowland, Denise Wells, and Ashley Williams

Ms. Greene thanked Kimberly Darling and UACCM for hosting the board meeting at their campus. She turned the floor over to Mr. Richard Counts, Vice Chancellor for Academics and he welcomed everyone to their campus and gave information about Morrilton.

Ms. Greene called the meeting to order at 10:32 a.m. and gave an invocation. Ms. Greene stated that there are going to be a lot of topics that we are going to have to vote on and so if there is a conflict of interest in what we are talking about and your work, please make sure you abstain from voting.

Approval of Minutes:

Ms. Greene said the minutes from the December meeting needed to be approved and asked if there were any comments or discussion. Ms. Dearmon mentioned that Ms. Breashears sent in a text to her to be excused from the December meeting, however it wasn't added to the list of excused absence requests given to Ms. Greene before the meeting. Judge Hart made a **motion** to approve the requested excused absence and was seconded by Ms. Darling to approve. Motion carried unanimously. Ms. Greene asked if there were any more changes and if not, she asked for a motion to approve the minutes. Ms. Golden made a **motion** to approve the minutes with the addition of the previous change and was seconded by Mr. George. Motion carried unanimously.

Budget Reviews:

Ms. Greene turned the floor over to Ms. Easterday to go over the budgets. She said that the Finance Manager wasn't here today, but they got together and went over the budget reports. She said that she understands that it can be difficult to read sometimes. We are going to be working

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on updating this in a more presentable format so that everyone can understand. She went over each funding streams budgets.

PY-22 Monitoring Reports:

Ms. Greene turned the floor over to Ms. Dearmon to discuss the PY-22 Monitoring Report. Ms. Dearmon stated that WCAPDD has responded to ADWS on all of the findings and that we are awaiting a response back from ADWS if they accept our responses. Discussion followed.

Selection of Committees

Ms. Greene stated that an updated list of the committees. She stated that the names have changed a little bit. She said the committees we have now are Executive, One Stop Systems Overview, Planning/Performance/Finance, Youth Council and Rehabilitation. Ms. Greene said that Bryan Smith is the Chair of the One Stop Systems Oversight Committee. Karen Breashears is the Chair of the Planning/Performance/Finance Committee. Kimberly Darling is the Chair of the Youth Council. Ms. Cynthia Gleghorn is the Chair of the Rehabilitation Committee.

Tour

Ms. Greene said that Green Bay has a Training Center that is used by industry partners, and they are training their own employees. Ms. Greene said that after the meeting that she has arranged for anyone who would like to take a tour of the Training Center and/or the Packaging Plant is welcome to do so. Discussion followed about what is available at the training center.

Planning/Performance/Finance Committee

Ms. Greene turned the floor over to Ms. Breashears to give her report. Ms. Breashears reported that the committee met and is bringing the following recommendations to the board for approval. There are primarily three things we had to take action on: Initial Eligible Training Provider (ETP) applications, Performance Information and some RFPs that we are going to have to request. To keep this simple, Ms. Breashears said the ETP applications are grouped based on recommendations. Ms. Breashears said they would recommend approval of River Rock CDL Training LLC. Next is to recommend for approval after completing EEO Review for Arkadelphia Health Academy, National Park College Adult Education and Gateway Allied Health LLC and NCSI. Ms. Breashears said that she would like to turn it over to Ms. Easterday because the committee had asked her to do a walk through and address the concerns from the original board meeting and addressed them at the committee meeting. Ms. Easterday said that Central had sent their EEO manager to do their own review. They were not ADA accessible. They had two different locations. He didn't show the restroom and was upfront that it was not ADA accessible. The actual training provider did not meet our standards for being ADA accessible, but all his classes are online. Ms. Easterday stated that she reached out to the State, but she hasn't received a response back from them. At this time, she said that she did not feel like they met the requirements. Based on that, the committee would recommend the board to table this once again until we get feedback from the State. Discussion followed. Ms. Brown made a **motion** to approve the committee's recommendation as reported, seconded by Ms. Grayer. Motion carried unanimously. Ms. Embry abstained from voting due to conflict of interest in her role. Ms. Embry recommended that the board may want to look into the ADA requirements for online education as well as in person education classes because there are guidelines around that as well.

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Ms. Breashears reported that the next item the committee discussed was performance measures. We reviewed all of this, and Ms. Dearmon explained it to the committee. The question was asked that if we didn't have a DLW participant, how can we spend money on DLW. In order for staff to actively seek those dislocated workers they have to spend that money and pay salaries etc. To make a long story short, Ms. Dearmon will probably need to give you more information on it, but down the pipeline this board is going to be required to submit a Performance Improvement Plan. It's coming and the handwriting is on the wall. The committee has already recommended during their meeting that the staff begin to work on a Performance Improvement Plan. This is the recommendation of the committee. Ms. Greene asked for a motion for the staff to start preparing a Performance Improvement Plan. Mr. Hughes made a **motion** to have staff work on Performance Improvement Plan, seconded by Ms. Darling. Motion carried unanimously.

