

Yavapai County Workforce Development Board January 13, 2022 Meeting Minutes

Attendees:	Present/Absent	Number of Absences in 2022
Anita Payne, Chairman	Present	0
Gary Hassen, Vice Chairman	Present	0
Philip Tovrea, Executive Member	Present	0
Mark Timm, Executive Member	Present	0
Greves, Kurt, Executive Member	Present	0
Tony Gauthier, Public Voice	Present	0
Garth Bascom	Present	0
Alycia Botkin	Present	0
Elaine Bremner	Absent	1
John Heiney	Present	0
Mel Ingwaldson	Present	0
Nancy Jensen	Present	0
Ginger Johnson	Present	0
Craig Lefever	Present	0
Patrick Ramirez	Present	0
Brenda Rhodes	Present	0
Soto, John	Present	0
Wilkinson, Kurt	Present	0

Staff: Teri Drew, Executive Director
Julia Sawyer, Executive Assistant

Guests: Leah Cickavage, NACOG Operations Manager; Gabe Loyola, Loyola Associates

I. Call to Order/Welcome/Introductions

Chairman Anita Payne called the meeting to order at 10:09 AM. She welcomed everyone and called for introductions; all introduced themselves. Chairman Payne noted that Public Comment cards are available for use during the Public Comment period, and gave brief meeting protocol.

Chairman Payne read the Mission Statement: *To Build Economic Success through Workforce Development Partnerships.*

II. Approval of the November 10, 2021 Minutes

Chairman Payne called for review/comments of the November 10, 2021 WDB meeting minutes, hearing no comments she called for a **motion and second to approve as drafted; so moved by John Heiney and seconded by Brenda Rhodes. The motion carried unanimously.**

III. Chairman's Report

➤ Executive Committee Update

Chairman Payne reported that NACOG and the WDB have a unique partnership under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act (WIOA). The Executive Committee has many questions related to the Board's authority involving items such as staffing of the Board and has decided to retain legal counsel to help.

As a means of explanation for why she is chairing the meeting instead of Phil Tovrea, Chairman Payne also reported that, because Mr. Tovrea serves on both the NACOG Regional Council Executive Committee as well as the WDB Executive Committee, there is a conflict of interest. Mr. Tovrea has stepped down as Chair of the WDB and she has stepped into the Chair role on an interim basis, until the legal matters have been resolved or until the next elections. Chairman Payne requested that any question come directly to her and she will answer as she is able. She noted that was all she could discuss at this time.

Chairman Payne asked for questions, there were none.

➤ Election Committee Appointments

Chairman Payne reported that the following Board members are appointed to the 2022 Elections Committee to meet in March to consider Board Officer nominations:

- Elaine Bremner, Chairman
- Kurt Greves, Vice Chairman
- Mel Ingwaldson, Chairman of Youth Council
- Craig Lefever, Chairman of One Stop Committee

Chairman Payne called for a **motion to approve the recommendations for the Elections Committee; so moved by Tony Gauthier, seconded by John Heiney. The motion carried unanimously.**

Chairman Payne concluded her report and turned the meeting over to Executive Director Teri Drew.

IV. Award Presentation

Ms. Drew announced that the Yavapai County Workforce Development Board was nominated to receive an award at the Governor's Workforce Arizona Council 2021 Workforce Leaders Convening, and the Board was awarded the Local Board Impact Award. Ms. Drew presented the award, noting that it was presented in recognition of making significant impacts in building the skills and abilities of Arizonans to meet the workforce needs of employers. Chairman Payne invited all the Board members to come forward for the presentation and a photo opportunity. A round of applause followed. Ms. Drew reported that there are 13 local workforce areas and Yavapai County was honored for the services performed during the pandemic, including a request from U.S. Congressman O'Halleran's office to serve all of Northern Arizona in Congressional District 1, serving 37,000 individuals in 2020 and 22,000 in 2021 because of the Board's leadership. She noted that the Board continued to meet during the pandemic, especially the Executive Committee, and she expressed her gratitude to everyone for their contributions to the Yavapai County Local Workforce Development Area. Positive comments followed regarding how nice it was to receive the award. Phil Tovrea asked for clarification

that the service to Congressman O'Halleran's District did not just include the NACOG four-county region, Ms. Drew confirmed.

