

**Minutes**  
**Twin Districts Workforce Development Area**  
**Local Workforce Development Board**

**Tuesday, April 26, 2022      11:00 AM**  
914 Sullivan Drive, Hattiesburg

**LOCAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD PRESENT:**

Danny Box, Rebecca Brown, Wayne Buffington, Sedgie Foxworth, Lillie Graves, Jennifer Griffith, Lucy Lamberth, Laura Lewis, Julia Lindsay, Calvin Newsom, Jermaine Simmons, David Stephens, Connie Valentine, Lucretia Williams, and Marshall Wood, Sr.

**LOCAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD ABSENT:**

Donnie Bond, Charles Fairly, Ricky Harrison, Newt Ishee, Tom Miles, Cory Nelson, Phil Nichols, and John Poelma (Proxy Rebecca Brown).

**STAFF:**

Allison Hawkins, Patricia Morrison, Marilyn Minor, Shari White, Marvin Dickey, Kenny Jett, and Grant Wesley

**CALL TO ORDER AND COMMENTS**

Mr. David Stephens called the meeting to order and greeted everyone in attendance.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Mr. Stephens called for a motion to approve the agenda.

**ACTION: Mr. Wayne Buffington motioned to approve the agenda; Ms. Rebecca Brown seconded. Motion carried.**

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Mr. Stephens called for a motion to approve the minutes from last meeting (January 25, 2022).

**ACTION: Mr. Calvin Newsom motioned to approve the minutes; Ms. Lucretia Williams seconded. Motion carried.**

## **LEO BOARD UPDATE**

No report.

## **DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

Mr. Stephens called on Ms. Allison Hawkins to present the Director's Report. Ms. Hawkins began by explaining that the State Workforce Plan was submitted to the Department of Labor by Accelerate MS; SMPDD's Local Plan Update will be presented to the Workforce Board when available. We are awaiting guidance from MDES.

Ms. Hawkins and Ms. Patricia Morrison attended the National Association of Workforce Boards conference in Washington, D.C, along with Mr. Stephens.

Mr. Kenny Jett was awarded the John Craig President's Award at the Spring SETA Conference for his many years of hard work serving on the SETA Board.

In partnership with the Governor's Job Fair Network, three job fairs were hosted on the Gulf Coast. Attendance was good at each fair, and numbers were bolstered by those on Unemployment Insurance that were required to attend.

However, workforce participation overall remains low, but numbers should start to increase. Mr. Stephens asks if there are any follow-up incentives for participants after they exit a program. Ms. Hawkins stated in the affirmative, and that these services fall under the category of Supportive Services. Childcare, transportation, and cash/gift card incentives are just a few examples.

Mr. Stephens continued, and reiterated to the Board the importance of reaching out to the various communities. Recruitment is always a priority.

Ms. Hawkins announced that the date for the next TDWDA Board meeting would be July 26, with the Annual Meeting to be held sometime in October in Meridian.

In response to the Youth Program separation-of-duties finding by the external monitor last year, Ms. Hawkins presented a written response to the Workforce Board. The response addressed the monitor's concerns of possible conflict of interest. This involved removing the Youth Program Administrator (Ms. Shonta Duncan) from the procurement process, and handing off those responsibilities to other SMPDD staff. After the submitted Youth Program proposals are selected and ranked, only then will Ms. Duncan review them. Program duties will also be further divided among existing staff. This response was also presented to the LEO Board, and are attached to the minutes.

Ms. Hawkins concluded her report.

## **ONE-STOP COMMITTEE REPORT**

Due to time constraints and an overlapping schedule, Mr. Stephens moved the One-Stop Committee report up on the Agenda, and called on Ms. Rebecca Brown to present.

Ms. Brown's first item was a simple update of the Priority of Service policy, which would change its title to 'Priority of Service for WIOA Adult Program.' Ms. Brown called for a motion to accept this change.

**ACTION: Mr. Wayne Buffington motioned to accept the policy title change; Mr. Sedgie Foxworth seconded. Motion carried.**

The next item is an amendment to the Incumbent Worker Training policy, which establishes one exception rule for the six-month requirement. Ms. Brown called for a motion to accept this amendment.

**ACTION: Ms. Lucretia Williams motioned to accept the Incumbent Worker Training policy amendment; Mr. Sedgie Foxworth seconded. Motion carried.**

Next, Ms. Brown presented the new Personal Identifiable Information policy. This policy is to provide guidance to staff members who have the ability to access personal identifiable information (PII) with the requirements of protecting said information. Ms. Brown called for a motion to approve this policy.

**ACTION: Mr. Danny Box motioned to approve the PII policy; Ms. Lucy Lambeth seconded. Motion carried.**

Lastly, Ms. Brown requested that the Board grant authorization to the One-Stop Committee to draft a new policy to increase the ITA amount to \$7,200. Ms. Brown asked for a motion for this authorization.

**ACTION: Mr. Sedgie Foxworth motioned to approve this request; Mr. Wayne Buffington seconded. Motion carried.**

Ms. Brown concluded her report.

## **FINANCIAL REPORT**

Mr. Stephens called on Ms. Shari White to present the financial report. Ms. White began her report with the PY21 Overview of Current Funding. Effective January 1, 2022, TDWDA received an additional \$700,000 in Rapid Response/Layoff Aversion funds (PY21 NFA #4). This increased the Total Funds Available to \$16,677,194.21.

Activities for the Twin Districts' Layoff Aversion Plan for 2022-2023 include strategic planning, business outreach, Incumbent Worker training, performance data collection and tracking, economic analysis, and Dislocated Worker activities.

