

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

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

**LOCAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD PRESENT:**

Danny Box, Rebecca Brown, Wayne Buffington, Sedgie Foxworth, Lillie Graves, Newt Ishee, Lucy Lamberth, Julia Lindsey, Calvin Newsom, John Poelma, David Stephens, Connie Valentine, Lucretia Williams, Valerie Wilson, and Marshall Wood, Sr.

**LOCAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD ABSENT:**

Donnie Bond, Charles Fairley, Jennifer Griffith, Ricky Harrison, Laura “Missy” Lewis, Tom Miles, Cory Nelson, Phil Nichols, and Jermaine Simmons.

**STAFF:**

Allison Hawkins, Patricia Morrison, Marilyn Minor, Shari White, Marvin Dickey, 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: Ms. Rebecca Brown motioned to approve the agenda; Mr. Sedgie Foxworth seconded. Motion carried.**

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Mr. Stephens called for a motion to approve the minutes from last meeting (April 26, 2022).

**ACTION: Mr. Danny Box motioned to approve the minutes; Ms. Lillie Graves seconded. Motion carried.**

## **APPROVAL OF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES**

Mr. Stephens called for a motion to approve the minutes from last Executive Committee meeting (May 20, 2022).

**ACTION: Mr. Marshall Wood motioned to approve the Executive Committee meeting minutes; Mr. Sedgie Foxworth seconded. Motion carried.**

## **LEO BOARD UPDATE**

On Mr. Calvin Newsom's behalf, Mr. David Stephens presented the TDWDA Service Awards to former TDWDA Workforce Board members. The recipients were Mr. Alexander Alston, Mr. John Wayne Barrow, II, Mr. Neal Campbell, Ms. Denise Cartledge, Ms. Terri Clark, Mr. Joseph Sean Dunlap, Mr. Robert Freeman, Mr. Randy Gill, Mr. Joseph Knight, Ms. Judith Redshaw, and Mr. John Shows.

## **DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

Mr. Stephens called on Ms. Allison Hawkins to present the Director's Report. Ms. Hawkins began by stating that SMPDD has been working closely with the Governor's Job Fair Network, and that recent job fairs have been very successful. However, we do expect attendance to slow down as we approach the Holidays.

Mr. Stephens asked if overall workforce participation is improving. Ms. Hawkins said it was, but relatively slowly.

Ms. Rebecca Brown asked if individuals on Unemployment Insurance were required to attend the job fairs. Ms. Hawkins answered that yes, they were.

Accelerate MS released a RFP for high school career coaches. This one-year pilot program will place grant-funded career coaches at participating high schools. Accelerate MS will fund the program, while participating non-profits will administrate. Since Coast counties are already funded through another grant, these funds will focus on the Pine Belt and East Central areas.

The Local Plan Update deadline has been pushed to September 30, 2022. Since this will be before the next full Board meeting, Ms. Hawkins requested that the TDWDA Executive Committee be authorized to approve the Local Plan. This approval will then be voted on by the full TDWDA Workforce Board at the upcoming Annual Meeting.

**ACTION: Sedgie Foxworth motioned to give the Executive Committee authorization to vote on the Local Plan Update; Ms. Lucretia Williams seconded. Motion carried.**

The TDWDA Annual Meeting will be held in Meridian this year, probably late Fall. This will be a two-day event, with workshops on the first day and the LEO/Workforce Board meetings on the second.

Ms. Hawkins 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. On May 31, 2022, TDWDA received NFA #500-20-7, which extended the ending date for the PY20 Youth funds and the PY20 Layoff Aversion/Rapid Response Funds.

June 30, 2022 would have been the ending date for these funds; however, SMPDD submitted an extension request to the Office of Grant Management (OGM). OGM approved the extension request for an additional seven months. The revised ending date is now January 30, 2023.

