

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

**Thursday, January 22, 2026**

**11:00 AM**

**914 Sullivan Drive, Hattiesburg**

**LOCAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD PRESENT:**

Millie Bordelon, Rebecca Brown, Lindsay Brown, Wayne Buffington, Grant Crowder, Perry Duckworth, Lillie Graves, Ricky Harrison, Brian Johnson, Lucy Lamberth, Julia Lindsey, Calvin Newsom, Tiffany Parrish, David Stephens, Lucretia Willams, and Marshall Wood, Sr.

**LOCAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD ABSENT:**

Danny Box (proxy), Sedgie Foxworth, Newt Ishee, Laura "Missy" Lewis, Tom Miles, and Jermaine Simmons

**STAFF:**

Allison Hawkins, Patricia Morrison, Marilyn Minor, Shonta Duncan, Marvin Dickey, Shari White, Elena Borel, Shonta Duncan, 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; Mr. Calvin Newsom seconded. Motion carried.**

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Mr. Stephens called for a motion to approve the minutes from last meeting (October 1, 2025).

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

## **LEO BOARD UPDATE**

Mr. Stephens called on Mr. Calvin Newsom to present the LEO Board Update. Mr. Newsom announced that three new appointees have been put forward to serve on the TDWDA Workforce Board: Grant Crowder, District Vice President at Jones College; Lindsay Brown, Executive Director of the Petal Area Chamber of Commerce; and April Stennett, Economic Development Director for Greene County. All of their appointments were approved this morning, and Mr. Crowder and Ms. Brown are both in attendance. Mr. Stephens welcomed them to the Board.

## **TWIN DISTRICTS UPDATE**

Mr. Stephens called on Ms. Allison Hawkins to present the Twin Districts Update. She began by introducing Mr. Chris Nixon, who is the new Pathway Home Re-Entry Program Administrator. Ms. Hawkins announced that going forward, non-WIOA-funded programs will be highlighted in Workforce Board meetings, even though the Board may not be fiscally responsible for them. This will help keep the Board informed of other programs and resources that are available in their communities.

Ms. Hawkins also announced that Mr. Kenny Jett has retired after 20 years of service to SMPDD and the TDWDA Board.

WIOA will most likely receive level funding this year, based on Congressional activity. However, Adult Education funding is still questionable.

As announced last meeting, MDES received \$5.7 million as part of the Industry-Driven Skills Training Fund, which will be directed to shipbuilding efforts. Ms. Hawkins introduced Ms. Stephanie Murray of Bollinger and Ben Weldon of Huntington-Ingalls Shipbuilding, who are in attendance and will be utilizing these funds. She also thanked other interested parties and partners that are present in today's meeting, and commented on the high attendance.

Ms. Hawkins concluded her report.

## **TWIN DISTRICTS FINANCIAL REPORT**

Mr. Stephens called on Ms. Shari White to present the Financial Report. She began her report with the Program Year 2025 (PY25) Funding Overview. The total PY24 carryover, which included the Unobligated and the Unliquidated Obligations totals \$3,075,301.12. The PY25 Allocations, which included a 10% decrease from the prior year, are as follows: Adult \$1,804,473; Dislocated Worker \$1,877,566; Youth \$1,889,355. The total allocation for PY25 is \$5,571,394.00, and the total funds available are \$8,646,695.12.

Ms. White then went over the PY25 Funding Highlights. On December 18, 2025, TDWDA received PY25 NFA #4, which provided the TDWDA the authority to expend and request PY25 Adult Advance funds, in the amount of \$1,461,623.00. Also, on

December 18, 2025, TDWDA received PY25 NFA #5, which provided the TDWDA the authority to expend and request PY25 Dislocated Worker Advance funds, in the amount of \$1,483,276.00. On December 30, 2026, The OGM approved TDWDA's PY25 transfer request. At our last board meeting, the Transfer of \$317,000 from PY25 DW Advance funds to PY25 Adult Advance funds was approved. Copies of these NFAs can be found in the meeting packet.

Ms. White continued with the Obligations and Expenditure Summary. The expenditures reported are for the Third Quarter costs - the period ending 3/31/25. The Obligations were as follows: Adult was 97.9% obligated, Dislocated Worker 88.9%, Youth 100%, and Rapid Response/Layoff Aversion was 100%.

Ms. White then summarized the expenditures through December 31, 2025, and made special note that the MDES expenditures for December 2025 have not yet been reported, and are not included in the totals. Adult was 25%, Dislocated Worker 27%, Youth 46%, and Rapid Response/Layoff Aversion was 33% expended. Overall, TDWDA has expended 33% of its PY25 Obligations, equaling \$2,707,244.82. Please note that the PY25 Youth Work Experience Rate is at currently at 40.78%.

