

**North Central Arkansas
Workforce Development Board
March 10, 2021
Minutes**

The North Central Arkansas Workforce Development Board convened through electronic means on March 10, 2021, beginning at 10:30 a.m. The meeting was conducted remotely utilizing Zoom and teleconference. Board Chair Gayle Cooper presided with the following members voicing their presence: Ben Baxter, Kimberly Clayborn, Gayle Cooper, Shayne Gaither, Garry Lawrence, Amber Neal, Wiley Osborn, Jamie Rayford, and Becky Warren.

Others Present: Jan Smith, Byron Southerland, Angela Goodwin, Bree DeShazo, Elizabeth Smith, and Trish Miller.

Board Chair Gayle Cooper called the meeting to order at 10:43 a.m. upon seeing a quorum.

Chair Cooper called upon Angela Goodwin to present the introduction of new staff. Ms. Goodwin announced that Ms. Sequoia Dean has been hired to fill the vacancy at the Newport Workforce Center as a Career Specialist.

Board Chair Gayle Cooper asked if there were any corrections or revisions to the December 03, 2020 board minutes. Hearing none, a motion to accept the December 03, 2020 minutes was made by Becky Warren and seconded by Jamie Rayford. The motion carried unanimously with none opposed.

Board Chair Gayle Cooper then asked if there were any corrections or revisions to the Disabilities Services Committee Meeting minutes from December 03, 2020. Hearing none, Ben Baxter made a motion to accept the Disabilities Services Committee Meeting minutes from December 03, 2020 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 Youth Services Committee Meeting minutes from December 03, 2020. Hearing none, Becky Warren motioned to approve the minutes and Shayne Gaither seconded. The motion carried unanimously with none opposed.

Board Chair Gayle Cooper then called upon Byron Southerland to give a financial report. Mr. Southerland shared with the board the current funding amounts for the WIOA program.

Board Chair Gayle Cooper then called upon Elizabeth Smith to share a success story. Ms. Smith was unable to play the video on Zoom. She informed the board that she would email the video to the board members after the meeting.

Board Chair Gayle Cooper then called upon Elizabeth Smith to give a program report. Ms. Smith informed the board how many individuals we are currently serving and how many of those are in work experience. She also presented a chart showing participant counts for other local areas in the state.

Board Chair Gayle Cooper called upon Angela Goodwin to discuss the policy updates, which had been previously distributed. Ms. Goodwin presented the WIOA Case Management Policy. She explained that this is a new policy put together with federal and state law, along with some procedural matters. Board Chair Cooper asked if there was any further discussion of the policy. Hearing none, he requested a motion to accept the policy. Garry Lawrence motioned to accept the

WIOA Case Management Policy and Jamie Rayford seconded. All were in favor and the motion to approve the policy carried.

Ms. Goodwin discuss the proposed changes to the Supportive Services polices. The use of fuel cards, in addition to the current method of reimbursement, has been added as an option. She explained that this will allow the participants to receive fuel assistance on the front end, instead of having to wait until after the fuel has been purchased and then reimbursed. Becky Warren asked about the forms that would be used in order to properly capture the information required and was followed with a brief discussion of related procedures. After confirming there was no more discussion on the change, Chair Gayle Cooper requested a motion to approve the change to the Supportive Services Policies. Ben Baxter motioned to approve and Becky Warren seconded. All were in favor and the motion carried.

Angela Goodwin then presented the Public Health Emergency Policy. She explained that this policy was necessitated by the Covid-19 national emergency. Becky Warren asked if this policy covers other types of emergencies as well. Ms. Goodwin explained that this policy was focused solely on national health emergencies and did not include policy for any other type of emergency or disaster. Chair Cooper asked if there was any further discussion. After hearing none, he asked for a motion to approve the Public Health Emergency Policy. Garry Lawrence motioned to approve the policy and Jamie Rayford seconded. All were in favor and the motion carried.

Ms. Goodwin then presented the changes to the Procurement Policy. The Small Purchase amount was changed from 3,500 to 10,000, allowable by a change in federal law. Chair Cooper asked if there was a motion to approve the updated policy. Becky Warren motioned to approve the change in the procurement policy and Ben Baxter seconded. With no further discussion, the motion carried.

The next agenda item was Occupational Skills Changes. Ms. Goodwin discussed the changes in the state's understanding of how providers and programs will be approved, partially due to the change in ArkansasJobLink, the state's Management Information System website. She informed the board that the training providers should all have an initial eligibility and then each program to be evaluated annually based on performance. Chair Cooper asked for a motion to approve the listed providers in the handout previously distributed. Ben Baxter address his concern for the provider list. He questioned why some of the schools listed are not in our local area and asked why would we pay for our participants to attend training in other areas. Elizabeth Smith explained that the law requires customer choice. If a participant that lives in our area chooses to attend a school outside of our local area, it is allowable under the law. After there was no further discussion, Chair Cooper asked for a motion to approve the training provider list. Garry Lawrence motioned to approve the training provider list and Ben Baxter seconded. With no further discussion, the motion carried.


Ms. Goodwin then presented the One-Stop Update. She explained that the One-Stop Operator will need to be re-procured. Ben Baxter explained that this was done recently, but the only responder did not follow the timeline set in place and the response had to be dismissed. Chair Cooper asked for a motion to approve moving forward with a new procurement for the One-Stop Operator. Becky Warren motioned to approve the procurement and Shayne Gaither seconded. All were in favor and the motion carried.

Ms. Goodwin discussed the need to procure for a One-Stop monitor. She explained what this entity would be responsible for and why this is needed. Becky Warren motioned to approve the procurement for the One-Stop monitor and Shayne Gaither seconded. All were in favor and the motion carried.

Board Chair Gayle Cooper asked if there was any other business to discuss. WRPDD Executive Director Janet Smith responded that she would like to discuss the recent monitoring response that had been distributed to the board members by the state. She explained that staff are working to satisfy the state requirements listed in the report. After Becky Warren asked where the money comes from for disallowed costs, Ms. Janet Smith explained that the district will pull together any costs that were misapplied and correct them internally in instances where this is possible. If ever the event was to arise where this was impossible, the Chief Elected Officials would then be ultimately responsible for disallowed costs that could not be corrected through other resources.

Becky Warren then asked if there were any staff positions open in the WIOA program. Ms. Janet Smith informed her that the staff that was hired to cover the Newport office was the only position that has been open, and that it has now been filled.

Having no more business to discuss, Board Chair Gayle Cooper asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Ben Baxter motioned to adjourn the meeting and Becky Warren seconded. The motion passed unanimously and the meeting was adjourned.



Gayle Cooper – Board Chair

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