

MINUTES

Little Rock Workforce Development Board
Executive Committee Meeting by Zoom
January 28, 2021

PRESENT

Members Present: Bryan Day, Beverly Smith, Kristi Barr, Kathy Fulks

LRWDB Staff: W.J. Monagle, Shannon Rast, Tanisha Lawson

Arbor Education & Training/Equus Workforce Solutions: Sheena Fluker, Cherisa Price-Wells

LRWDB Attorney: Steve Riggs

Arkansas Department of Workforce Services: Jenn Pierce

CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

Bryan Day called the meeting to order at 12pm. The audience was welcomed and reminded that the meeting was being recorded. It was determined that a quorum of four was present.

MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

Upon a motion by Kathy Fulks, duly seconded by Kristi Barr, it was unanimously **RESOLVED**: To approve the minutes of the September 24, 2020 meeting as presented. (Exhibit I)

CHAIR'S REMARKS

Calling the year 2020 "unsettled", Chair Day thanked all of the board members, staff and attendees for their service and continued commitment to the LRWDB throughout such an "unsettled" time. We don't know when it will stop being "unsettled" – some say in the spring, but it could be well into the fall of the year – but we will all get through it.

STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS

One-Stop Partners Advisory Committee

There was a meeting that took place on January 27th, but Director Monagle did not have information on it since he could not attend due to illness.

Services to Persons with Disabilities Committee

Chair of the Committee Robin Hunt has emailed Director Monagle to inform him of her necessary resignation from the LRWDB due to a transfer of her responsibilities to the North Little Rock and Pulaski County areas. In the meantime, Terrence Boatwright has offered to guide the committee as well as Brian Sanders, also with the Division of Services for the Blind. They did not have a report because the committee did not meet.

Services to Youth Committee

Yet to identify a chairperson for the committee, so that is still being worked upon. We will allow Sheena Fluker's update on the WIOA Youth Programs serve as the report on Youth activities.

WIOA SERVICE PROVIDER/ONE STOP OPERATOR'S REPORT

Sheena Fluker presented the Equus Workforce Solutions January 28, 2021 LRWD Briefing Report (Exhibit II). The WIOA and other grant team members are expressing more the need of seeing participants face to face, so many are donning face shields and other PPE to go out to the UI lines, but some are still not comfortable doing so. They are continuing to make progress toward

achieving their goals. At this time, Adult Enrollment is 11 out of 50, with one staff member going outside with UI Team and working with the Re-EMP group, so they are seeing an uptick there this month. Our Dislocated Workers enrollment is 9 out of 30. Youth Enrollment is 3 out of 20, so they are working on co-enrolling more there once the TANF Apprenticeship program is up and rolling. OJT has not secured a participant, but they do have two openings that are seeking a good fit for the employer. The Community Outreach measure is at 18 out of 36 for December – doing a lot of social media events on Facebook. The Hiring & Recruiting Events measure is 28 out of 36, having hosted several virtual events, but also participating in those of the partners and state. Social Media Post is 21 out of 72, and that was for the month of December; they have done quite a few for the month of January already. Participant Training Sessions are 7 out of 12. We are starting a new event called “Take Action Tuesday” for social media participant training, which launches next week on Facebook Live and will include not only outreach for program enrollment but training sessions available to the public.

The TANF Work Based Learning program at Our House has enrolled 13 participants and is beginning to gain momentum. The TANF Youth Apprenticeship grant had a virtual kick-off event earlier this month for potential participants and their parents. The TANF Lost Wages Assistance Grant has been closed now. It did not generate the number of anticipated enrollments or referrals from UI, but over \$160,000 was expended helping around 50 low-income families. The Reentry Program released its flyers last month with a scan code which goes directly to its website for more information. They also ran a series of radio ads to boost enrollment and it is at about 40 now. Our OJT partner Black Swan is also looking to hire six new staff, particularly those that have already gone through our Reentry Culinary program.

Success Story:

There were two December graduates in Nursing – one LPN and one RN who are both waiting to take the licensing exams but able to work at Baptist Hospital due to the shortage of nurses created by COVID-19. Lavon Slay is our success story from January. Lavon worked at the LRWFC under the WIOA WEX program and did a great job helping with taking temperatures and greeting people; he was noticed by CADC and was offered full-time employment increasing his pay from \$10 to \$13/hour.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Activity Report

Director Monagle presented the Executive Director's Report dated January 28, 2021 (Exhibit III). Grant updates: the Conditions of Award that were in place on the YouthBuild grant have been lifted, so we will be bringing partners and providers together to launch that \$1M program again; TANF Discretionary grants have made available the Construction Apprenticeship Grant and talks are under way with TANF to fund a Youth Programming and IT Apprenticeship Grant in partnership with the AR Human Development Corporation; getting acclimated to the different culture within TANF. We have also been active responding to monitoring reports and resolving those findings. The interest in our virtual event platform has increased: CAHRA Spring Job Fair; City of Little Rock Rights After Wrongs; The Consulate of Mexico's Latino Bilingual Job Fair; the potential of a Job fair for People with Disabilities. Monagle reported that he attended a virtual workshop with Federal reserve of St. Louis CEO Jim Bullard who said that in terms of emerging from this recession, we are fours ahead of where we were in comparison to the 2008 recession. Monagle thanked LRWDB member Jo Keegan who has gone above and beyond to answer questions and help individuals struggling with the UI system who have contacted him for help. Chair Day seconded that praise for Ms. Keegan's helpfulness. The RFP for the WIOA Title I Provider Services is out on the street and has been sent out to no less than eight interested

organizations. The LRWDB review panel consists of Bryan Day, Beverly Smith, Terrence Boatwright and Ron Bara. Proposals are due to the LRWDB office by March 2nd at 3pm.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Bryan Day reminded all that the Full Board would meet on Thursday, February 25, 2021, probably again by Zoom, and we will get the information out to everyone.

Next meetings:

- LRWDB Full Board: February 25, 2021
- LRWDB Executive Committee: March 25, 2021

ADJOURNMENT

Upon a motion made and duly seconded the meeting adjourned at 12:28 pm.



Approved, Bryan Day, Chair

January 28, 2021

Date

MINUTES

Little Rock Workforce Development Board
Full Board Meeting – via Zoom Virtual Meeting
February 25, 2021

PRESENT

Members Present: Bryan Day, Kristi Barr, Kathy Fulks, Terrence Boatwright, Ron Bara, Beverly Smith, Larry Schleisher, Teresa Knapp Gordon, Jo Keegan, Marla Strecker, Markous Jewett, Tad Bohannon
LRWDB Staff: W.J. Monagle, Shannon Rast, Tanisha Lawson
Abor Education & Training: Sheena Fluker, Cherisa Price-Wells
LRWDB Legal Consultant: Steve Riggs
AWDS: Rowena Reyes, Shenaye Johns, Tom Pittman
Guests: Marsha Guffey (Port of LR – Host/Facilitator)

CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL/WELCOMES

Bryan Day called the meeting to order at 12:00PM. The audience was welcomed to the Zoom virtual format and reminded that the meeting was being recorded for assistance in preparing the minutes. Roll was called, and it was determined that a quorum was present with nine members.

MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

Preparation of the minutes of the December 10, 2020 meeting were delayed by the severe winter storm event recently experienced and therefore postponed until a future meeting.

RATIFY ACTIONS OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

There were no actions taken at the January 2021 meeting by the LRWDB Executive Committee that required approval.

CHAIR AND COMMITTEE REPORTS

The Chair and Executive Director asked members to provide reflection on the ADWS Governance Training on Feb. 2-4, 2021. New members Ron Bara and Tad Bohannon expressed that they felt the training was very useful, especially as new members, but that it further impressed upon them the vast learning required by WIOA.

Committee Reports

Jo Keegan, ADWS Area Manager and Chair of the One Stop Partners Advisory Committee, reported that the committee was not able to meet in February due to the severe weather event, which closed the Center for eight working days. Other than that, the One Stop Center continues to operate in a “soft opening” mode: general services are closed to the public, but staff is accepting UI claimants into the front of the building on a highly regulated basis, still abiding by all CDC protocols and screening requirements.

Robin Hunt, Chair of the Services to People with Disabilities Committee, has been reassigned to the North Pulaski County division of ARS and thus tendered her resignation from the LRWDB. For that reason and the winter weather event, W.J. Monagle reported that the committee did not meet.

With the absence of a Chair for the Youth Services Committee, W.J. reported that services to WIOA Youth continue as they have been in previous months. He deferred to Sheena Fluker to include a report about those efforts in her overall report.

WIOA SERVICE PROVIDER/ONE STOP OPERATOR'S REPORT

Sheena Fluker presented the Equus Workforce Solutions report (Exhibit I), which included a review of the WIOA performance goals from an annual basis. At this time, Equus is meeting or exceeding 2 of the 11 WIOA Common Goals for the program year. They are also meeting five of the goals at 90% or better. They are waiting for the data to materialize on the goals having to do with employment retention and median earnings. The TANF Work Based Learning program has already enrolled its mandated twenty participants for the year. They are using a participant tracking tool called Works, provided by Equus, to keep up with case management and financial obligations since this particular grant cannot use AJL to enter participants. They have also submitted paperwork to use the Wisely Pay Cards, also an Equus-provided product, and are expecting to provide those to participants soon. The TANF-funded Skilled Trades Apprenticeship Program is still off to a slow start, but discussion are underway to adjust the TANF eligibility requirements. The Rock City Reentry Grant Team is still in the process of writing and putting together a proposal for the Pathway Home grant. There are two new work experience sites for the reentry program: Baucum Nursery of the AR Forestry Commission; Pulaski County Detention Facility. Sixty-seven reentry participants have been enrolled. updates and a success story. Equus is working on more fillable applications where customers can complete it on their phone and return it to Equus that way. Training sessions are going really well through Facebook Live. They are available to anyone, not just WIOA or other enrolled participants, with such topics as "Customer Service with a Heart" on how to communicate effectively in a professional environment. The social media goals are being met with this more proactive approach and they are paying to boost these events as well as the virtual job fairs coming up.

Take Action Tuesdays are being implemented as an outreach measure and they take place every Tuesday at 10am on Facebook Live, to promote all of the programs on different weeks and sessions, which has produced a lot of virtual foot traffic, inquiries, reposts, etc., so that interest, awareness and enrollments are increasing.

Equus has passed it Data Validation review for WIOA programs. During the severe winter event, Equus staff did their annual Equus training and a lot of Linked-In training RE: communication, public speaking and leadership development.