As a reminder, the Layoff Aversion activities include:

1. Strategic Planning
2. Business Outreach
3. Incumbent Worker Training
4. Performance Data Collection and Tracking
5. Economic Analysis
6. Dislocated Worker activities

Ms. White continued with the Obligation and Expenditures Summary. Program Year 21 began on July 1, 2021, and will ended on June 30, 2022. The expenditures reported are for cost through 06/30/22.

As for Obligations, Adult was 100% obligated, Dislocated Worker 100%, Youth 100%, and Rapid Response/Layoff Aversion 14.1%.

As for Expenditures, Adult was 77% expended, Dislocated Worker 61%, Youth 42%, and Rapid Response/Layoff Aversion 28%. Overall, TDWDA has expended 58% of its PY21 Obligations. Ms. White also noted that PY21 Youth Work Experience Rate is at 44.03%.

As for the remaining funds, all PY21 Unobligated funds carry forward into PY22. PY21 Closeout packages are due from the adult and youth providers by August 15, 2022. All unexpended funds will be de-obligated, and those funds will carry forward into PY22.

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>, \$1,923,342.35 in the 3<sup>rd</sup>, and \$3,077,597.58 in the 4<sup>th</sup>, totaling

\$8,888,960.14. Ms. White explained that last year's expenditures at this time was \$6,796,384, which is a \$2 million increase, so our expenditures are continuing to trend upwards.

Ms. White continued with the PY22 Overview of Current Funding. The PY20 and PY21 estimated Carryover is \$7,788,234.07. We will not know the actual carryover amount until the PY21 Closeout package is received in mid-August. The PY22 Allocation is currently \$2,431,193 for Adult, \$2,428,377 for Dislocated Worker, and \$2,569,189 for Youth (on July 8, 2022, TDWDA received NFA #500-22-1 which is the first NFA for PY22, and it allocated TDWDA youth funds). This brings us to a total allocation of \$7,428,759, and the Total Funds Available to \$15,216,993.07.

Ms. White finished with the PY22 Obligation and Expenditures Summary. Program Year 2022 began on July 1, 2022, and will end on June 30, 2022. Adult funds are 96.6% obligated, Dislocated Worker 86.5%, Youth 81.7%, and Rapid Response/Layoff Aversion 14.7%. Ms. White noted staff have been very busy getting the PY22 sub-awards in place, and that services to the TDWDA area have continued.

Mr. Newsom asked about the Layoff Aversion funds, and why they have not been used as much as the other funds. Ms. Hawkins explained that Layoff Aversion funds cannot normally be used until needed, such as for mass layoffs or business closures. However, more recently, we have been able to implement and use them with job fairs.

Ms. White concluded her report.

Mr. Stephens called for a motion to accept the reports from Ms. Hawkins and Ms. White.

**ACTION: Mr. Marshall Wood motioned to accept the reports; Mr. John Poelma seconded. Motion carried.**

## **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 41 On-the-Job training agreements, totaling \$1,247,917. In addition, 190 participants were placed in OJT Agreements during PY21.

So far, 530 participants have been enrolled in ITAs during this program year, and \$1,521,434 in ITA funds has been obligated.

Also, 22 individuals were served under Supportive Services during PY21

During PY21, a total of 2,913 WIOA enrollments were entered.

Ms. Valentine also explained that Ms. Robin Beebe will be retiring as Manager of the Gulfport WIN Job Center, effective July 31, 2022.

Ms. Valentine concluded her report.

## **YOUTH COMMITTEE REPORT**

Mr. Stephens called on Ms. Lillie Graves to present the Youth Committee report. Ms. Graves began by stating that the Twin Districts Youth Committee has met twice since the last board meeting. The first meeting was on May 18, 2022. During the meeting, the Youth Committee approved the release of an emergency out-of-school RFP to cover 8 counties not currently being served.

