

**North Central Arkansas  
Workforce Development Board  
June 19, 2024**

**Minutes**

The North Central Arkansas Workforce Development Board convened at White River Planning and Development District on June 19, 2024 beginning at 11:00 a.m. The meeting was conducted in person, with a zoom option, and there was a quorum. Chairman Gayle Cooper presided with the following members present:

Gayle Cooper	Marcus Orf
Stacy Gunderman	Karen Palmer
Janet Hearyman	Jennifer Pike
Garry Lawrence	Christel Taylor
Renee' Martin	Jada Washington
Amie McBride	
Trish Miller	

**Others Present:**

Staff included; Janet Smith, Bree DeShazo, Taylor Smith, Chase Shonk, Calvin Wright and Elizabeth Smith. Guests included; Dr. Holly Smith from the University of Arkansas Community College of Batesville (UACCB), Charles Walker from the Arkansas State University in Newport, Amanda Moore from UACCB, and Ron Painter from Forbes Field Associates.

**Members not present:**

Michael Arnold  
Brittany Baker  
Dr. Zach Harber  
Amber Neal  
Wiley Osborn  
Chad Vincent  
Gina Wells

Since there was a quorum, Chairman Cooper asked the Board for approval of the previous minutes from March of 2024. Chairman Cooper asked if there was any discussion that needed to take place before the voting and there was none.

1<sup>st</sup> Mrs. Stacy Gunderman 2<sup>nd</sup> Mrs. Renee' Martin All members voted yes for approval of the minutes.

Chairman Cooper then called on Mr. Calvin Wright and Mr. Chase Shonk to present the financial report. Mr. Wright explained where North Central was at in terms of spending the allocated funds. Mr. Shonk went over the charts in the board packet and explained that the North Central team was on track to spend all of the funds by the end of June 2024 having to return no money to ADWS. Chairman Cooper then asked for discussion over the budget to which Mr. Garry Lawrence made a motion to approve the budget as is.

1<sup>st</sup> Mr. Garry Lawrence 2<sup>nd</sup> Mrs. Stacy Gunderman All members voted yes for approval of the financial report.

Chairman Cooper then asked Mrs. Taylor Smith to give a One-Stop update. Mrs. Smith shared the monthly activity report for the Searcy Workforce Center. She explained the job orders and referrals that were taking place as well as the increased outreach efforts of the Searcy Workforce Center to meet the needs of the ten county area. Mrs. Smith also provided a list of activities that were forthcoming.

Next, Chairman Cooper called the partner programs to provide an update. Mrs. Jennifer Pike, the Searcy Workforce Center Manager, spoke about the efforts the Searcy team has been making across the ten county area. Mrs. Pike reiterated some of the aspects that Mrs. Taylor Smith spoke about saying that since the Searcy Workforce Center was the last remaining workforce center in the North Central region that efforts to conduct outreach have increased. Mrs. Pike stated that one of the goals is to conduct a job fair in each of the ten counties. The Division of Services to the Blind was next on the partners list but representation was not had at this meeting so Chairman Cooper moved to the Adult Education Director at Ozarka College in Melbourne, Mrs. Trish Miller. Mrs. Miller spoke about the efforts that were being conducted on behalf of Adult Education. Mrs. Miller also talked about a new effort which included allowing GED students to co-enroll into a technical degree so that when the participant finishes their GED they also have a technical certificate to be work ready. Mrs. Miller asked the Board if they would be willing to revise the policy where it states that individuals must gain their GED, if they have not already, before being enrolled in post secondary education. There was further discussion about this among the Board. Mrs. Stacy Gunderman did not like the idea stating that she felt individuals would be less likely to complete their GED if that rule were changed. Mrs. Miller is to bring more information about Mrs. Gunderman's concerns to the September Board meeting. Arkansas Rehabilitation Services (ARS) was not on the list to provide information as the Board had a new representative from ARS, however, they will be presenting at the September meeting. Chairman Cooper then called upon Mrs. Bree DeShazo to provide a program/ETPL update. Mrs. DeShazo stated that currently the North Central area had a total of 192 participants. Mrs. DeShazo then stated that there were 18 worksites that the WIOA Title 1-B program was working with. Concerning the ETPL Mrs. DeShazo stated that there were three new programs that participants had requested to be approved on the North Central ETPL. These program descriptions were sent to the Board and included; physical therapy assistant from Arkansas State University in Jonesboro, Criminology from Arkansas State University in Jonesboro, and Radiology from North Arkansas College. Chairman Cooper then asked for discussion over the new programs to which Mrs. Renee' Martin made a motion to approve the programs.

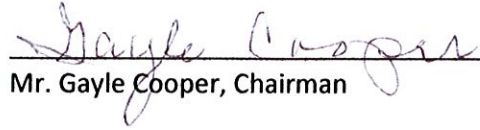
1<sup>st</sup> Mrs. Renee' Martin 2<sup>nd</sup> Mrs. Stacy Gunderman All members voted yes for approval of the three programs.

Chairman Cooper then asked if there was any other business to which Ms. Elizabeth Smith stated that it was time to procure for a third party monitor. The One-Stop Committee Chair, Mrs. Stacy Gunderman, would be in charge of coordinating the Request for Proposal on behalf of the board. Mrs. Stacy Gunderman had recruited Mrs. Amie McBride and Mrs. Karen Palmer, both members of the One-Stop Committee, to assist. Ms. Elizabeth Smith also stated that due to the monitoring reports from the State the Board needed to adjust their committees to either be in full compliance or to shorten the committees by combining the Disability and the Youth committees to one committee called the Targeted Populations committee. Chairman Cooper asked for discussion to which Ms. Renee' Martin made a motion to combine the two committees into one.

1<sup>st</sup> Mrs. Renee' Martin 2<sup>nd</sup> Mrs. Stacy Gunderman All members voted yes to combine the Disability and Youth committee into the Targeted Populations committee.

Having no further business Chairman Cooper asked for a motion to adjourn.

1<sup>st</sup> Mrs. Amie McBride 2<sup>nd</sup> Mr. Garry Lawrence All members were in favor of adjournment.

  
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Mr. Gayle Cooper, Chairman

9/11/2024  
Date