Success Story for the Month is Steve Long, who was enrolled and participated in the National Dislocated Worker Grant - Natural Disaster Program. He was subsequently hired full-time by the City of Little Rock after the grant ended and has been pursuing additional opportunities through WIOA – such as CDL training – as his new work schedule permits.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Director Monagle submitted in his report (Exhibit II) that he has received three letters of Intent to Submit proposals for the WIOA Title I Adult, Youth and Dislocated Services and One-Stop Operator Services. He also reported that a further response by the LRWDB to the ADWS PY17 Monitoring Report is required by ADWS, including a written request of repayment sent to the CEO and his response. Director Monagle reported that the virtual event software platform has been a useful and popular product to attract employer and partner interest for conducting virtual job fairs and events. He and the Equus Team have received interest from CAHRA, Consulate of Mexico, City of Little Rock, Racial and

Cultural Diversity Commission/Rights After Wrongs, and the Rock City Reentry Program as possible event partners. He also discussed that the contract for these virtual platform services would need to be procured again and that there was a team working on that, including volunteers Beverly Smith and Kathy Fulks from the LRWDB. Kristi Barr provided some information about their search for a virtual provider, and possibly going with a multi-year commitment to get a better price. Because of the winter storm event and the closure of the Little Rock Workforce Center during the period of the month when invoices are due and processed, there was no financial report.

Chair Day asked that the action item needed to amend the local travel policy base upon recent requirements and review by the ADWS. Since the travel policy of the federal government is more flexible, generous and will align more easily with our current travel policy, Director Monagle asked the LRWDB to approve the amended Travel Policy Upon a motion by Beverly Smith, duly seconded by Tad Bohannon, it was unanimously RESOLVED: To approve the amended LRWDB Travel Policy based upon the federal model.

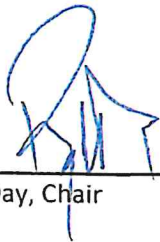
Announcements

There were no additional announcements, except that Girl Scout cookies have arrived!

ADJOURNMENT

Upon a motion made and duly seconded, unanimously RESOLVED: To adjourn meeting at 12:48PM.

Approved by:



Bryan Day, Chair

April 22, 2021

Date

MINUTES

Little Rock Workforce Development Board
Executive Committee Meeting by Zoom
March 25, 2021

PRESENT

Members Present: Bryan Day, Beverly Smith, Jo Keegan, Ron Bara
LRWDB Staff: W.J. Monagle, Shannon Rast, Tanisha Lawson
Arbor Education & Training/Equus Workforce Solutions: Sheena Fluker, Cherisa Price-Wells
LRWDB Attorney: Steve Riggs
Arkansas Department of Workforce Services: Shenaye Johns
Zoom Host: Marsha Guffey

CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

Bryan Day called the meeting to order at 12pm. The audience was welcomed and reminded that the meeting was being recorded. It was determined that a quorum of four was present.

MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

Upon a motion by Jo Keegan, duly seconded by Beverly Smith, it was unanimously **RESOLVED:** To approve the minutes of the January 28, 2021 meeting as presented. (Exhibit I)

CHAIR'S REMARKS

Asking the members of the RFP Review Panel for WIOA Title IB and One-Stop Operator Services to present its recommendation and answer any questions concerning it, Beverly Smith, Ron Bara and Bryan Day announced that the panel decided that Arbor E&T, d.b.a. Equus Workforce Solutions submitted the most qualified and responsive bid. Chair Day, who was also a member of the panel, added that while there are some things needed to be improved upon and will be discussed before negotiating and completing a contract, there was a clear distinction of quality and appropriateness in both the written proposal and virtual interview made by Arbor/Equus. Upon a motion by Beverly Smith, duly seconded by Ron Bara, it was unanimously **RESOLVED:** To approve the recommendation of the RFP Review Panel to award the contract for WIOA Title I and One-Stop Operator Services to Arbor E&T, d.b.a. Equus Workforce Solutions, and to authorize the Executive Director to begin contract negotiations with them.

STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS

One-Stop Partners Advisory Committee

Due to the severe winter snowstorm in February, there was not a meeting that took place of the committee in February or March.

Services to Persons with Disabilities Committee

Due to the severe winter snowstorm in February, there was not a meeting that took place of the committee in February or March. Chair Terrence Boatwright was not able to attend this meeting.

Services to Youth Committee

Due to the severe winter snowstorm in February, and the lack of a Chairperson, there was not a meeting that took place of the committee in February or March.

WIOA SERVICE PROVIDER/ONE STOP OPERATOR'S REPORT

Sheena Fluker presented the Equus Workforce Solutions March 25, 2021 LRWD Briefing Report (Exhibit II). Take Action Tuesdays are really gaining traction. They are advertising FREE trainings for Adult, Youth, and DW in CNA and Phlebotomy, etc. through WIOA, but with the program taking place on April 13th they are going to emphasize the Reentry for Young Adults program, the 3rd Tuesday is Dress for Success in the Professional Workplace, and on April 27th it will be focused on the Youth Apprenticeship Program. On April 9th, they are hosting a virtual recruitment and hiring event for the Rock City Reentry Program, for which she included a copy of the flyer. There is a virtual job fair taking place today in partnership with the Little Rock Air Force Base.

The WIOA and other grant team members are working very hard to get enrollments completed. They are breaking down the numbers to make at least 10 enrollments each month over the next 3-4 months as a strategy for achieving their goals. At this time, Adult Enrollment is 16 out of 50, with one staff member going outside to work the UI lines and announce what programs and training is available. They are thinking outside the box to engage youth and the unemployed community.

Success Story:

Project Director Fluker reported that National Dislocated Worker Grant participant Steve Long who has spent the last year working for the City of Little Rock Parks & Recreation Department repairing damage from the 2019 flood disaster was offered full-time employment in the City's Public Works Department. During his time working under the NDWG, Mr. Long received valuable resources including supportive services and ResCare Academy soft skills building. Mr. Long has previous forklift driving experience but would eventually like to obtain his CDL to expand his future opportunities.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Activity Report

Director Monagle presented the Executive Director's Report dated March 25, 2021 (Exhibit III). He announced that the team had just submitted the largest Grant application in LRWDB history of \$2.5M for Adult reentry services, both pre- and post-release, and of course, in partnership with Equus, Our House and the City of Little Rock.

The number of online and virtual activities that we are hosting, and facilitating has been impressive, diverse and evolving. Today, Equus and the LRWDB is hosting an event with the Little Rock Air Force Base that will allow us to potentially reach the spouses of active-duty and retired service veterans, which is a targeted population which we have been challenged to engage.

Our license for the virtual event software platform Easy Virtual Events is expiring, so we need to re-procure that contract and a committee has been engaged in that activity with the projection that it will bring forth a recommendation next month. The committee consists of Beverly Smith, W.J. Monagle, Shanta Arnold, Sheena Fluker and Yolanda Carman.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Ron Bara announced that because of the increase in vaccination availability, they are bringing the Bridge to Work program operations back up and are desiring to conduct a clinic for homeless persons. The Jericho Way Drop-In Center just had a clinic through UAMS and that was a success, so they would like to follow up with one at Canvass Community Church with a soft-skills workshop. Monagle reported that he had received an invitation from Salvation Army to work with the homeless population as well.

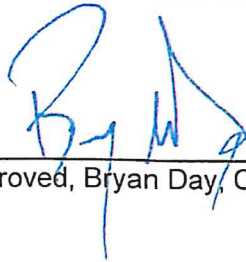
Chair Day inquired if we had received the letter from LRWDB CEO Mayor Frank Scott Jr. and Monagle reported that no letter has yet to be received. Chair Day directed Monagle to reach out to Grant Tennille at the Mayor's office to impress upon them the urgency of getting that letter and moving it along to the ADWS and DOL.

Next meetings:

- LRWDB Full Board: April 22, 2021
- LRWDB Executive Committee: May 27, 2021

ADJOURNMENT

Upon a motion made and duly seconded the meeting adjourned at 12:47 pm.



Approved, Bryan Day, Chair

May 27, 2021

Date

MINUTES

Little Rock Workforce Development Board
Full Board Meeting – via Zoom Virtual Meeting
April 22, 2021

PRESENT

Members Present: Bryan Day, Kristi Barr, Kathy Fulks, Ron Bara, Beverly Smith, Larry Schleicher, Jo Keegan, David Stephens, Markous Jewett, Tad Bohannon

LRWDB Staff: W.J. Monagle, Shannon Rast, Tanisha Lawson

Abor Education & Training: Sheena Fluker, Cherisa Price-Wells

AWDS: Rowena Reyes, Tom Pittman

Guests: Marsha Guffey (Port of LR – Host/Facilitator)

CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL/WELCOMES

Bryan Day called the meeting to order at 12:00PM. The audience was welcomed to the Zoom virtual format and reminded that the meeting was being recorded for assistance in preparing the minutes. Roll was called, and it was determined that a quorum was present with nine members.

MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

Upon a motion by Kathy Fulks, duly seconded by Beverly Smith, it was unanimously **RESOLVED:** To approve the minutes of the February 25, 2021 meeting as presented.

RATIFY ACTIONS OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The LRWDB Chair reviewed the recommendation of the WIOA Title I (RFP) Review Panel to contract with Arbor E&T, d.b.a. Equus Workforce Solutions to provide WIOA Title I Adult, Youth and Dislocated Worker Program Services and One Stop Operator Services for one (1) year. In addition to Chair Day himself, members of the RFP review panel included Beverly Smith, Terrence Boatwright and Ron Bara. Upon a motion by Ron Bara, duly seconded by Kathy Fulks, it was unanimously **RESOLVED:** to ratify the executive committee's action to contract with Arbor E&T, d.b.a. Equus Workforce Solutions to provide WIOA Title I Adult, Youth and Dislocated Worker Program Services and One Stop Operator Services for one (1) year, as presented.

CHAIR AND COMMITTEE REPORTS

The Chair and Executive Director asked members to provide reflection on the ADWS Governance Training on Feb. 2-4, 2021. New members Ron Bara and Tad Bohannon expressed that they felt the training was very useful, especially as new members, but that it further impressed upon them the vast learning required by WIOA.

Committee Reports

Jo Keegan, ADWS Area Manager and Chair of the One Stop Partners Advisory Committee, reported that the committee met on April 20th. The ADWS UI unit is going to have some ID Verification events, but those will likely take place away from the center, since they will be drive through events. There is a large public miscommunication that the workforce centers are handling the PUA system, which they are not. There are some staff trained which can reset passwords and answer questions but that is all.

Jo Keegan has been assigned away from the center to train in PUA in case there are issues that need to be addressed. The company that cleans the center has been re-awarded the contract. No date has been given about when the building may be reopened and returned to some kind of normalcy.

Terrence Boatwright, Co-Chair of the Services to People with Disabilities Committee, was not able to attend the meeting. W.J. Monagle reported that the committee is still committed to the idea of a virtual job fair for people with disabilities, but it has not had the opportunity to meet or coordinate.

Kathy Fulks, Chair for the Youth Services Committee, has not been able to convene the committee due to the COVID-19 circumstances and the onset of more training demands on the Construction Education Foundation. W.J. Monagle reported that LRWDB would take additional step to enable the Services to WIOA Youth committee convene in the next couple of months.