On July 18, 2022 the TDWDA Youth Committee met to review proposals submitted for the Emergency RFP for Out-of-School Youth programs. An independent review was conducted prior to the Youth Committee review and those scores and comments were taken into consideration. Four proposals were submitted. One was deemed non-responsive after failing to meet the technical requirements set forth in the RFP, and one was not accepted having been submitted past the submission deadline (June 21, 2022, 5:00pm CST).

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

1. Jones College – Greene and Wayne Counties
2. Multi-County Community Service Agency – Clarke, Jasper, and Smith Counties

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

The Youth Committee 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. Ms. Graves motioned to approve the proposal ranking.

**ACTION: Ms. Lillie Graves motioned to accept the proposal ranking for the PY22 WIOA Emergency Out-of-School Youth RFP; Mr. Sedgie Foxworth seconded. Motion carried.**

Ms. Graves continued, and stated that during the July 18, 2022 meeting, the Youth Committee also approved SMPDD's 11-month youth contract to serve In-School and Out-of-School Youth for PY22. This contract is included with the meeting packet. Ms. Graves motioned to approve this contract.

**ACTION: Ms. Lillie Graves motioned to approve the PY22 SMPDD Youth Contract; Ms. Lucy Lamberth seconded. Motion carried.**

Ms. Graves continued with a program update from the SMPDD staff. The update stated that:

- All contracts have been executed and training for the new youth providers is underway.
- Program year 2021 monitoring is complete. No findings or major issues were noted during the programmatic review.
- The state of Mississippi has received a 50/50 in-school and out-of-school waiver. The WIOA law states that we have to spend at least 75% of funds on out-of-school. Due of the waiver, we are now able to increase spending on in-school and therefore serve more in-school youth.

Ms. Graves concluded her report.

## **ONE-STOP COMMITTEE REPORT**

Mr. Stephens called on Ms. Rebecca Brown to present the One-Stop Committee report. Ms. Brown began by stating that the Individual Training Accounts (ITA) Policy that the TDWDA Board authorized the committee to revise was complete. This revision increased the ITA from \$5,000 to \$7,200. Ms. Brown called for a motion to accept the policy change.

**ACTION: Ms. Lillie Graves motioned to accept the new ITA Policy; Mr. Calvin Newsom seconded. Motion carried.**

Ms. Brown also stated that the One-Stop certification process has begun to make sure that each site is up to standards. This process will be complete by the next TDWDA Board meeting.

Ms. Brown concluded her report.

## **INDUSTRY ADVISORY COUNCIL REPORT**

Mr. Stephens called on Mr. Mark Scott to present the Industry Advisory Council report. Mr. Scott began with the TDWDA Job Training Survey results. Earlier this month, a survey was released to TDWDA Employers utilizing WIOA funds for training purposes in one or more of the following categories: On-the-Job Training, Customized Training, Incumbent Worker Training, Internships and Work Experience, Job Orders, and Apprenticeships. Of those polled, the majority were "Very Satisfied", and a few were "Somewhat Satisfied." None were "Dissatisfied" with the services offered.

Notable comments include the ease of communication with the Hattiesburg WIN Center, the need for more background information on applicants that includes a valid driver's license, and a request for less cumbersome bureaucracy.

Regarding the Application Process, 67% were "Very Satisfied," 22% "Somewhat Satisfied," and 11% "Neither Satisfied/Dissatisfied." Notable comments include the need for more agency visits to employers, and the increased need for more Nursing externships.

Regarding Funds Ease-of-Use (bureaucratic burden), 56% found it "Very Easy," 22% "Somewhat Easy," 11% "Neither Easy/Difficult," and 11% "Somewhat Difficult."

Regarding their Follow-Up/Audit experience, 89% were "Very Satisfied" and 11% "Neither Satisfied/Dissatisfied." No other notable comments.

Mr. Scott explained that this was the first step in a process to reach out to local employers, and will improve over time.

Mr. Scott concluded his report.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

Mr. Stephens presented one new appointment to the One-Stop Committee, Mr. John Poelma from Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College. Mr. Stephens congratulated Mr. Poelma on his appointment.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

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