At the last meeting (January 25, 2022), the Board approved to move \$500,000 from PY21 Dislocated Worker funds to Adult funds. That request was approved by the Office of Grant Management on February 8, 2022.

Ms. White continued with the Obligation and Expenditures Summary. Program Year 21 began on July 1, 2021, and will end on June 30, 2022. The expenditures reported are for cost through 03/30/22.

As for Obligations, Adult was 91.7% obligated, Dislocated Worker 97.7%, Youth 81.3%, and Rapid Response/Layoff Aversion 14.1%.

As for Expenditures, Adult was 54% expended, Dislocated Worker 38%, Youth 38%, and Rapid Response/Layoff Aversion 11%. Overall, TDWDA has expended 42% of its PY21 Obligations. Ms. White also noted that PY21 Youth Work Experience Rate is at 43.58%.

As for Expenditures by Quarter, we have expended \$1,917,367.26 in the 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter, \$1,970,652.92 in the 2<sup>nd</sup>, and \$1,923,342.35 in the 3<sup>rd</sup>, totaling \$5,811,362.56. Ms. White explained that our Expenditures this time last year were \$4,694,908. They are continuing to trend upward.

Ms. White continued with the PY21-22 Funding Comparison. TDWDA has received an estimate of our PY22 funding. The PY22 Allocation estimates reflect a 10% decrease in funding across the board, in all funding streams. At our next meeting, we should have a more accurate funding level to report for PY22.

Mr. Stephens inquired if there was any carry-over projection. Ms. White said there was not one yet, but it would be available at next TDWDA Board meeting. Ms. Hawkins added that SMPDD is working with Accelerate MS to fill any gaps in funding.

Ms. White concluded her report.

## **WIN JOB CENTER UPDATE**

Mr. Stephens called on Ms. Connie Valentine to present the WIN Job Center update.

Ms. Valentine began by stating that there are now 37 On-the-Job training agreements, totaling \$1,280,578.

There are 483 ITA enrollments, totaling \$1,689,500.

All ITA allocations have been completed.

At this time, we have 2,417 WIOA enrollments in PY21.

Ms. Hawkins inquired about foot traffic in the WIN Centers, as it was a topic of discussion in the preceding LEO Board meeting. Ms. Valentine confirmed that it was very slow, but site managers are continuing to reach out to employers for recruitment opportunities.

Ms. Valentine concluded her report.

## **YOUTH COMMITTEE REPORT**

Mr. Stephens called on Ms. Lillie Graves to present the Youth Committee report. Ms. Graves began with the PY22 Youth Proposal rankings. The Twin Districts Youth Committee met on April 7, 2022, to review proposals submitted for both Out-of-School Youth programs and In-School Youth Programs. An independent review was conducted prior to the Youth Committee review and those scores and comments were taken into consideration. Ten proposals were submitted; eight for Out-of-School and two for In-School. One was deemed non-responsive, having failed to meet the technical requirements set forth in the RFP.

Based on the review, the Youth Committee recommends that the staff begin contract negotiations with the following six proposals in the Out-of-School Category, with the highest ranked proposals receiving funding priority:

1. Pearl River Community College – serving Forrest and Lamar County
2. East Mississippi Community College – serving Kemper County
3. Meridian Community College – serving Lauderdale County
4. East Central Community College – serving Leake, Neshoba, and Newton County
5. Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College – George, Harrison, Jackson, and Stone County
6. CLIMB CDC – Harrison, Jackson, Stone, George, and Pearl River County

Scope of work and geographic service area will be addressed for each proposal during negotiations.

Two proposals were received in the In-School Category. Based on misalignment with WIOA programmatic goals and the fiscal inconsistencies of the submitted proposals, the Youth Committee does not recommend that any In-School proposals be awarded at this time.

The Youth Committee also recommends that any proposer not selected have the opportunity to discuss their deficiencies. Those wishing to do so should notify Trisha Morrison in writing/email at [pmorrison@smpdd.com](mailto:pmorrison@smpdd.com) to request a discussion.

It should also be noted that no contract can be finalized until Twin Districts has received its PY 2022 funding allocation.

Ms. Graves motioned to accept the Youth Committee's proposal rankings.

**ACTION: Ms. Lucy Lamberth and Ms. Lucretia Williams recused themselves from the vote. Ms. Rebecca Brown exited the meeting early, and was not present for the vote. Ms. Lillie Graves motioned to accept the PY22 Out-of-School and In-School Youth Proposal Rankings; Mr. Danny Box seconded. Motion carried.**

## **INDUSTRY ADVISORY COUNCIL REPORT**

Mr. Stephens called on Mr. Mark Scott to present the Industry Advisory Council report.

Mr. Scott began by stating that the upcoming We Survey questionnaire for businesses and industries would be focused on ease of application, ease of use, effectiveness, and practical follow-up. This process will be overseen by SMPDD staff.

Mr. Scott concluded his report.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

Mr. Stephens presented one new appointment to the Youth Committee, Ms. Janet Baldwin from the Oseola McCarty Scholars Program. Mr. Stephens called for a motion to accept this appointment.

**ACTION: Mr. Wayne Buffington motioned to approve Ms. Janet Baldwin's appointment to the Youth Committee; Mr. Sedgie Foxworth seconded. Motion carried.**

Ms. Hawkins stated the date for the next TDWDA LEO/Workforce Board meeting has been set for July 26, 2022.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

With nothing further to discuss, Mr. Stephens adjourned the meeting.