WIOA SERVICE PROVIDER/ONE STOP OPERATOR'S REPORT

Sheena Fluker presented the Equus Workforce Solutions report (Exhibit I), which included a review of the WIOA performance goals from an annual basis. Adult and Youth enrollment are at 50% and DLW is at 33%, or 10/30. Equus staff has adopted Internal goals and action plans as people become a little more engaged in employment and training programs. For OJT, they have exceeded the goal with 2 out of one. For Community Outreach, they are also exceeding the goal with 40/30. They have 64/72 Social Media posts. They have conducted 10/12 training sessions. For the TANF WBL at Our House, they enrolled all 25 participants – while implementing the WISELY pay cards, or direct deposit. Equus has been asked to present to TANF Oversight Committee of the AWDB, but that has been postponed due to a technical issue. In the Rock City Reentry Project, 93 participants have been enrolled out of 188. Work experience in that program is still taking place at Bacum Nursery, Habitat for Humanity and the Pulaski Co. Detention Center. Equus conducts Take Action Tuesdays every Tuesday at 10am – using Instagram to get more Youth engaged and enrolled, putting flyers at Pizza places and at summer programs.

April Success story is Colby Whaley, a 17 year-old living with his grandparents and unable to afford his PLC Training program at Starlight Automation, from where he was referred. WIOA was able to fund his training and on April 12th he completed his PLC training certificate and had a graduation ceremony, which include his grandparents and his WIOA Case Manager, Debra McGee.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Director Monagle submitted his report (Exhibit II) and thanked board members for their presence and continued commitment to the LRWDB. He noted that additional board members Markous Jewett, Larry Schleicher, and Tad Bohannon had joined the meeting. He reported that the major piece of news is the renewal of the contract and continuation of the relationship with Arbor E&T, d.b.a. Equus Workforce Solutions and that he looked forward to negotiating a new contract. He reminded the LRWDB that it had not yet received official allocations which would allow him to do that, but it had received projections from ADWS, and those amounts look good with increases in both Youth and Adult funding streams, while DW dropped slightly. He will do everything he can in the meantime to be prepared and ready to complete a contract.

He reported that the LRWDB had answered the latest and hopefully last question of the PY17 Monitoring Report requesting pay back of \$41,000 in disallowed costs. He has received a letter from the Mayor of Little Rock stating that they do not have the funds to repay this amount. ADWS and DOL are set to discuss this further this week

The LRWDB application for a \$2.5 reentry grant has been rejected on a technicality. The submission asked for \$1 too much on the threshold of participants to be served. French Hill and his team are helping to contact the DOL national office. The reentry team is crushed, but they can try to find a new grant to use this work to find other funds.

Cameron Intl (formerly Cameron Valve) is laying off 264 people. This has been certified as a Trade Affected (TAA) layoff and could be a source of significant Dislocated Workers to increase our enrollments. Kristi updated the discussion with information that those employees had been laid off months ago and the last one left in December 2020. They performed one-to-one coaching and counseling in partnership with their HR Director and that was possibly in July or August of 2020. Director Monagle will research and find out what happened with the time lag in notifying WIOA.

Last virtual event took place on April 9, 2021 and was not as successful as previous events. Staff is debriefing the event and the provider in preparation of the RFP for possibly a new provider.

Monagle produced a Budget & Financial report. As it is the 3rd quarter of the fiscal year, about 25% should remain in any category. The LRWDB operations budget has 30% left. Other grants are really helping to offset expenses. The Arbor E&T/Equus WIOA funding stream budget reflects a wider variance by line item or category costs is being experienced, but a total expended amount is at 54% with 46% left to expend. Given the general circumstances under COVID-19 that is not necessarily a surprise with the difficulty in recruitment, enrollment and employment placement at this time. Monagle reported that the team is taking steps to increase enrollment and expenditures, however, he noted that whatever funds are not spent this year are rolled over to the next fiscal year and can be expended under some better social conditions. All in all, the LRWDB is not doing too badly.

In the budget reports with Our House and the Work Based Learning and Reentry Grants with which we partner with them, we are seeing similarly lower expenditure rates than normal at 43% left to spend.

Monagle reviewed several programs that have had difficulty getting off the ground and/or extreme difficulty finding eligible enrollments, such as the YouthBuild program, the TANF Construction Trades Apprenticeship Program, and the TANF WBL Program at Our House (albeit there has been an uptick in enrollments, so we will start to see more expenditures.) As with the WIOA grants, these grants are multi-year, so unexpended funds will rollover into the 2nd and 3rd years of those grants.

After some further explanation and discussion, and, upon a motion by Tad Bohannon, duly seconded by Ron Bara, it was unanimously **RESOLVED:** to approve the April 2021 Financial Report as presented.

Director Monagle reported that ADWS has recently notified him that a re-certification of the local board is required at this time and he may be asking some members to provide a new letter of nomination, resume, attestation of optimal hiring or policy-making authority, and/or other documents as required. This will mainly apply to longer standing board members, since this process has already been followed more closely with the newer appointments.

Announcements

Kristi Barr announced that the LR Chamber has been working with Amazon and their jobs should post at the end of May, projecting to open their Little Rock and North Little Rock facilities in July and August. Stayed tuned for information about drive-through job fairs and virtual meetings about that. She wanted

to point out the concerns she sees and hears from companies like Amazon worried about all of the new companies gearing up, the generally low and improving unemployment rate, and the potential issues in finding enough employees to fill their production needs. She feels that the crunch we are seeing now is going to get worse as competition increases. This initiated a great discussion among a LRWDB members.

Bryan Day reported that at a recent meeting of the board of the Port of Little Rock, the Chamber reported talking to 17 industries at the port and majority were hiring, having more than 200 open positions. Beverly Smith reported seeing the same trend at her business, and suggested more employers consider working with the Reentry population. Jo Keegan reported that some businesses are closing on certain days because they do not have the staff to maintain full working hours – this being especially true in the restaurant industry. She wanted to remind businesses that there is a provision within the UI system for a claimant to have his/her benefits cut for refusing an employment offer. Under PUA, they are in the process of building their own Refusal to Work provision. Employers are encouraged to keep their state legislative representatives aware of this, so that stricter regulations and punishments can be enacted. Beverly Smith added that people will apply for Jobs and never see them afterwards, fulfilling the requirement to search for work but they do not answer or respond to potential offers of work. Kathy Fulks is working with 2 employers that are looking for almost 300 employees combined, but only receive 6-7 qualified and interested persons per week. Tad Bohannon states that they are getting very qualified candidates for the skilled positions they have, but the problem is onboarding them fast enough before they are taking part-time positions or going elsewhere with their skills. Ron Bara added that for the homeless, they are skilled and wanting to work, but not having a place to stay or access to affordable housing is an impediment to being able to show up for work. Director Monagle mentioned the programs we have for homeless people at Our House and stated that they had recently had conversations with Salvation Army as well. Marsha Guffey, of the Port of Little Rock, recounted her story of working with a CASA appointed parent who she communicates with through Facebook Messenger, which is used by folks without telephone services. It is challenging to communicate with economically challenged job seekers, but HR managers are probably not going to use Facebook Messenger to communicate.

Kristi Barr mentioned that a new company called Custom Craft Poultry is actively hiring for a quick start and ramp up, which will take 2nd Chance candidates.

ADJOURNMENT

Upon a motion made and duly seconded, unanimously **RESOLVED:** To adjourn meeting at 12:48PM.

Approved by:



Bryan Day, Chair

April 22, 2021

Date

MINUTES

Little Rock Workforce Development Board
Executive Committee Meeting by Zoom
May 27, 2021

PRESENT

Members Present: Bryan Day, Beverly Smith, Kristi Barr, Jo Keegan, Kathy Fulks
LRWDB Staff: W.J. Monagle, Shannon Rast LRWDB Attorney: Steve Riggs
Arbor Education & Training/Equus Workforce Solutions: Sheena Fluker
ADWS: Shenaye Johns, Rowena Reyes, Tom Pittman, Beverly Lovett
Zoom Host: Marsha Guffey

CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

Bryan Day called the meeting to order at 12pm. The audience was welcomed and reminded that the meeting was being recorded. It was determined that a quorum of five was present.

MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

Upon a motion by Kristi Barr, duly seconded by Kathy Fulks, it was unanimously **RESOLVED:** To approve the minutes of the March 25, 2021 meeting as corrected. (Exhibit I)

CHAIR'S REMARKS

Bryan Day observed that the city and community are slowly starting to reopen and would like to discuss the plan to meet again in person. He asked for a status report of the environment at the LRWFC. Jo Keegan provided an update on the status of all state workforce offices stating that they are fully open again, with the exception that customers in the waiting areas are socially distanced and they are asking people to wait in their cars to be called and not in lines. However, signs have been removed requiring masks – even though they are made available – and screens and protective barriers have been taken down. They continue to spray down and wipe clean after use by customer and continue to use the fogging device every few days. She felt that W.J. could reserve Room 189 and even provide lunches (making gloves and hand sanitizer available.) W.J. Monagle reported the LRWDB and Equus is still encouraging customers and employees to use masks while in transit through the building or working with customers. Kristi Barr asked if moving forward under any environment, could the LRWDB have a virtual option for attendance, citing there are many times when she must miss because of the transit time involved in attending in person. Monagle responded that the technology for this was in place but could be made more reliable, and that it was still an option to join meetings by telephone.

Chair Day then opened discussion to consider the recommendation from the RFP Review Panel evaluating the Virtual Event Software Provider and the panel decided that Talentspace submitted the most compelling and responsive bid out of three bids received. Vice Chair Beverly Smith, who led the panel as the board member, agreed that Talentspace was more modern, demonstrated a wider capacity for a variety of meeting and conference types, and was cost competitive. Upon a motion by Jo Keegan, duly seconded by Kristi Barr, it was unanimously **RESOLVED:** To approve the recommendation of the RFP Review Panel to award the contract for Virtual Event Software Services to Talentspace and authorize the Executive Director to sign a contract with them.

STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS

One-Stop Partners Advisory Committee

In addition to the information, she provided about the COVID-19 status, Jo Keegan reported that ADWS will be having a local office manager meeting on June 24-25, 2021 at the Central office. She will be away quite a bit of the month in June at the Jacksonville office since that director is retiring and she must help with that transition. Everything in the Little Rock WFC is going well, and partners are planning some fire and tornado drills.

Services to Persons with Disabilities Committee

Chair Terrence Boatwright was not able to attend this meeting, but there was not a meeting that took place of the committee. Kristi Barr stated that Amazon has indicated that it wants to conduct an informational event for "All Abilities" and would like a good contact for establishing that.

