

**North Central Arkansas
Workforce Development Board
December 8, 2021
Minutes**

The North Central Arkansas Workforce Development Board convened at White River Planning and Development District on December 8, 2021, beginning at 10:38 a.m. The meeting was conducted in person and through Zoom. Board Chair Gayle Cooper presided with the following members present: Ben Baxter, Gayle Cooper, Shayne Gaither, Alvin Hearyman, Garry Lawrence, Renee' Martin, and Becky Warren. Those attending by Zoom include: Stacy Gunderman, Robin Hunt, Laura McGuire, Amber Neal, Jamie Rayford, and Latasha Robinson.

Others Present: Angela Goodwin, Elizabeth Smith, Byron Southerland, Bree DeShazo, Janet Smith, and Pasha Bristow. Clevon Young, guest speaker from ADWS Farmworker's program joined through Zoom.

Board Chair Gayle Cooper called the meeting to order at 10:38 a.m. upon seeing a quorum.

Board Chair Cooper called upon Elizabeth Smith to present the introduction of guests. Ms. Smith introduced guest Clevon Young, guest speaker from ADWS Farmworker's program. Elizabeth Smith announced that later we would be joined by Pasha Bristow to share her story about WIOA.

Board Chair Cooper announced a change in the order of the agenda and gave Mr. Clevon Young the floor.

Clevon Young, the Executive Director of the Arkansas Human Development Corporation discussed the Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker Program. He explained eligibility and types of services offered. He announced the farmworkers program will celebrate its 50th anniversary in 2022.

Board Chair Gayle Cooper then asked the Board if there were any corrections or revisions to the September 9, 2021 NCA WDB minutes. Hearing none, Alvin Hearyman made a motion to approve the September 9, 2021 NCA WDB minutes and Becky Warren seconded. The motion carried unanimously with none opposed.

Board Chair Gayle Cooper asked if there were any corrections or revisions to the minutes of the Board meeting that took place through email on October 10, 2021 to approve policies that had been updated. Hearing none, Garry Lawrence made a motion to accept the October 10, 2021 meeting minutes to approve the updated policies as presented. Shayne Gaither seconded. The motion carried unanimously with none opposed.

Board Chair Gayle Cooper then called upon Byron Southerland to present the Financial Report. Mr. Southerland presented the Board with the spending progress report. He explained that there may be excess DLW funds that could be transferred to Adult funding stream to utilize the funds before they expire. Mr. Southerland explained that the funds do not carry over to the next year, but that funds have been available and will be used when the current funds are exhausted or expire.

Board Chair Gayle Cooper called upon Angela Goodwin to discuss proposed policy changes. Ms. Angela Goodwin then discussed the policy updates which had been previously distributed.

Ms. Goodwin explained that a Board member had requested at the last meeting that the policy

changes be more clearly defined. She presented the Board with an proposed update to the local policy 1.10, Issuance of Policies. Board Chair Gayle Cooper asked if there was any discussion or questions about the proposed changes. Hearing none, Becky Warren motioned to approve the updated policy and Renee' Martin seconded. The motion carried with none opposed.

Ms. Angela Goodwin then discussed the change in Policy 2.13 Self-Sufficiency. She explained that the current policy did not clearly define the purpose of the policy. Ms. Goodwin explained to the Board what the changes were and why they were needed. After discussion, Becky Warren motioned to approve the updated policy as presented. Ben Baxter seconded. All were in favor and the motion carried.

Board Chair Cooper called upon Elizabeth Smith to provide the program report. Ms. Smith discussed the ADWS monitoring report final response for PY19. She explained to the Board that the report had been closed and all issues resolved except for the issues that all the districts are struggling with regarding the leases. Jan Smith informed the Board that the state monitoring will begin next week, and that the response from Hightower third party monitor has not yet been received.

Elizabeth Smith informed the Board of the problems with lack of childcare opportunities in our area. Jamie Rayford started a group of interested individuals recently to find ways to mitigate this issue. It was shared that Childcare Aware has grant opportunities for local child care businesses and that WIOA can help with incumbent worker training services.

Elizabeth Smith then shared the PY20 local area performance. She discussed the measures that the local area captured and detailed the state's overall performance and how the local area measured up on average to the rest of the state.

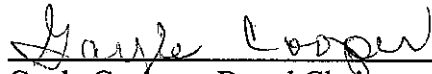
Ms. Elizabeth Smith shared that the TANF work experience grant has not been finalized, that the state is still reviewing for final approval.

Board Chair Gayle Cooper asked Elizabeth Smith to invite the guest speaker Pasha Bristow to share her story with the Board. Pasha is an Emergency Medical Technician at White River Medical Center. She shared that she had been a stay-at-home mom and decided that she wanted to start a new career due to financial issues. She wanted to make a difference to others outside of her home. She enrolled at UACCB in the paramedic program and applied for WIOA assistance. She was approved for tuition assistance, supportive services for school supplies, and childcare assistance. "WIOA dramatically changed my life. I am now independent and I do not have to depend on anybody to take care of myself or my children and that's what I wanted for myself." She shared that she plans to continue her education and get her bachelor degree. "Y'all have really helped me in my life. It's made a huge difference. Not just for me, but for my family as well. I really appreciate it and just want to say thank you, and God bless y'all."

Board Chair Gayle Cooper then presented the next item on the agenda, the election of officers. He informed the Board that the current officers are Gayle Cooper as Chair, Garry Lawrence as Vice-Chair, and Renee' Martin as Secretary. Ben Baxter motioned to keep the same officers for the next year. Shayne Gaither seconded. All were in favor and the motion carried.

In other business, Ms. Angela Goodwin informed the Board that interviews for a new one-stop manager were scheduled for the next week and hope to have someone fill the position by the first of the year.

Having no further business to discuss, Board Chair Gayle Cooper asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Garry Lawrence motioned to adjourn at 11:27 p.m. and Shayne Gaither seconded. The meeting was adjourned.



Gayle Cooper – Board Chair
North Central Arkansas Workforce Development Board