V. Director's Report

➤ Program Update

Ms. Drew reported staff changes at the State level, including the Governor's Office of Economic Opportunities (OEO) Director and Manager, as well as the Workforce Arizona Council (WAC) Chair and several WAC members. Ms. Drew noted that transition is usual with a Governor election looming in 2022.

➤ One Stop Assessment

Ms. Drew provided an update on the status of the One Stop Assessment that was reported at the November 2021 meeting, reporting that all responses to the observations were submitted and a decision for satisfaction is pending and could be delayed with the staffing and leadership changes at OEO and the WAC. She was pleased to report that the Department of Economic Security is working to resolve the issue that was cited at the Prescott Valley affiliate site.

Ms. Drew noted that the State has released a timeline for local Boards to accomplish board-related tasks. Some of the major tasks upcoming is the 2-year modification to the Workforce Development Plan for 2022 and the Title I OSO and Youth Council Operator selections. Ms. Drew reported that the One Stop Committee and Youth Council are working on their portions of the Plan update, and staff are pulling updated data. Also pending are the performance negotiations for PY2022-23 for Title I, Board Certificate and revisions to the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and Infrastructure Funding Agreement (IFA). Ms. Drew noted that the MOU/IFA documents were just completed and approved in October, and her intention is to re-submit them to meet compliance. She applauded the success of the MOU/IFA, noting the difference between Yavapai County and other local areas is the development of the Board Budget and partner sharing of Board operations. Yavapai County is the only local workforce area with a Board budget.

Ms. Drew reported that the audits have been completed during the holiday season, noting three audits during the month of December; 1) NACOG Independent Audit (final NACOG report has not yet been received, 2) Yavapai County fiscal and OSO audit, and 3) DES fiscal monitoring. Ms. Drew reported no findings from either of the fiscal audits, and she complimented the NACOG Fiscal Manager Colleen Easton, the Finance Director Allison Priest and program staff for their team effort. The NACOG Independent Audit Report will be brought to the WDB when it is received.

Ms. Drew reported that the outreach marketing campaigns to Veterans, Dislocated Workers, Youth, metro and retirees are beginning to see results, particularly the outreach to returning retirees and Veterans. She noted a shift in employment as a result of the pandemic and "baby boomers" returning to the workforce. It appears that the trending demand of job seekers is for flexibility. Ms. Drew reported that Ruger is having a job fair at the NACOG office this afternoon and program staff were able to pull 75 resumes for Ruger ahead of the job fair. She also reported that Yavapai County Board of Supervisors Chairman Mary Mallory assisted in connecting Ms. Drew with Yavapai County Sheriff Rhodes for collaboration in filling jobs in law enforcement. She noted that for the first time in several years the Sheriff Department has 17 candidates enrolled in training at the academy. She spoke of the difficulty that law enforcement candidates sometimes face in personal investment for the required

equipment, and noted that Yavapai County pays for all required equipment for their candidates. Ms. Drew credited the Sheriff's office on their success.

Ms. Drew noted the Brookings Labor Market Report that demonstrated how the labor market is rebounding. The report noted a younger population returning to work, creating a more sustainable workforce over time.

Ms. Drew thanked Mr. Tovrea for signing a letter of support on behalf of the Board for the NACOG Build Back Better Regional Challenge grant application that was submitted in October. The focus of the application was for expanding the healthcare talent pipeline with a broadband expansion component. Ms. Drew reported that 529 applications were submitted for the highly competitive grant and 60 projects were selected. NACOG's project was not selected, however NACOG will move forward to seek out other funding opportunities. She congratulated the City of Tucson, the Greater Phoenix Economic Council (GPEC) and the Hopi Tribe for their successful grant applications. Ms. Drew noted that she will seek a partnership with GPEC for opportunities to participate in their healthcare industry workforce training focus. She paused for questions and comments. A question was asked about the size of the grant award – Ms. Drew replied the first phase is a \$500,000 planning grant and the second phase is for up to \$100 million.