Services to Youth Committee

Kathy Fulks reported there was a virtual meeting that took place of the committee on May 25, 2021. Sheena reported at this meeting that all youth programs had been negatively impacted by COVID-19, but they were still achieving 90% enrollment in WIOA. They have enrolled first two clients in the TANF Construction Pre-Apprenticeship, so that program should be seeing more enrollments too. Monagle reported about another TANF-funded youth program that will work with mostly ISY 16-24 years old for a summer work experience, in partnership with the Arkansas Human Development Corporation and several municipalities in the Eastern and Southeastern parts of AR. The City of Little Rock has reduced the size of its summer youth employment program by half to around 300 participants. Job Corps reported that every service has been virtual, but they are starting to open back up and have 34 students living on campus. The AR Out-of-School Network is working on some issues related to the loss of education during COVID-19 and projects this will be an issue for 10 years.

WIOA SERVICE PROVIDER/ONE STOP OPERATOR'S REPORT

Sheena Fluker presented the Equus Workforce Solutions May 27, 2021 LRWD Briefing Report (Exhibit II). The WIOA programs have been working hard and they are meeting at least 90% of their local goals. Where it is lacking is in the Adult and DW enrollments, just as everybody has been experiencing lack of engagement. New TAA requirement have resulted in 68 referrals, and hopefully at least 5-10 of those can be enrolled. They also have ten Nursing student referrals between UA-PTC and UALR that are waiting on the eligible provider system to correct to enroll them. Reentry Young Adult has 112 participants enrolled and working in various work experience locations. Twelve have enrolled in the Goodwill certified welding program, a 20-week course. Five of those students are in CDL training also. Equus is now also physically outside doing outreach, not just virtually, so they are attending several in-person hiring events with various local entities, such as Watershed, CADC and the City of Little Rock's Summer Youth Employment Program.

Take Action Tuesdays continue to be heavily promoted and have gained more social media recognition. The June calendar is out and being shared with Partners and online. Great speakers have been lined up for every Tuesday at 10am, including a Positive Mindset speaker, AR Youth Challenge, and a career readiness seminar by one of the local case managers.

Success Story:

Project Director Fluker reported that TANF Work Based Learning participant Marquita Harper is the success story of the month. A mother of four young children who was unemployed, recently released from jail and recently lost her housing, Harper was receiving services at Our House in November 2020. Through the TANF WBL Program, she has shown progress in communicating with her co-workers at Our House Re-sale stores, completed all the courses assigned to her by the court, moved into the Family House on the Our House campus, and now has a car. She is hoping that this next month may be the time she can find housing outside of the shelter.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Activity Report

Director Monagle presented the Executive Director's Report dated May 27, 2021 (Exhibit III). He announced that the LRWDB has received the amounts that the LRWDB will receive for WIOA Adult and DW Subawards from the ADWS. The subawards themselves are yet to materialize, but the amounts are now known. The subaward for WIOA Youth has been previously issued and a signed agreement returned. The PY21 WIOA allocation for Adult and Youth reflect increases of about \$90,000 combined, while the DW funds decreased by around \$12,000. Since these funds have just been made aware to LRWDB staff, a budget is not yet ready, but staff will be working to prepare a budget for June's full board meeting to have a fiscal budget in place by July 1. The LRWDB has not heard back from Congressman Hill's office concerning the grant which we submitted including the error we committed in stating the number served and request amount, so we are assuming that those are being sent to the readers and ours will be excluded from consideration. We are trying to pivot and look at DOJ grants that can be applied for using some of the same research and program planning. The LRWDB is working with TANF and the AR Human Development Corporation on a regional grant called "Project Y.I.E.L.D. Results" and expanding our reach to other communities in organizing and funding summer youth employment programs in five counties.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Kristi Barr announced that a lot of companies are hiring and seeking employees, such as Custom Craft Poultry, Windsor Door has a small expansion, a Call Center in Sherwood has a new facility, Amazon continues to hire for their Little Rock location opening in July, Costco will open on July 21st, several Port companies are looking for people, L'Oréal is expanding and hiring in NLR, and, in fact, the Little Rock Regional Chamber of Commerce is looking for two people. Beverly Smith noted that some of their light industrial assignments are coming to an end, so employment agencies may be able to help in this situation.

Sadly, Director Monagle announced that longtime LRWDB member and officer, Mrs. Linda Kindy, passed away that morning. With prayers and intentions, the LRWDB will miss our friend and colleague who was always a ready and willing partner to make any program significantly better.

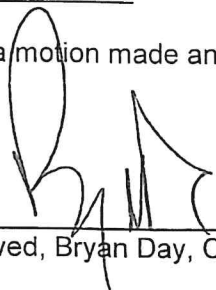
Chair Day indicated that while the budget was not ready today, employee raises were not made during COVID-19 and therefore he would be recommending to the LRWDB for appropriate amounts to be included in the budget to be considered next month.

Next meetings:

- LRWDB Full Board: June 24, 2021 – which will be a Zoom meeting again
- LRWDB Executive Committee: July 27, 2021 – consider cancellation

ADJOURNMENT

Upon a motion made and duly seconded the meeting adjourned at 12:51 pm.



Approved, Bryan Day, Chair

September 23, 2021

Date

MINUTES

Little Rock Workforce Development Board
Full Board Meeting – via Zoom Virtual Meeting
June 24, 2021

PRESENT

Members Present: Bryan Day, Beverly Smith, Kathy Fulks, Kristi Barr, Terrence Boatwright (also proxy for Jo Keegan), Ron Bara, Larry Schleicher, Markous Jewett

LRWDB Staff: W.J. Monagle, Shannon Rast, Tanisha Lawson

LRWDB Attorney: Steve Riggs

Abor Education & Training: Sheena Fluker, Cherisa Price-Wells, Bob Knight

AWDS: Rowena Reyes, Tom Pittman

Guests: Marsha Guffey (Port of LR – Host/Facilitator)

CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL/WELCOMES

Bryan Day called the meeting to order at 12:00PM. The audience was welcomed to the Zoom virtual format and reminded that the meeting was being recorded for assistance in preparing the minutes. Roll was called, and it was determined that a quorum was present with nine members.

MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

Upon a motion by Ron Bara, duly seconded by Kathy Fulks, it was unanimously RESOLVED: To approve the minutes of the April 22, 2021 meeting as presented.

RATIFY ACTIONS OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The LRWDB Chair reviewed the recommendation of the RFP Review Panel evaluating the Virtual Event Software Provider and the panel decided that Talentspace submitted the most compelling and responsive bid out of three bids received. Vice Chair Beverly Smith, who led the panel as the board member, agreed that Talentspace was more modern, demonstrated a wider capacity for a variety of meeting and conference types, and was cost competitive. Upon a motion by Kathy Fulks, duly seconded by Ron Bara, it was unanimously RESOLVED: To ratify the action of the LRWDB Executive Committee to award the contract for Virtual Event Software Services to Talentspace and authorize the Executive Director to sign a contract with them.

CHAIR AND COMMITTEE REPORTS

The Chair and Executive Director introduced members to special guest speaker Bob Knight, an expert and analyst in federal workforce policy development and government relations with Equus Workforce Solutions with more than 30 years' experience. The CARES Act, which in general encompassed all of the COVID-19 related federal response, clearly impacted the present and future of workforce, especially in consideration of the UI benefits program. Then the \$2T ARPA bill is being available: \$1.57B for Arkansas; \$76M for Pulaski Co.; \$37.7M for Little Rock. There are four things the money can be used for and one of them is to respond to the negative economic impact of the pandemic, which most are interpreting to say that workforce development is a legitimate use of it. The money is around until 2024. The budget for WIOA in 2021 will increase slightly, but not significantly when considering inflation, so the challenge is to explore and find other resources that are of plenty and more forthcoming, some containing expressed job training and development. He noted that three major pieces of legislation were set to expire with no clear intentions of efforts to reauthorize them: WIOA, TANF and Higher Education Act.

Committee Reports

Jo Keegan, ADWS Area Manager and Chair of the One Stop Partners Advisory Committee, could not attend the meeting in person; her proxy for the meeting was Terrence Boatwright who read the report of the LRWFC Partners' Advisory Meeting which met on June 22th. LRWDB Executive Director and Equus Project Director provided additional comments on the Advisory Committee meeting.

Terrence Boatwright, Co-Chair of the Services to People with Disabilities Committee, was not able to convene a meeting of this committee.

Kathy Fulks, Chair for the Youth Services Committee, was not able to convene the committee.

WIOA SERVICE PROVIDER/ONE STOP OPERATOR'S REPORT

Sheena Fluker presented the Equus Workforce Solutions report (Exhibit I), which included a review of the WIOA performance goals from an annual basis. Adult and Youth enrollment are at 35/50 and 17/20 respectively, while DLW is at 16/30. For OJT, they are one out of two. For Community Outreach, they are exceeding the goal with 74/36. They have exceeded the goal for Social Media posts with 98/72. Equus staff have conducted 12/12 training sessions. For the TANF WBL at Our House, 32 out of 40 participants have been enrolled. In the Rock City Reentry Project, 123 participants have been enrolled out of 188. Work experience sites include Baucum Nursery, Habitat for Humanity and the Our House retail stores. Nine students are currently enrolled in the welding program at Goodwill/Metro CTE Academy, and five students are engaged in completing their CDL training and five more are pending the start of the next class. Take Action Tuesdays occur every Tuesday at 10am.

The June Success Story is Javyn Luckey. While battling Leukemia, Javyn has been enrolled in the WIOA Youth program, both completing his H.S. Diploma and gaining work experience while working at the Little Rock Workforce Center. He has been taking online career courses in such areas as career assessment, time management and work ethics, which will serve him well as he has been accepted and will study Sports Medicine at Grambling State University. Everyone is very proud of Javyn Luckey.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Director Monagle submitted his report (Exhibit II). He repeated information in his prior month's report on the amounts of PY20 WIOA Allocations by funding stream, noting an overall increase of \$170,977, which will be significant when the budget is discussed later in the meeting. Monagle reported that a major new \$2.2M grant from TANF entitled Project Y.I.E.L.D. would result in several summer jobs programs in Little Rock and around the SE section of Arkansas. Monagle provided the LRWDB with an update on the status of the PY17 Monitoring Report, indicating that an agreement had been reached with the state to seek a waiver from USDOL of all disallowed costs and financial penalties (with their exception of \$6,000), which is a major breakthrough in those negotiations. He noted that the LRWDB and Equus Workforce Solutions staff would host a "Drive-Through" Job Fair in partnership with Baptist Health Systems on Saturday, June 26th. These kinds of job fairs and hiring events have been popular and somewhat productive with employers during the COVID-19 pandemic as a hybrid online/in-person event.

Director Monagle and Chair Day next presented the PY21 LRWDB Budget and asked the LRWDB members to review and ask any questions about as he walked them through the formation and explanation of the budget amounts. Monagle noted that again the grants made possible through competitive USDOL FOAs, as well as TANF & Statewide WIOA Discretionary Grants exceeded that of

WIOA Formula Allocations. He noted that this budget was very similar to the PY20 LRWDB Budget and should not offer any surprises to the board. He noted that the amount left in the Unobligated Reserve column was just under \$200,000 and provided an ample amount to fund the board and its contractor for 2-3 months in a crisis, over the annual hump, or if additional funding to the public became necessary if we happened to run short. Upon a motion by Kathy Fulks, duly seconded by Markous Jewett, it was unanimously RESOLVED: To approve the LRWDB PY21 Budget as presented.

