

**North Central Arkansas
Workforce Development Board
March 11, 2020
Minutes**

The North Central Arkansas Workforce Development Board convened on March 11, 2020, beginning at 10:30 a.m. The meeting was conducted at University of Arkansas Community College at Batesville, 2005 White Drive, Batesville, Arkansas. Vice-Chair Garry Lawrence presided with the following members present: Ben Baxter, Regina Burkett, Gayle Cooper, Pat Dunegan, Shayne Gaither, Raye Ann Hager, Chris Lorch, Sherry Organ, Jamie Rayford, Amber Neal, and Micah Woods.

Others Present: Wendy Howard, Bree DeShazo, Lynn Poff, Tom Anderson, Arnel Willis, Andrea Lee, Amanda Chapman, Greg Miller, Tonya Crawford, Jan Smith, Brandon Downing, Antonio Garcia, Jr., Ronda Ivy, Byron Southerland, Jamie Hill, and Tamika Speed.

Tom Pittman from the Arkansas Division of Workforce Services joined the meeting through phone conference.

Board Vice-Chair Garry Lawrence called the meeting to order at 10:30 a.m. upon seeing a quorum.

To start the meeting, Vice-Chair Lawrence introduced Tom Pittman from the Arkansas Division of Workforce Services who joined the meeting through phone conference. Other guests introduced were Arnell Willis of the Arkansas Division of Workforce Services and Tom Anderson, the Arkansas State Workforce Development Board Chair. Also introduced was a participant Brandon Downing.

Mr. Arnell Willis, Director of the State Workforce Investment board, spoke about state issues monitoring findings. HE discussed that monitoring findings cannot be resolved verbally, but must be documented in detail. He also discussed board governance and conflicts of interest with the board and One-Stop Operators.

Vice-Chair Garry Lawrence asked if there were any corrections or revisions to the December 11, 2019 board meeting minutes. Hearing none, a motion to accept the December 11, 2019 board meeting minutes was made by Regina Burkett and seconded by Ben Baxter. The motion carried unanimously with none opposed.

Vice-Chair Lawrence called Byron Southerland to give a financial report. Mr. Southerland presented a progress report on budgeted and remaining funds by funding stream.

He discussed a move of funds between adult and dislocated worker programs. In October, \$250,000 was moved from FY19 DLW to FY19 Adult. He mentioned that more funds will be moved from FY20 DLW to FY20 Adult in March or April of 2020. He explained that the funds could be better utilized in the Adult program due to low Dislocated Worker enrollment.

Vice-Chair Lawrence invited Ms. Elizabeth Smith to discuss the One Stop and Partner Updates. Ms. Smith discussed partner meetings at the one-stop centers. She discussed a meeting in February at Batesville Workforce Center. These meetings help the other partners know what is available.

Ms. Smith then discussed the Adult Education Request for Proposal. She said we have 4 Adult Education Centers in our 10 county area. She discussed the need for a committee to score the RFP. She requested 4 people to join her on the 18th at noon at WRPDD.

Vice-Chair Lawrence then called Ms. Jamie Rayford to discuss the National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC) and the direction the Batesville Area Chamber is taking the county to becoming an ACT Work-Ready community. She explained that they have two years to complete the goal and have attained 70% in 11 months. She said Sharp County is also interested in this program.

Vice-Chair Lawrence called Tony Garcia to discuss Youth Outreach. Mr. Garcia discussed what has been done to reach the youth populations. He said that 34 area high schools were contacted regarding the WIOA youth program in order to set up presentations for the students. He said that last year 1,290 students were made aware of the program across the 10 county area. He then went to DHS and parole offices to make them aware of the program and how it can benefit the youth.

Vice-Chair Lawrence called Tamika Speed to discuss program enrollment. Ms. Speed gave a participant count and discussed work experience. She also went over Individual Training Account (ITA) and Supportive Services handouts.

Vice-Chair Lawrence called Angela Goodwin to update the board on Cosmetology programs. She discussed that since cosmetology was approved to be available for assistance six months prior, there have been no participants that have enrolled in cosmetology. This is partly due to the Adult funding issues. She shared that there was one youth who is interested in attending cosmetology in the fall.

Ms. Goodwin then directed the board to the Arkansas Consumer Report Systems (ACRS) approved programs list. Vice-Chair Lawrence asked for an approval of the list. Shayne Gaither motioned to approve the list as presented, and Ben Baxter seconded. All were in favor and the motion passed.

Vice-Chair Lawrence called on Brandon Downing to speak. He shared that he had to work during high school for his family and was not able to get his high-school diploma. He did not feel that he would ever be able to attend college. He discussed how he found out about the WIOA program and the educational opportunity he has been involved with and what he has learned since he began the program.

In other business, Ms. Elizabeth Smith reminded the board of the One-Stop Procurement and said she will be reaching out for volunteers to help score.

Ms. Goodwin discussed the disclosure and conflict of interest forms for the board members. She informed the board that committee leaders and officers will be determined at the next meeting.

Vice-Chair Lawrence asked if there was any other discussion. Seeing there was none, he asked for a motion to adjourn. Ben Baxter motioned to adjourn and Shayne Gaither seconded. Having no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:14 a.m.



Gayle Cooper – Board Chair

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