



SOUTHEASTERN ARIZONA

**SOUTHEASTERN ARIZONA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD**

**Minutes**

Eastern Arizona College  
615 North Stadium Ave.  
Academic Programs Building, Room 122  
Thatcher, Arizona 85552

**Zoom Online Virtual Meeting**

<https://zoom.us/j/2048227879?pwd=NG51ZTgrK29wRkVhRWN6UXF1UzgwUT09>

**Meeting ID: 204 822 7879**

**Passcode: 1Tzf0K**

**Thursday, September 21, 2023**

**10:00 AM**

**Members Present**

Ron Curtis  
Lance Baxter  
Tony Boone  
Samuel Kolapo  
Doris Tolbert  
Martha Lujan  
Joshua DeSpain  
Kevin Peck  
Elizabeth Kinder  
Jacob Williams  
Merritt Essig  
Evonne Cummins  
Mary Ann Hockstad  
Sam Curtis  
Rebekah Kimmel  
Jelensky Irons

**Members Absent**

Matt Bolinger  
Kathleen Bullock  
Steven Garate  
Wick Lewis  
Kim Henderson

**Staff Present**

Vada Phelps  
Vickie Simmons  
Michelle Huff  
Bobbie Reed  
Lori Baron  
Robert Archer  
Marina Morales

**Guests Present**

Jim Mize  
Anita Baca  
Vaughn Croft  
Rene Connor

**A. Call to Order**

President Ron Curtis called to order the meeting of the ARIZONA@WORK Local Workforce Board at 10:00 AM on September 21, 2023 in person as well as on Zoom.

## **B. Roll Call**

Lori Baron conducted roll call. The names of present and absent members, as well as guests and staff are listed above. A quorum was established.

*"If such a conflict does arise, I will declare that conflict before the board and refrain from discussing and voting on matters in which I have conflict."*

## **C. Call to the Public**

No Public comments were made.

## **D. Action Item: To Approve/Disapprove September 21, 2023 Agenda**

**Motion to Approve:** Doris Tolbert

**Seconded:** Evonne Cummins

**Approved:** Unanimously

## **E. Action Item: To Approve/Disapprove June 14, 2023 Minutes**

**Motion to Approve:** Doris Tolbert

**Seconded:** Mary Ann Hockstad

**Approved:** Unanimously

## **F. Committee Reports**

Communications – Tony Boone

- Like and Share AZ@Work Social Media accounts
- A Billboard is advertising AZ@Work
- Reinforce what the staff is already working on

Ambassador – Evonne Cummins

- Plans to release a program for High School and College students in January 2024. This program will start in Safford.
- Making a flier

Business Engagement – Mary Ann Hockstad

- Employers do not know what we can do for them
- Suggest we improve our website
- Our Board represents the current required labor sector ratio
- How do we measure our success?
- Sierra Vista, Douglas and Safford have different needs

Jim Mize stated that nationally we are the best kept secret.

## **G. Financial Report: Budget and Expenditures**

Ron Curtis: Our audits are squeaky clean.

## **H. One-Stop Operator Report**

Jim Mize's report is in the Packet.

- There was an article in AARP, workers over 65 have increased by 160%.

## **I. Core Partner Reports**

One-Stop Employment and Training Reports was presented by Vickie Simmons.

Vickie's report is in the Board packet.

- Clifton traffic has increased.
- The 2022 data validation is complete with no findings.
- H1B had no findings but funding was pulled because the numbers were met.
- Up coming events are in the packet.

Ron Curtis noted that we can advocate for Workforce but cannot align politically.

Rehabilitation Services report was presented by Elizabeth Kinder.

Elizabeth's report is in the Board packet.

- Anew counselor has been hired. She is coming in strong.
- Willcox High School is a Transition School to Work contracted school.

Employment Services verbal report was presented by Jelensky Irons.

- They have restructured their internal processes. More information will come out tomorrow.
- There is still a week to week Statewide call.
- We should have an awareness around Veterans.

Adult Education reports

Lance Baxter's report for Cochise County is in the Board packet.

- Fall semester began August 21
- Last year was very successful with 63 graduates. The goal is 70 graduates this year.

Rene Connor gave a verbal report for Graham and Greenlee Counties.

## **J. Career Cluster Presentation given by Vaughn Croft**

## **K. Executive Director's Report – Vada Phelps**

- Cochise College had a ground breaking for their Law Enforcement program
- Trevor Stokes will speak about Economy in the World at the December AZ@Work Board meeting

## **L. President's Report – Ron Curtis**

- Board engagement has been great.
- The work by staff is appreciated
- We can change our programs to fit the needs of businesses.
- Think regionally – problems are not unique to our area.

## **Board Announcements**

Welcome to new Board members Samuel Kolapo and Lance Baxter.

Members shared the status of their businesses. The overall observation was that the supply chain has stabilized, since Covid, which has changed employee/employer needs.

## **Next Board Meeting**

December 21, 2023  
Sierra Vista, Arizona

## **Adjourn**

The meeting was adjourned at 11:44 a.m.

**ARIZONA@WORK is an Equal Opportunity employer/program.**

**Funded by WIOA federal dollars serving Adults, Youth, and Dislocated Workers**

Report Submitted by: *Lori Baron*