Announcements

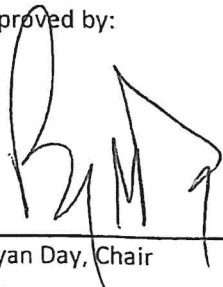
Kristi Barr announced that she understood that the Amazon jobs at the LR Port Fulfillment and Warehouse Center will post on Saturday, June 26, 2021 and they will begin their hiring process at the Holiday Inn Airport the following Monday. They will post on the www.amazondelivers.jobs

Bryan Day endorsed that announcement and also reported that at least five other companies operating at the Port of Little Rock are hiring and have Help Wanted signs in front of their facilities. He did not have specifics to share, but said that he could find that out for anyone interested. Terrence Boatwright inquired if the Amazon hiring process will consider persons with disabilities and attempt to make accommodations for persons who, for instance, are blind. Kristi Barr responded that, not being an employee of Amazon herself, she has heard them say that Amazon is "An Employer of Everyone" and will make accommodations and work with potential employees.

ADJOURNMENT

Upon a motion made and duly seconded, unanimously RESOLVED: To adjourn meeting at 1:01PM.

Approved by:



Bryan Day, Chair

November 4, 2021

Date

MINUTES

Little Rock Workforce Development Board
Full Board Meeting – via Zoom Virtual Meeting
August 26, 2021

PRESENT

Members Present: Beverly Smith (presiding), Kristi Barr, Kathy Fulks, Terrence Boatwright, Ron Bara, Jo Keegan, David Stephens, Markous Jewett, Tad Bohannon

LRWDB Staff: W.J. Monagle, Shannon Rast, Tanisha Lawson

Abor Education & Training: Sheena Fluker, Keondra Hampton, Tim Foster

ADWS: Tanya Plunkett, Rowena Reyes, Tim Gibbons, Shenaye Johns

AWDB: Chad Brown

Guests: Marsha Guffey (Port of LR – Host/Facilitator)

CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL/WELCOMES

Beverly Smith called the meeting to order at 12:00PM. The audience was welcomed to the Zoom virtual format and reminded that the meeting was being recorded for assistance in preparing the minutes. Shannon Rast called the roll verbally, and a quorum was present with nine members.

MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

Having recently returned from an extended vacation, the Executive Director informed the members that the previous minutes had not been completed in time and begged the patience of the board, stating that the minutes of the June 24, 2021, meeting will be presented for approval at the next meeting.

RATIFY ACTIONS OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The LRWDB Executive Committee did not meet in July 2021 and therefore there were no actions or recommendations to review or approve.

Nominating Committee Report and Election of LRWDB Officers.

Jo Keegan, ADWS Area Manager and Chair of the Nominating Committee, reported that she and/or members of the committee met or spoke with each of the prospective candidates for PY2021 LRWDB Officers and offered the slate of nominations below for consideration:

- Bryan Day – Chair
- Beverly Smith – Vice Chair
- Kathy Fulks – Secretary/Treasurer

Additional nominations were asked from the virtual audience, and none were forthcoming. After no additional nominations were offered and, upon a motion by Terrence Boatwright, duly seconded by Kristi Barr, it was unanimously **RESOLVED:** to approve the slate of PY2021 LRWDB Officers as presented by the Nominating Committee.

CHAIR AND COMMITTEE REPORTS

Chairs Report

The Conflict-of-Interest Forms have been sent out and the Executive Director would like to receive those back from members ASAP. Due to COVID and not meeting, the LRWDB is behind in having those on file.

The Vice Chair asked members to share observations and reflection on the current employment and hiring environment. She noted for her part as an employment agency continued high demand for qualified and quality employees on the part of employers, but a reluctance to meet competitive wage demands, offer signing perks or incentives, or realize the level of competition for high performing candidates – to the extent that if an employer is offering less than \$13 per hour, CSS is probably not the employment company for that employer. She does not think this environment is not going away and we will continue to see a “shortage” of qualified candidates in the pool. Kristi Barr raised the topic of the “Great Resignation” and the incentives that somewhat older, more experienced, and higher end workers can demand or else move on to positions that can offer more flexibility. Terrence Boatwright said that candidates with visual impairments and/or other disabilities often get delayed in the slow hiring process and perhaps hesitation in hiring people with disabilities. If anyone has more immediate employers, he can refer his customers to, that would be a benefit. Vice Chair Smith advised that more education needs to take place among our employers in making accommodations for and reaping the benefits employing a person with a disability. Jo Keegan agreed with Member Boatwright’s assessment of the disability hiring environment, as well as noting that employers are going to need to reconsider on a case-by-case basis the former offender population as well in expanding their view of who is qualified to work for them. Sheena Fluker noted that the LRWDB/Equus Reentry program has had success with this population, so if there is something she can do to offer assistance to a person in this category, please let them know. Kathy Fulks noted a legislative act was passed which prohibits licensing ex-offenders from more than 60 occupational licenses. Markous Jewett noted that Goodwill placed more than 7,000 in employment in the year before COVID-19, but so far this year their best month has been this August with 500 through their doors and 76 placed in employment with an average wage of \$14 per hour, and 30 placed in each of the past two weeks. Goodwill discontinued their specific program of working with people with disabilities at the onset of COVID-19. Ron Bara brought up the need for soft skills, especially as he sees and works with people who are homeless; he is currently looking at committed participants and the possibility of putting in a tiny house dormitory at Canvass to meet a small part of their housing needs. Director Monagle mentioned that the topic of Afghan immigrant workers and the fact that all of the ideas and perspectives shared in this exchange would be used in the formation of the 4-year local plan.

Committee Reports

Jo Keegan, ADWS Area Manager and Chair of the One Stop Partners Advisory Committee, reported that work at the LRWFC continues to move at a steady pace, but it has slowed down considerably, which is a good and needed breath of fresh air for all staff. More job fairs are happening. CADC is offering it rental and utility assistance from the back entrance of the LRWFC. It will be closed on Sept. 6th for Labor Day and the annual WIOA Partners’ Meeting will take place on Sept. 21-23, 2021. The center still allows and provides masks and encourages unvaccinated people to take precautions but has removed all signs mandating them and all barriers between employees and the public. Three large humidifiers that clean and disinfect an area of 5,000 sq ft are still in use in the higher trafficked areas.

Terrence Boatwright, Co-Chair of the Services to People with Disabilities Committee, did not have a committee report since a meeting did not occur this month.

Kathy Fulks, Chair for the Youth Services Committee, reported that the committee met on July 26, 2021, and heard an update from Michael Sanders at the City of Little Rock – Dept. of Community Programs that its Summer Youth Employment Program did take place but on a much smaller scale of around 200 participants due to the COVID-19 circumstances. There was a job fair for those that were not selected for the program in order to secure them jobs in the open market, which Sanders felt was more successful than anticipated. W.J. Monagle reported on the partnership between LRWDB and the AR

Human Development Corporation's Summer Y.I.E.L.D. Results Program, taking place mainly in the SE AR region among municipalities and non-profit programs offering summer jobs to youth. WIOA met their goals for the last fiscal year. Job Corps also attended the meeting and have openings, although their virtual attendance in both class and occupational training has been taking place through a USDOL grant which provides Chrome Books and wi-fi hotspots; when they physically return, they will spend 18 days in quarantine on campus before being released to move about the site freely. They are looking to increase their partnerships within the community for service and leadership projects. Youth Challenge reported that they graduated 75 students in the spring and their placement numbers are increasing.

WIOA SERVICE PROVIDER/ONE STOP OPERATOR'S REPORT

Sheena Fluker presented the Equus Workforce Solutions report (Exhibit I). Equus managed to meet all of its local goals except for three: Adult, Dislocated and Youth enrollment. This was due to the general COVID-19 environment of people reluctant to go back to work for various reasons related to the pandemic. However, for PY21 those numbers have picked up and they are ahead of where they normally are at this point in the year. Four new goals have been added to the new year: two in Adult Work Experience; six Youth Occupational Skills training; quarterly center-wide cross trainings which may happen on our virtual meeting platform; Business Services Surveys to assess local business service needs. For this year's enrollment goals, Equus is at 12/50 for Adult, DLW is at 7/30, and Youth is at 10/30. For OJT, they have not established that measure yet but expect to achieve that one OJT goal very soon. with 2 out of one. For Community Outreach, they are also already meeting that goal with 50/50. They have set a goal of having 50 Hiring and Recruiting events. They have conducted 4/24 training sessions, including conducting one session per month during Take Action Tuesdays in order to meet that goal. They are providing The Works System in order to track expenses, participant activities and case management notes and documents for non-WIOA programs that cannot use the AJLA system. One feature in particular will be the digital and electronic expense and obligation tracking program for each participant, thus eliminating the need to send and trade paper approval and signature documents back and forth. Equus is also implementing Jobs EQ, a tool for the use of the Business Services Liaison and Team to target any businesses that have a high or specific need for a certain kind of qualified employee. They may also use this tool to target certain populations – such as Youth or Dislocated Workers – within a certain area or zip code. Equus was part of a team that included LRWDB, ADWS, Our House and DIS which submitted funds for a NDWG Grant based upon the qualifying COVID-19 disaster it caused to local economies, creating an opportunity to expand the partnership at Our House to 250 customers over three years. The current TANF-funded WBL Grant at Our House is at 43/40 enrollments, and they are hoping to get an extension of that grant to be able to use all of the work-experience funds that were provided by it. The Project YIELD Grant has 70 participants to date enrolled, and because of the late start for many of the local areas, the partnership has extended this grant beyond just summer jobs to include weekend and after-school jobs once the school year resumes. The Rock City Reentry Project has received a 6-month extension of the programming period and end of program date due to the challenge of engaging and enrolling ex-offenders during the pandemic. Currently, it has 151/188 participants enrolled, but we can continue enrolling through March 2022. They have nine students currently in welding, eight in CDL training and two students recently graduated the culinary training. YouthBuild is getting off to a great start. Mrs. Keondra Hampton was introduced as the new Program Director and 20 participants have been pre-screened and are going through the enrollment and assessment process.

The PY20 Success Story is Willie "Rocky" Wright, from the Reentry Program, who heard about the program from Power 92 Radio ads. He enrolled on March 12, 2021, in CDL training at Pine Bluff Truck Driving School, struggled with the program demands somewhat, but ultimately passed with a 95% pass rate one month later and now drives over the road with a salary of \$46K/year.