Ms. Breshears said the last item was the finance report, which Ms. Easterday talked about earlier and they are looking to update the budgets forms. We must send out RFPs for Fiscal and Program Monitoring. This doesn't need a vote; it is just giving you an update. We did have an in-depth discussion on the One Stop Operator. Ms. Greene asked Ms. Strumpf to step out for this part of the discussion. The One Stop Operator contract is about to expire. We have pros and cons about going out for a new RFP or extending it for another year. There are things that we are 100% satisfied with and there are some things that we are 100% dissatisfied with. We had a lengthy discussion and to make this very short, the recommendation is to renew the sub agreement, but to have a meeting and layout specific task that this board is going to require of the One Stop Operator. Discussion followed. Ms. Embry made a **motion** to accept the committee's recommendation to extend the contract and layout specific task required of the One Stop Operator and go out on RFP next year, seconded by Mr. Harrington. Motion carried unanimously.

One Stop Operator: Ms. Strumpf gave the OSSO report that covered Systems Process Improvements, which included Customer Comment Cards System, MOU and IFA Development and Negotiations, Strategic Planning, Center Updates and Customer Traffic Reports. Discussion followed.

Business Engagement Coordinator Report: Ms. Easterday highlighted ACT WorkReady Communities Initiatives going on across the 10-county region. She said that the ACT WorkReady website has a lot of detail and information. With assistance from Prestley we have created a CRC Landing Page on the WCAPDD website that is housed in our Virtual Career Center. Ms. Easterday talked about upcoming events during the month of March and April.

Communications Manager Report: Ms. Smith reported on the updates on the Workforce Development page of WCAPDD website. This included Updated/New Policies, Virtual Career Center, Workshops. Ms. Prestley also talked about the CiviForm Pilot Program.

Discussion of Workforce Development in Local Communities:

Ms. Greene opened the floor for any discussion of workforce development in the local communities and there was no discussion.

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New Business:

Ms. Greene said that she is opening up the floor for any new business. She said our By-Laws were sent out prior to the meeting and said that we will need to approve the updated By-Laws. Ms. Greene said that they were laid out well and asked if anyone had any discussion on them. Ms. Breashears made a **motion** to approve the By-Laws, as written, seconded by Judge Hart. Motion carried unanimously. Ms. Greene opened it up for anybody else that would like to speak.

Ms. Darling gave an update on Adult Education. She said that your local Adult Education program right now is in the process of completing a Request for Proposal for federal funding. We knew the RFP phase was coming and we were notified on January 31st so, for the month of February, your local adult education programs are going to be developing a 100-page proposal that will be reviewed by the local workforce development boards for consideration for our federal funding for the next reporting period, which is three years. She wanted to let the board know that was on the horizon.

Ms. Dearmon said that Ron Magby was appointed to the Board and when the Board Certification was submitted to ADWS, he was inadvertently left off. Ms. Dearmon stated that she talked with Ms. Akidi to find out what we needed to do about Mr. Magby. She stated that we just needed to bring it up during this meeting and have it as a part of our minutes that he was appointed, and Judge Hart signed all his paperwork. Ms. Greene said we will record it in our minutes to be official for Ms. Magby.

Ms. Greene mentioned that the local Plan must be submitted to ADWS by April 15, 2024. A committee meeting will be scheduled to update and review the plan. We have a short turnaround to get it completed to meet the required 30-day comment period. Ms. Greene said this would give us about 3-4 weeks to work on it.

Mr. Mason gave an update on the development of the Hostess Brands facility in Clark County. We began in November. We are currently operating two lines over three shifts. We have a little over 200 team members right now. Next month we will open our line three and after that line four. We will have somewhere around 300 team members by that point in time. We are currently actively recruiting for those net two lines coming up, primarily for production and sanitation workers, but we also have maintenance technicians, administrative positions, QA all across the board. Any one in your community, business or family that is interested in coming and joining a great team, not just with Hostess Brands, but also JM Smucker Company, we welcome you. Ms. Greene recommended we have our next meeting at the Hostess Brands and take a tour.

Venorris Webb-Deseline introduced herself as representing Cass Job Corps and said she is excited about being a part of this board and the Youth Council. She said she looks forward to giving Job Corps a voice. She said they have been blessed to work with Ms. Boyer and Mr. Golden in Russellville and working with the youth across the state.

Mr. Troutman asked if everyone could introduce themselves since we have so many new members. Ms. Greene said that was a good idea and asked Ms. Embry to start it off.

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Ms. Greene asked if there was anyone else that wanted to speak. Ms. Breashears said she would like to compliment the facility because we have had virtual and in-person meetings in the past and if you are in-person it is great but if you are virtual, it's not. This by far has been the best combo meeting we have had. There have been no issues on either side. I don't know who made it happen, but kudos to whoever pulled it off. Ms. Greene thanked Kyle for his support with everything.

Adjournment:

Ms. Breashears made a **motion** to adjourn, seconded by Mr. George. Motion carried unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 11:49 a.m.



Lisa Greene, Chair



Date

LG/md