Next, Ms. White went over the Unobligated Remaining Funds. Unliquidated Obligations are funds that were obligated, but not expended. The Unobligated funds were as follows: Adult funds totaling \$65,865 and Dislocated Worker \$266,018.

Ms. White continued with the Expenditure by Quarter Report. Expenditures are as follows: 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter expended \$1,280,944.45 and 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter \$1,426,300.37.

Ms. White concluded her report.

## **WIN JOB CENTER REPORT**

Mr. Stephens called on Mr. Brian Johnson to present the WIN Job Center Report. Mr. Johnson began by thanking the SMPDD staff, regional MDES staff, and employer partners in attendance. Next, he introduced Mr. Trae Muse, the Assistant Area Director under Mr. Johnson for the southern half of Mississippi; Mr. Nicholas Evans, Area Director of the northern half of Mississippi; and Ms. Daphne James, who is the Workforce Services Director for the State.

Since the last meeting, two new Center managers have been hired: Mr. Greg Yarborough at the Gulfport WIN Job Center, and Ms. Robin Powell at Pascagoula.

The Meridian WIN Job Center has moved to a new location near the Meridian Community College campus. The amenities and layout are much better than the old location.

The Columbia WIN Job Center is hosting a Chamber event towards the end of this month (January). The last event went very well, and employer outreach was very successful.

Looking ahead, there are still a few staff vacancies within the TDWDA WIN Centers, especially Pascagoula and Meridian. However, with new management at both, this should be rectified in the near future.

Mr. Johnson also explained the Mobile WIN Job Center, a bus with everything needed for WIOA enrollment and Rapid Response events that can drive out to underserved areas. Similarly, the Navigator Kiosks have been successfully trialed, and can be placed in Libraries and other public spaces in areas that do not have easy access to brick-and-mortar WIN Job Centers. These will start rolling out across the State, including within the TDWDA.

Mr. Johnson concluded his report.

### **YOUTH COMMITTEE REPORT**

Mr. Stephens called on Ms. Lillie Graves to present the Youth Committee Report. Ms. Graves began with the current enrollment. Program Year 2025 is off to a good start, despite lower funding. The number of Youth being served is close to pre-COVID levels, with 121 Out-of-School youth and 33 In-School youth served so far.

SMPDD Youth Program monitoring will also begin soon, and updates on that will be available at the next Board meeting.

Ms. Graves then presented the PY25 SMPDD Youth Subaward Modification. This includes a Budget Modification to better align with our current expenditure projections. Cost adjustments were made in the Direct Training, Work Experience, and In-School/Out-of-School categories; however, no additional dollars have been added and the total subaward amount is unchanged. The other subaward provisions also remain unchanged. Ms. Graves motioned to approve the Modification; Mr. Stephens called for a vote.

**ACTION: Ms. Lillie Graves motioned to approve the PY25 SMPDD Youth Subaward Modification; Ms. Millie Bordelon seconded. Motion carried.**

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 announcing that the Meridian WIN Center has moved into a new location. Because of this, the new location needs to be certified. One-Stop Committee members visited the site on January 9, 2026, and the Center opened on January 20. At the time of the visit, there was still some work that needed to be

completed, including some painting, ADA signage installation, and updating Google Maps. Most of the work has been completed or will be soon, and the One-Stop Committee recommends that the new Meridian WIN Center be conditionally certified through March 31, 2026. Ms. Brown motioned to approve the conditional certification; Mr. Stephens called for a vote.

**ACTION: Ms. Rebecca Brown motioned to conditionally certify the Meridian WIN Job Center through March 31, 2026; Mr. Wayne Buffington seconded. Motion carried.**

Ms. Brown concluded her report.

### **INDUSTRY ADVISORY COUNCIL REPORT**

Mr. Stephens called on Mr. Aaron Akers to present the Industry Advisory Council Report. Mr. Akers stated that the Council has not yet met and instead gathered input through a survey of its members. Key items from the responses suggest that WIOA-funded programs may not always be fully aligned with current industry needs, and many respondents recommended great opportunities to strengthen employer engagement by WIOA operators. At the same time, all respondents indicated they had utilized a WIN Job Center within the past two years and was satisfied with the services. One member shared a positive experience, noting that with the support of their local WIN Center, which voluntarily remained open beyond normal business hours, they hosted a successful after-hours job fair that resulted in five job applicants as potential new hires. It should be noted that the number of survey respondents was limited, and a more formalized survey with a larger sample size may be considered in the future.

Mr. Akers concluded his report.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

No new business.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

With nothing further to discuss, Mr. Stephens motioned to adjourn the meeting.

**ACTION: Mr. Marshall Wood motioned to adjourn the meeting; Mr. Perry Duckworth seconded. Motion carried.**