The second Success Story for PY21 is Mr. Gervontay Tolbert who is also from the Rock City Reentry Program and also started his training at the Pine Bluff Truck Driving School. After experiencing some obstacles there, he and his case managers determined that he needed a different school and approach, so he transferred and on August 16th became the first program graduate from River Rock CDL Training School – a new occupational training provider for the LRWDB based out of North Little Rock.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Director Monagle submitted his report (Exhibit II) and acknowledged guests and ADWS employees on the Zoom meeting. He noted that board member Markous Jewett had joined the meeting previously. He asked that Keondra Hampton introduce herself to the board. He reported and expanded upon the importance of the Rock City Reentry Grant receiving a 6-month extension and what that will mean to the LRWDB's continued capacity to reach out to that population since we have not heard back from other funders yet (such as the DOJ) about the success of our \$900,000 submission with them. The Central AR Re-Entry (CARE) Coalition is also back on track in planning its annual Rights After Wrongs (RAW) event to take place in October 2021. He also expanded upon the \$2M grant that was just submitted in partnership with the state ADWS and DIS agencies in addition to Equus and Our House that will be able to address the employment retraining needs of persons impacted by COVID-19, which could be just about anyone, so that DLW eligibility hurdle of other National Dislocated Worker Grants will be much more flexible this time.

Monagle then asked the LRWDB members to turn their attention to the final Financial Report for PY20 or for the year ending 6/30/2021. He noted that the report for the year-end was being presented now because the Executive Committee was not able to meet in July and therefore the LRWDB had not seen or approved these figures. Overall, the LRWDB expended just 75% of its total operating budget due to the constraints of COVID-19, while over-expending on a few line items due to the same cause, such as exceeding our Outreach & Recruitment budget in order to purchase the Easy Virtual Fair platform, which turned out to be well-used and was a very good investment but was not in the budget. Because of the extensions to submit financial audits and 990's, the LRWDB was also charged an additional amount by BKD, Inc. to submit an additional 990 in this fiscal year, which was also not anticipated in the budget. After some further explanation, and, upon a motion by Ron Bara, duly seconded by David Stephens, it was unanimously **RESOLVED**: to approve the June 2021 End of Year Financial Report as presented.

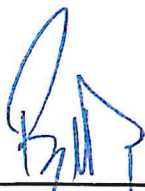
Announcements

There were no further announcements

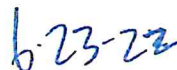
ADJOURNMENT

Vice Chair Beverly Smith apologized for the meeting running a little long but thanked members for their valuable contributions to the discussion. She adjourned the meeting at 1:14PM.

Approved by:



Bryan Day, Chair



Date

MINUTES

Little Rock Workforce Development Board
Executive Committee Meeting by Zoom
September 23, 2021

PRESENT

Members Present: Bryan Day, Kristi Barr, Kathy Fulks
LRWDB Staff: W.J. Monagle, Tanisha Lawson
LRWDB Attorney: Steve Riggs
Arbor Education & Training/Equus Workforce Solutions: Yolanda Carman, Cherisa Price-Wells
ADWS: Tonya Plunkett, Shenaye Johns, Tom Pittman
Zoom Host: Marsha Guffey

CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

Bryan Day called the meeting to order at 12pm. The audience was welcomed and reminded that the meeting was being recorded. It was determined that a quorum of five was present.

MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

Upon a motion by Kathy Fulks, duly seconded by Kristi Barr, it was unanimously **RESOLVED**: To approve the minutes of the May 27, 2021 meeting as corrected. (Exhibit I)

CHAIR'S REMARKS

Bryan Day recounted that during negotiations with the state over submitting the findings of the PY17 Monitoring Report to the DOL for waiver of disallowed costs, the power of the Executive Director to enter contracts of \$25,000 or less (observing all procurement rules, of course) without prior approval of the LRWDB would reflect a common and efficient policy that several city-related boards have adopted. Therefore, he asked the Executive Committee to consider and approve an amendment to the LRWDB Finance and Procurement Policy allowing the Executive Director to enter into contracts up to and including \$25,000 (see attached amendment.) Upon a motion by Kathy Fulks, duly seconded by Kristi Barr, it was unanimously **RESOLVED**: To approve the amendment to the Financial and Procurement Policy allowing the Executive Director to enter contracts up to and including \$25,000 without prior approval of the LRWDB. (Exhibit II)

STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS

Services to Youth Committee

Kathy Fulks reported there was not an opportunity to conduct a virtual committee meeting and therefore had no report.

One-Stop Partners Advisory Committee

Jo Keegan was not able to attend the meeting and therefore had no report. Director Monagle reported that the LRWFC Partners meeting that would have taken place earlier had to be cancelled due to it conflicting with the statewide ADWS WIOA Partners Meeting. It will take place on September 28, 2021 instead. The environment and situation at the LRWFC continue much as they have for the past several months, with the doors fully open to the public, but continuing to take necessary actions to balance staff and public health with the services in demand.

Services to Persons with Disabilities Committee

Chair Terrence Boatwright was not able to attend this meeting, and there two times when Director Monagle and Mr. Boatwright, with the ADWS Division of Services for the Blind, attempted to talk, but the committee has not been able to create the opportunity to meet.

WIOA SERVICE PROVIDER/ONE STOP OPERATOR'S REPORT

Standing in for Sheena Fluker, Yolanda Carman presented the Equus Workforce Solutions September 23, 2021 LRWD Briefing Report (Exhibit III). To summarize where they are with enrollment, they have 21 out of 50 adults, Dislocated Workers is 8 out of 30, 12 out of 30 with Youth enrollment. Other local measures: Community Outreach events is 15 out of 50; Hiring and recruiting events is 6 out of 50, and Participant training Sessions at 6 out of 24. They have strategies in place and make our current enrollment goals and those that they have not quite met, such as their Adult Work Experience goals; they are working with AR Heart Hospital to certify them as a work site and possible OJT. The TANF Work Based Learning Program has exceeded its goal, enrolling 47 out of 40 participants, and there's a grant extension request in process. They have also been able to train three culinary students under that program, with two having completed and they are going to be placed at the Rock City Kitchen, with the overall goal for them to be hired on permanently. Under the TANF Pre-Apprenticeship Program they had three start today. The TANF Project YIELD program finished up with 114 successful enrollments in that program. In the Rock City Reentry Program there have been 150 out of 188 enrolled in the Young Adult program. That program has been granted a six-month extension in response to the impact by COVID. The program has paid training and they have currently 5 students in welding training at Goodwill Metro, 4 students in CDL training, and 2 graduated successfully from the culinary program in August. Our YouthBuild update includes a Mental Toughness Orientation that began on September 20th, they have hired a program manager Keondra Hampton, a case manager, and an academic instructor through Adult Education has also been hired. The program manager and case manager are currently conducting outreach with Graduate Arkansas, the juvenile system, local school districts and Job Corps. One of their activities that they've been doing for mental toughness is volunteering at the Arkansas Food Bank where they have sorted and boxed over 1500 pounds of food for the family and community members that rely upon that food. The ACEF has completed the lesson plan timeline for basic skills in construction. The goal is for participants to begin their skilled training with AECF on Monday September 27th. Equus has certainly been busy here at the LRWFC when serving the community and appreciates all the support that has been provided.

Chair Day inquired what the workforce development professionals are seeing in terms of people's desire and interest to engage in training and employment programs, noting that there are probably 500 open positions at the Port of Little Rock and that employers are having a tremendous challenge in finding help. Ms. Carman responded that there have been challenges finding willing participants due to the pandemic but noted that they are seeing more individuals that have been incarcerated and getting out early who are seeking CDL training, which is in very high demand. They are also seeing a lot of interest in CNA, LPN and RN due to the demand and incentives for healthcare workers. When asked what the LRWDB, Port of Little Rock or the Chamber could do to assist in efforts to bring people in, Ms. Carman stated that working cooperatively to get the word out and create more public awareness about the programs would be beneficial. Kristi Barr remarked that the issue of eligibility and enrollment paperwork that was talked about should be of interest to address, but that people have had an extended opportunity to reevaluate where they want to work, how they want to work, and be incredibly thoughtful about how they want to spend their time, and they are making different choices, so from her perspective employers are going to have to play catch up and amend some of their benefits, incentives and offerings in creative ways to offer more flexibility to lure these employees back. Bryan Day endorsed that and mentioned that the Ryerson Corporation was offering a \$1,000 hiring bonus for basic manufacturing employees. He further asked if just hitting pause from what we are currently offering and rethink

and reconfigure everything about what we are offering? Director Monagle's initial response is that the four-year local plan is coming up to be renewed again and he thinks that's a time when we pause and we reflect and we look at data and examine what the current situation is, including the effects of COVID and the outcomes that we have learned there. There are also some things that members and their networks can get behind and one of those is making sure that they're aware that we are going through this transitional process to develop a workforce delivery system plan not just for ourselves but for this whole community in order to get a wider buy-in and participation. There's also an initiative right now that's being sponsored and promulgated by the governor, and this is called Ready for Life, an effort to bridge communication between the workforce development, economic development and education sectors in the state of Arkansas because they all realize that we are having we have some enormous deficiencies in that area. The governor has put \$14 million initially behind this plan for called Ready for Life. The LRWDB needs more of that cooperation and coordinated efforts from workforce, economic development and education reflected on its Executive Committee and full board membership as well. Chair Day mentioned that especially when this COVID pandemic is finally passed, we could come together and brainstorm and network and be an active participant in the four year plan and use the expertise from everyone on this call, use the level of expertise Kristi gained with Ford NGL, with the governor's Ready for Live program, the Ports working with UA system to prepare a grant for workforce development robotics, creating a port employment office out there to focus on manufacturing jobs, and so forth. "I think that if we ought to think about that as we move forward you know and ask ourselves "Is what we're doing good, but maybe it's time to have a systemic change in the programs that we deliver and I don't know what that is yet?" Kristi added that "we wouldn't want to get rid of everything, like you said CDL and nursing definitely I wouldn't, based on what I'm seeing now, but there are things we could probably add that would be a greater value than some of the others."

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Activity Report

Director Monagle presented the Executive Director's Report dated May 27, 2021 (Exhibit IV).

The LRWDB has successfully placed the audit into the Federal Clearinghouse for the year ended June 30, 2020, more than a year after that time ended of course, which was due to COVID and nine months of extensions. We're actually now at a time when BKD should be coming out and auditing us again. He will share that audit with the Executive Committee before sending it out to the full board, and then make that information publicly available.

Director Monagle expressed his happiness with the YouthBuild staff that were put in place under the leadership now of Keondra Hampton as the manager of the Youth Build program. She's doing a great job. He is really happy to have her on board and they are making great progress in terms of recruiting. He also wanted to point out in the report our number of co-enrollments with the Trade Affected Act (TAA) area of workforce development has grown from less than 5% to over 33% of those enrolled in that program. WIOA struggled with that for a long time, but it was really just an institutional and regulation type of impediment that kept us from reaching those kinds of goals before and once some of those impediments were removed and some processes were reversed, it allowed us to reach out to those clients on an earlier basis. A company can be certified as TAA due to international trade implications, many times either the company is moving offshore or just the trade imbalance creates a situation where a company could not compete with companies from other countries and therefore had to close or layoff people.

