

**North Central Arkansas
Workforce Development Board
March 8, 2023
Minutes**

The North Central Arkansas Workforce Development Board convened at White River Planning and Development District on March 8, 2022 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	Dr. Zach Harber
Garry Lawrence	Michael Arnold
Marcus Orf	Dr. John Kelly
Stacy Gunderman	Raye Ann Hager
Wiley Osborn	Stacey Gunderman
Jamie Rayford	Jill Dockins
Brittany Baker	PaTricia Cargill-Zelasko
Raye Ann Hager	Robin Hunt

Others Present:

Staff included; Janet Smith, Byron Southerland, Taylor Smith, Calvin Wright, Bree DeShazo, Elizabeth Smith, and Keydra Looney. Guests included; Tom Pittman Senior Auditor for ADWS, Dr. Kelly Lyon with ASU-Beebe Director of Workforce and Community Development, and Dominique Euell with ADWS.

Members not present:

Karen Coltharp	Chad Vincent
Pat Dunegan	Shayne Gaither
Alvin Hearyman	Amber Neal
Laura McGuire	

Since there was a quorum, Chairman Cooper asked the Board for approval of the previous minutes from December of 2022. Chairman Cooper asked if there were any discussion that needed to take place before the voting and there was none.

1st Mr. Garry Lawrence 2nd Stacy Gunderman All members voted yes for approval of the minutes.

Chairman Cooper then called upon Ms. Elizabeth Smith to discuss the recent monitoring by ADWS. Ms. Smith explained that ADWS came to White River Planning Development on December 20 and 21 of 2022. This only included program monitors financial was working remotely. Ms. Smith explained that there were three new monitors hired by ADWS that attended and that one of the new monitors had intently looked at the policies and procedures of the Board. As a result, North Central had received a 13 page report detailing minor issues that needed to be fixed. One major issue, however, was that internal procedures were not approved by the Board. ADWS was suggesting that the Board approve all procedures and input them into their respective policies. Ms. Smith explained to the Board that she had requested a citation from law showing this was a requirement. No citation was provided by ADWS. Stacy Gunderman, Board member, asked if this was a recommendation or a mandate to which Ms. Smith replied that as of now, no issuance had been produced by ADWS,

making this a recommendation. Mrs. Gunderman then stated that she felt approving the procedures or inputting them into the polices would be very difficult to maintain. Mrs. Gunderman also stated that she felt we would be setting ourselves up to have more findings and it would tie our hands since the procedures are internal processes. Chairman Cooper asked if a motion would like to be made to table this issue until ADWS sends a formal issuance. Mrs. Gunderman made a motion that the Board table approving the procedures, or inputting them into policy, until ADWS sends an issuance mandating that the Board do so. Board member Mr. Wiley Osborn seconded the motion and all Board members voted to approve the motion.

Chairman Cooper then called on Ms. Elizabeth Smith to present the policies that needed approval. Ms. Smith then reiterated that staff was working diligently to update the policies based on ADWS's suggestions in the 13 page document. Dr. Zach Harber stated that he was appreciative of staff for taking the initiative to get all policies updated in a timely manner. Ms. Smith then went through the Priority of Service-Veterans and Eligible Spouses policy. Chairman Cooper asked for discussion of the policy and there was none.

1st Mrs. Stacy Gunderman 2nd Dr. Zach Harber All members votes yes for approval of the policy.

Chairman Cooper then asked for discussion on the Dislocated Worker Eligibility policy. Since there was none Chairman Cooper asked for a motion to be made.

1st Mrs. Stacy Gunderman 2nd Dr. Zach Harber All members voted yes for approval of the policy.

The next policy was the Priority of Service-Individuals with Barriers. Chairman Cooper asked if everyone had the opportunity to look through the policy as it was distributed previously. No discussion took place.

1st Wiley Osborn 2nd Dr. Zach Harber All members voted yes for approval of the policy.

The final policy was the Co-Enrollment and Co-Funding which Ms. Elizabeth Smith shared the minor changes with the Board. Chairman Cooper asked if there were any questions and after there were none, he then asked for a motion to be made.

1st Dr. Zach Harber 2nd Dr. John Kelly All members voted yes for approval of the policy.

After approval of the policies, Chairman Cooper then asked Mr. Byron Southerland to present the financial report. Mr. Southerland explained where North Central was at with spending and went into detail about a transfer of funds from Dislocated Worker to Adult. Mrs. Stacy Gunderman asked about the youth spending and if staff planned to expend all funds by the end of June. Mr. Southerland explained that staff did plan to expend the funds and were working persistently to increase the numbers of in school youth. After no further discussion, Chairman Cooper asked for a motion and approval of the financial report.

1st Dr. Zach Harber 2nd Mr. Garry Lawrence 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 explained her efforts, with the partners, in order to see more cross training being conducted. Mrs. Smith also spoke about how she had invited a member of ADWS to speak at their next Business services meeting about the Work Opportunity Tax Credit. Dr. John Kelly commented on the numbers for the Work Keys program and stated how he would like to see those numbers rise. After review of the One-Stop numbers for Searcy and Batesville, Mrs. Raye Ann Hager had reservations that the numbers were not being captured accurately in the Searcy Workforce Center. Mrs. Hager stated that she wanted to visit with Mrs. Smith to discuss how the information is being reported from the two centers. Mrs. Smith stated that she would meet with Mrs. Hager and the Searcy Workforce Manager.

After no further One-Stop discussion, Chairman Cooper called on Mrs. Keydra Looney to provide a TANF update. Mrs. Looney stated that in the last quarter the TANF program had 12 participants. Mrs. Looney went into detail on where the participants were working and how a few of them had stopped participating in the program all together either due to positive drug tests or due to incarceration. Dr. John Kelly asked Mrs. Looney about the worksites she was using to which Mrs. Looney responded with an exact list. Mrs. Looney also went into detail on what participants were active in post-secondary education as well as work.

Next, Chairman Cooper called on Mrs. Bree DeShazo to provide a WIOA review and an ETPL update. Mrs. DeShazo stated that North Central currently has 192 participants which 19 of them were on Work Experience and 3 were in On the Job Training, the rest being in Occupational Skills Training. Mrs. DeShazo then presented the ETPL to the Board. Chairman Cooper asked for discussion before approval of the ETPL. Dr. Zach Harber stated that there were a few programs from the University of Arkansas Community College at Batesville that were not on the list that he would like to be listed. Mrs. DeShazo stated that she would begin working on getting those approved. After the discussion, Chairman Cooper asked for a motion regarding approval of the ETPL.

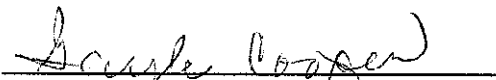
1st Dr. Zach Harber 2nd Mr. Wiley Osborn All members voted yes for approval of the ETPL.

In the other items of the agenda Chairman Cooper explained that the Board needed to vote on a Chairman and Vice Chair. A motion was made by Mrs. Stacey Gunderman that Mr. Gayle Cooper remain the Chairman to which Dr. Zach Harber seconded. All members were in favor of this and voted for approval of Mr. Gayle Cooper to remain the Chairman. Mrs. Jamie Rayford then made a motion that Mr. Garry Lawrence remain as the Vice Chair to which Dr. Zach Harber seconded. All members were in favor of Mr. Garry Lawrence remaining the Vice Chair.

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

1st Dr. John Kelly 2nd Dr. Zach Harber All members were in favor of adjournment.

Following the dismissal, the Board members remained for a Local Workforce Board training.



Gayle Cooper – Board Chair

North Central Arkansas Workforce Development Board