By working with TANF and the work based learning programs in particular has given us some national attention from the National Governors Association and the work based learning working

group the executive committee of the work based learning group here in Arkansas, and not only for Little Rock only but the state of Arkansas for its efforts to reach more people through work based learning programs. Little Rock is most definitely in the lead in terms of that and he calculates the LRWDB has about \$3.75M going on with TANF right now in the work based learning area. \$3.75M dollars is almost four times as much as what we receive every year through WIOA.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chair Day stated the next board meeting will be on October 28th and that is scheduled as a full board meeting. He assumed that it'll be a zoom meeting, although keen to get back together in person, he would recommend that we just end out the year virtually. He reminded members to remember in November and December we combine the two meetings, so the December meeting will be December 2nd to wrap up the year. He then took time to acknowledge and recognize the ADWS staff that were at the meeting today and emphasized that we could not do this work without them.


Cherisa Price-Wells, Regional Director of Equus Workforce Solutions, added that in the last couple days she was together with their management staff to do retreat on what they call "Our Brave New World" because we know that the world that we're going into is not what it used to be and our job seekers aren't necessarily having the same patterns that they've had in the past. We also know employers need labor and those things don't seem to be lining up, so they have spent quite a bit of time together identifying solution strategies, looking at a lot of research trends and news articles and really working together to identify what might be some opportunities to be able to help our employers and help our job seekers in a way that that helps communities. An article done by Harvard puts together where some of our hidden talent might be. The work/life balance as Kristi Barr said is absolutely critical and we are seeing that there's not one solution.

Next meetings:

- LRWDB Full Board: October 28, 2021 – which will be a Zoom meeting again
- LRWDB Executive Committee: January 27, 2022 – will try to have a hybrid meeting

ADJOURNMENT

Upon a motion made and duly seconded the meeting adjourned at 12:49 pm.


Approved, Bryan Day, Chair


Date

MINUTES

Little Rock Workforce Development Board
Full Board Meeting – via Zoom Virtual Meeting
November 4, 2021

PRESENT

Members Present: Bryan Day (also proxy for Tad Bohannon), Beverly Smith, Shannon Frieri (proxy for Kathy Fulks), Kristi Barr, Tammy Wheaton (proxy for Markous Jewett), Earnest Merritt (proxy for Jo Keegan), Ron Bara, Larry Schleicher, Brian Sanders (proxy for Terrence Boatwright)

LRWDB Staff: W.J. Monagle, Shannon Rast, Tanisha Lawson

LRWDB Attorney: Randall Bynum

Abor Education & Training: Sheena Fluker, Cherisa Price-Wells

AWDS: Eddie Thomas, Chad Brown, Tyler Gibbons, Tanya Plunkett

Guests: Marsha Guffey (Port of LR – Host/Facilitator), Jolla Robinson

CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL/WELCOMES

Bryan Day called the meeting to order at 12:00PM. The audience was welcomed to the Zoom virtual format and reminded that the meeting was being recorded for assistance in preparing the minutes. Roll was called, and it was determined that a quorum was present with nine members.

MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

Upon a motion by Ron Bara, duly seconded by Kristi Barr, it was unanimously **RESOLVED**: To approve the minutes of the June 24, 2021 and August 26, 2021 meetings as presented.

RATIFY ACTIONS OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The LRWDB Chair reviewed an amendment to the Financial and Procurement Policy, suggested by ADWS through its PY17 monitoring process, that the Executive Director be empowered to enter into contracts for \$25,000 or less without first seeking board approval, yet also following all procurement standards and providing the board with reports as necessary about these contracts. Upon a motion by Beverly Smith, duly seconded by Ron Bara, it was unanimously **RESOLVED**: To ratify the action of the LRWDB Executive Committee to amend the Financial and Procurement Policy with the verbiage as proposed to allow the Executive Director to enter into contracts for \$25,000 or less without board approval.

CHAIR AND COMMITTEE REPORTS

The Chair announced that two members of the LRWDB, Montine McNulty and Terrence Boatwright are leaving the board. Montine McNulty is deservedly retiring from the Arkansas Hospitality Association after many years of extraordinary service. Mr. Boatwright is leaving the AR Division of Services for the Blind for another state agency. While neither was able to attend the meeting in person, Chair Day thanked each of them for their time and service on the LRWDB.

Chair Day then reported that the BKD annual single financial audit for PY20 has been received and while there are some repeated concerns the LRWDB has always faced due to the size of its staff and the separation of duties, etc., the audit was clean, free of deficiencies and instances of non-compliance.

Upon a motion by Kristi Barr, duly seconded by Ron Bara, it was unanimously **RESOLVED**: To accept the PY20 LRWDB Financial Audit prepared by BKD, LLP.

Director Monagle was asked to review and discuss the growing relationship between LRWDB, WIOA Discretionary Grants and TANF, and it has been agreed that as more grant partnership opportunities become available and operational, a greater degree of oversight, management, reporting and monitoring will be required. Between the Assistant Director of TANF, Phil Harris, and WDB Executive Director Monagle, conversations led to an agreement in principal for TANF funds to be used to underwrite a position within the LRWDB to serve as a program manager of the TANF and Discretionary Grant programs. Director Monagle presented a preliminary job description for the position and asked the LRWDB membership for its input and feedback, as well as its acknowledgement and approval to move forward in exploring and developing the necessary requirements of adding this position and that of a financial administrative assistant to assist this TANF program manager. The LRWDB gave its consensus approval to move forward with developing this position, asking that Director Monagle return to the board with a final job description and plan of funding when TANF had approved for funding in January or February of 2022.

Committee Reports

Jo Keegan, ADWS Area Manager and Chair of the One Stop Partners Advisory Committee, could not attend the meeting in person, so Sheena Fluker said that she would cover in her service provider's report some of the topics and issues discussed in the Advisory Committee meeting on 10/26/21.

Terrence Boatwright, Co-Chair of the Services to People with Disabilities Committee, was not able to convene a meeting of the committee. Director Monagle also reported learning only recently that Mr. Boatwright had left the ADWS-ADSB. The LRWDB will seek his replacement nomination by ADWS-ADSB.

Kathy Fulks, Chair for the Youth Services Committee, asked W.J. Monagle to report upon the meeting held 11/2/21. LRWDB Executive Director reported that the committee did meet this month and one topic was the recent surge of youth gun violence and deaths, and the response by CEO Mayor Scott and the City of Little Rock to create the new Office of Neighborhood Safety, led by Youth Committee member Michael Sanders of the Community Programs Department, to refocus current city youth resources on addressing youth violence and engage community partners in joint activities and programs which address the employment and economic needs of marginalized youth. LRWDB programs such as the Rock City Reentry Project for Young Adults and YouthBuild are such programs. In fact, this issue hit very close to home when Monagle explained that one of our YouthBuild participants was a gun violence victim in the Pine Bluff Homecoming incident. That student was shot in the lower back and lung as he protected two of his friends – one being a pregnant young woman. Mr. Sanders will be the lead speaker of a panel he is bringing to meet among the partners at the Little Rock Workforce Center, which will take place at 2pm after the LRWDB meeting.

WIOA SERVICE PROVIDER/ONE STOP OPERATOR'S REPORT

Sheena Fluker presented the Equus Workforce Solutions report (Exhibit I), and added that an additional two WIOA youth participants have also been the victims of gun violence this year. Her report included a review of the local performance goals, which she concluded is doing extremely well. Adult and Youth enrollment are at 25/50 and 11/20 respectively, while DLW is at 11/30. For OJT, they have yet to secure either of their two, but they have completed one Adult work experience, and one youth in occupational skills training. For Community Outreach, they are at 20/50 on the goal, while hitting 10/50 on hiring and recruiting events. For their center wide trainings and business services surveys, they are still working on those, due unfortunately to the Business Services Coordinator leaving her position in the next week. Equus staff have conducted 8/24 participant training sessions. Due to the large increase in demand for training, as well as the increase in the cost of training programs (i.e., CDL), Equus is keeping a very close

eye on its financial obligations to current participants and co-enrolling where possible to conserve and stretch the WIOA funding. Project Director Fluker reviewed the annual report for WIOA Common Performance Measure for PY20; Equus met two (2) goals at 100%, six (6) goals at 90%, and did not meet any of the three (3) new Measurable Skills Gains common measures. Because this was new, she feels that some of that was a failure to capture appropriate data, but staff is receiving state and Equus training to meet 100% of those goals. For the TANF WBL at Our House, 55 out of 40 participants have been enrolled, and that grant has been extended to 12/31/21 in order to expend more of those funds. Three participants have been enrolled in the Construction Pre-Apprenticeship Program. In the Project Yield Summer Youth Employment Program 139 participants have been enrolled. In the Rock City Reentry Project, 156 participants have been enrolled out of 188. That grant has received a six-month extension until 3/31/22, but she anticipates completing that enrollment goal by 12/31/21. Eight students are engaged in completing their CDL training. At the time of writing her report, an OJT contract with TruFab in Maumelle was pending, however, they decided to de-commit, but they have agreed to hire directly students coming out of training in welding. YouthBuild has seven total enrollments, and seven more students are completing Mental Toughness, and several currently enrolled in our partner's Graduate Arkansas program that will go through Mental Toughness at that campus. Hoping to enroll all 30 of their goal by the end of the year, they are at about half of that goal now. There has been a lot of interest shown in the program and staff has done an amazing job with outreach and recruitment so that those enrollment goals are met.

The September WIOA Success Story is Sylvester Stewart, a felon who achieved his CDL certificate after serving 10 years. Having custody of two children, he became aware of needing to be more self-sufficient. He was accepted to DDA CDL training on June 1st, completed his training on June 25th. He was hired by 7-up and is making \$17/hr. The second success story is a video of Chase Richards who is a Reentry Young Adult participant who completed the welding program at Goodwill Industries of AR and was hired at DLM Systems LLC and is making \$18.50/hr.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Director Monagle submitted his report (Exhibit II). He provided additional information on the YouthBuild program monitoring visit and efforts to have the program removed from the high-risk status it currently has because of the COVID-19 pandemic. The team is also working hard to extend the award by six to twelve months. Monagle then presented the financial report for the month ending 9/30/21, saying that about 75% of funds should remain after the first quarter of the program year. Upon a motion by Ron Bara, duly seconded by Beverly Smith, it was unanimously **RESOLVED**: To approve and accept the financial report for the period ending 9/30/21 as presented to the LRWDB.

Announcements

Bryan Day announced that he hoped the board would come back to meet in person in January. He had been reading some pre- and post-pandemic statistical information and discovered that 30,000 workers have merely vanished from the workforce participation rate in the central AR area, so that creates the challenge in finding high quality employees that the LRWDB is attempting to address with the other partners in the workforce development delivery system.

ADJOURNMENT

Upon a motion made and duly seconded, unanimously **RESOLVED**: To adjourn meeting at 1:13PM.

Approved by:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Bryan Day", written over a horizontal line.

Bryan Day, Chair

6-22-22

Date

MINUTES

Little Rock Workforce Development Board
Full Board Meeting – via Zoom Virtual Meeting
December 4, 2021

PRESENT

Members Present: Beverly Smith (also proxy for Bryan Day), Kathy Fulks, Kristi Barr, Tammy Wheaton (proxy for Markous Jewett), Earnest Merritt (proxy for Jo Keegan), Ron Bara, Larry Schleicher, Tad Bohannon, Mark Bremer, Beverly Smith, David Stephens

LRWDB Staff: W.J. Monagle, Shannon Rast, Tanisha Lawson

LRWDB Attorney: Randall Bynum

Abor Education & Training: Sheena Fluker, Cherisa Price-Wells

AWDS: Chad Brown, Tanya Plunkett

Guests: Marsha Guffey (Port of LR – Host/Facilitator)

CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL/WELCOMES

Beverly Smith served as Chair in place of Bryan Day and called the meeting to order at 12:00PM. The audience was welcomed to the Zoom virtual format and reminded that the meeting was being recorded for assistance in preparing the minutes. Roll was called, and it was determined that a quorum was present with ten members.

MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

Director Monagle apologized for not having the minutes of the November 4, 2021, meeting completed in time for consideration and acceptance but will send those out in an email as soon as possible for review.

RATIFY ACTIONS OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Since the last meeting of the LRWDB was a full board meeting, there were no actions of the LRWDB Executive Committee to ratify.

CHAIR AND COMMITTEE REPORTS

Vice Chair Smith reiterated that two members of the LRWDB, Montine McNulty and Terrence Boatwright are leaving the board. Plans and efforts have been made to reach out to the ARS for a state-appointed replacement for Mr. Boatwright, as well as to the successor of Mrs. McNulty at the Arkansas Hospitality Association. These resignations point up the fact, reported Monagle, that additional LRWDB members are needed, especially from within the Business community, and recommendations from Board members would be appreciated.

Vice Chair Smith and Director Monagle then reviewed the timeline and process for the 4-year Local Plan and asked if Board members wished to volunteer further for 1-2 times per month to help research, rethink and rewrite the 2022 plan. Vice Chair Smith indicated that the board will be sent an update to inform those members who could not be present. Beverly Smith and Kathy Fulks volunteered to serve on the committee with Chair Bryan Day.

During open sharing of observations Vice Chair Smith reported that at her business at Career Staffing Services there is still a challenge finding qualified employees, leading them to be very specific about the

type of employee search that they will engage, instead of trying to recruit all kinds of positions due to the limitations. However, they are seeing people looking for, accepting jobs, and going to work. They are encouraging and reeducating their employer base to act quickly on hiring qualified candidates because they will be taken by other employers if they wait too long. Ron Bara mentioned that he is starting the Bridge to Work program again with the City of Little Rock to deliver soft skills training to the population that have been out of the workforce for some time and may be homeless. The program will probably start at the beginning of 2022, and everyone felt encouraged about that program. Ron Bara asked how there could be people that were not willing and available to accept employment with so many jobs open. Vice Chair Smith felt it was a mixed bag of issues: increase of minimum wage makes it hard for small business to compete; they do not fill minimum wage positions, telling their employers that they must be more competitive than that, but often they cannot. She reminded that pre-COVID there was very low unemployment and they struggled to fill positions then. There is an aging workforce, and a few generations now that have chosen to have fewer children, smaller families, and so there is a smaller workforce as a result. Ron reminded that this is where the homeless population that fell out of the workforce and lost their skills need to be reengaged and retrained, starting with soft skills, and addressing their additional needs. Cherissa Price-Wells of Equus interjected her research findings: an older workforce that chose to retire early due to the COVID environment; numerous childcare issues at both the consumer and the provider sides; there is a hidden and overlooked workforce that is being further hid by antiquated employer practices, automated candidate screening software that is designed to screen applicants out, two-wage families that are downsizing to one, reexamination of familial priorities. There are opportunities, however, with educating employers about expanding their hiring parameters and thinking outside the box, new immigrant families and immigrating populations coming into the workforce, etc. Vice Chair Smith agreed, pointing out the need to examine candidates on an individual basis, especially considering those with a background that may not have been considered before. Director Monagle asked Tad Bohannon and Mark Bremer, representing two major employers, what they are seeing and experiencing in filling their employment needs. Tad Bohannon of CAW stated that they are a premier employer (meaning higher wages and benefits than area competitors) in the range of employees with licenses and credentials in that industry to fill the technician jobs, often having 5-6 times the number of applicants for each open position. However, they struggle with trying to fill the more professional level openings in IT, Finance and Accounting, Engineering – again referring to comparatively low wages and benefits for those positions. Mark Bremer of Dassault Falcon Jet reports that it is very difficult right now and they have many jobs open with few resumes to consider. He has had to resort to going outside the area to hire contract employees, but success in doing that is also starting to wane. Looking at considering candidates with fewer qualification, they have teamed up with Caterpillar and UA-PTC to grow a pool of generically qualified entry-level technicians, but they cannot always fill the seats of a preliminary training class with enough potential interested applicants. Bremer reports it is definitely a mixed bag of challenges. He has seen people making radical life changes and choices to find a less stressful working environment. Several people have left their jobs to become truck drivers – or the spouse will become a truck drivers' companion – and take advantage of that demand and incentive package. He is seeing a reevaluation of priorities and life choices. Director Monagle stated long term efforts to effect education at an earlier level must also take place if we think that this problem can be addressed in 15-20 years; Tad responded that they are working in a high school to build a working water treatment plant, giving students coming out of that high school program with the credentials and experience to move right into employment with a water utility. All agreed that while the challenges are varied and real, the solutions must be varied and multiple as well. We have to think differently to find the people to support the businesses in Arkansas and those that want to come to Arkansas. Mark Bremer also mentioned the history of the migration of workers in Arkansas and how

they have moved from the rural and agrarian industries of the Delta to the towns and cities of the central Arkansas region and finally to the economic boom of the Northwest corridor of Arkansas.

Committee Reports

Sheena reported that Jo Keegan, ADWS Area Manager and Chair of the One Stop Partners Advisory Committee, did not leave her with a report to make and the committee was not able to meet.

Services to People with Disabilities Committee, Director Monagle reported, they were not able to convene a meeting of the committee. Director Monagle also reported that the LRWDB is seeking a replacement nomination by ADWS-ADSB or ADWS-ARS.

Kathy Fulks, Chair for the Youth Services Committee – No report this month.

WIOA SERVICE PROVIDER/ONE STOP OPERATOR'S REPORT

Sheena Fluker presented the Equus Workforce Solutions report (Exhibit I) and mentioned that not a lot had changed from early November to early December. Her report included a review of the local performance goals, which she concluded is doing extremely well. Adult and Youth enrollment are at 24/50 and 17/30 respectively, while DLW is at 11/30. For OJT, they have yet to resecure their original contract with UAMS and their partner in the culinary industry, Black Swan Catering, unfortunately had a house fire which eliminated their business operations connected to it. They have completed half of their adult work experience, and one out of six youth in occupational skills training. Equus is receiving a lot of referrals for all of their programs from Job Corps. For Community Outreach, they are at 26/50 on the goal, while hitting 13/50 on hiring and recruiting events. They are also trying to launch the virtual platform and get people involved that way. For their center wide trainings and business services surveys, they are still working on those and anticipate being two out of six by the January/February timeframe. Equus staff have conducted 11/24 participant training sessions. For the TANF WBL at Our House, 59 out of 40 participants have been enrolled. The grant is scheduled to terminate on 12/31/21, but there has been an effort and application to renew that program under a new grant award in the new year. There are still just three participants enrolled in the Construction Pre-Apprenticeship Program, however, that grant has been renewed as of this week. In the Project Yield Summer Youth Employment Program, 150 participants have been enrolled throughout the state – and not just during summer, but many of these students are still working afterschool and during the week for those not in school. Many of these small communities are posting their successes on Facebook and have been doing amazing things with their youth. In the Rock City Reentry Project for Young Adults, 163 participants have been enrolled out of 188. They are working to achieve their enrollment goal by 12/31/21 and reviewing what they can do to make that happen, however they do have an extension until March 31, 2022, to accomplish that goal. Five of these participants are in welding training at Goodwill and seven students are currently engaged in completing their CDL training. Fluker reported a huge uptick in the number of people interested in CDL training and further the need of creating a waiting list of at least 8-10 additional students. YouthBuild has thirteen total enrollments in the MIS, seven that are pending, and five more students are completing Mental Toughness. Hoping to enroll all 30 of their goal by the end of the year, they will have enough to start working on their construction project. There has been a lot of interest shown in the program, our community partners have all been generous in referrals and spreading awareness, and in particular the staff of Program Manager Keondra Hampton and Case Manager Brandon Cooley have gone above and beyond with outreach, recruitment and addressing the needs of the participants, who have experienced some real struggles in life, such as gun violence and injury, pregnancies, and homelessness.

The November WIOA Success Story is Julie Hollis, a participant at Our House in its CAFSI Program. After a year in that program planning and establishing security and a pathway for her family, she entered the

culinary arts program, Food Jobs Work, which was paid for by the TANF-funded Pipeline to Employment program. She gained work experience paid for by the Work Based Learning Program, then interned at Rock City Kitchen and now works full-time for Baptist Health making well above minimum wage.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Director Monagle submitted his report (Exhibit II). He provided information that the 2nd TANF-funded Construction Pre-Apprenticeship Grant had been approved for \$500K and was waiting on signatures to take effect. That was just one of many grants that the LRWDB is working with TANF to extend, renew or create for the first time, including the Work Based Learning Grant which will be expanded to reach more partners working with the homeless or near homeless, nearing \$800K-1M. The annual single financial audit will take place next week with BKD. The LRWDB staff will work on putting together a package of new and existing member appointments for Mayor Frank Scott to make and sign when they meet with him and the ADWS Asst. Director and AWDB Executive Director. Director Monagle stated that this is the time to put things in place institutionally for the organization to create a stronger foundation. He expressed that he had high hopes for the new year to be a much better year than before and that proactive steps could be taken to begin to put COVID and its devastating effects behind us.

Announcements

Vice Chair Smith reminded all in attendance that Equus was still doing Take Action Tuesdays and encouraged everyone to go to the Facebook page and LIKE those posts, follow that page, make comments, and help that effort gain traction, even if you are not watching them live. She mentioned that every Monday afternoon, CSS will be posting "Hot Jobs of the Week!" with good jobs they are trying to fill, so if you are so inclined, come and LIKE & Follow it. Tad Bohannon asked that links be sent out to the members to those pages. Vice Chair Smith put the links to both pages in the Chat box of the meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

Upon a motion made and duly seconded, unanimously RESOLVED: To adjourn meeting at 1:02PM.

Approved by:



Bryan Day, Chair

6.22.22

Date