Ms. Drew reported that the minimum wage in Arizona went up to \$12.80 per hour as of January 1, 2022. The average wage in Yavapai County currently is \$21.40 per hour. Fast food wages average \$16 per hour. Ms. Drew reported that Title I was working with the new Amazon Distribution Center, which advertised \$15 per hour as the starting wage. She noted that Cal Ranch is opening a distribution center in Prescott Valley also. John Heiney noted that it will be an additional location and will be housed in the Sam's Club building. Ms. Drew noted the economy is turning around with more job seekers in the area, and stressed the importance of employee retention as the bottom line in success. Discussion followed regarding wages and cost of living/housing challenges.

▼ **Strategic Plan Review**

Ms. Drew reported that the Yavapai County Workforce Development Board 2022 Strategic Plan was distributed to everyone ahead of the meeting, noting that this process began one year ago, but the consultant, Trevor Stokes has been ill and was not available to complete the process. She noted that the hope is that Mr. Stokes is well, first of all, and to move forward to finish the project. She thanked Executive Assistant Julia Sawyer for partnering with her to take the project on in December. Ms. Drew noted that the Strategic Planning Committee has reviewed and submitted comments.

The purpose of this Plan was for the Board to have a plan for moving forward, featuring the concept of Kaizen, or continuous improvement. Ms. Drew noted that this is a good reference for the Board and community, identifying a new Mission and Vision. This plan defines the Board's structure and successes, as well as Committee updates, mission, vision and goals.

Ms. Drew identified the contents of the Plan and the fact that Yavapai County is the only WDB in the State with a plan for their operations, separate from the State-required Workforce Development Plan. She spoke of other board information tools that are in the process of being crafted, which will include frequently asked questions to assist members in telling the story of the WDB. She paused for comments and questions. John Heiney noted well wishes for Mr. Stokes, and complimented the Plan in

spite of the interruptions, it looks very concise and a good one-year plan. Chairman Payne called for a **motion to approve the Yavapai County Workforce Development Board 2022 Strategic Plan; so moved by Phil Tovrea, seconded by John Heiney. The motion carried unanimously.** Ms. Drew thanked everyone for their support.

VI. Youth Council Report

Chairman Payne called for Mel Ingwaldson to bring the Youth Council report. Mr. Ingwaldson reported that the Youth Council will hold their first meeting of 2022 in February. He noted that the Council is planning their Scope of Work implementation as a plan of action for 2022. He noted the need for more members for the Youth Council, anticipating someone from the Sheriff Department as a potential new member candidate.

Mr. Ingwaldson noted that youth services numbers are down somewhat and he looks to report increases at the next meeting, as the Summer Youth programs will be starting up. Ms. Drew noted there are already calls coming in for the Summer Youth Employment Training program. She reported that a new Program Specialist at the EWD office, Lisa Luchtman, has already made a connection with her former employer, Department of Child Services (DCS), for youth services at NACOG as the young people age out of the DCS system, much like foster care. This will be a great new partnership in youth services. Mr. Ingwaldson concluded his report.

VII. One Stop Committee Report

Chairman Payne turned the meeting over to Craig Lefever to bring a report on behalf of the One Stop Committee. Mr. Lefever reported that the One Stop Committee met on December 21, 2021 to address their Scope of Work. They also discussed the pending MOU/IFA updates for 2022-24. Mr. Lefever reported that each of the core partners (Titles I – IV) would meet with their parent organizations to keep the momentum going from the recent collaborative approval of the MOU/IFA updates.

Mr. Lefever noted a significant One Stop Operator report that will be reviewed on today's agenda. He reported that all core partners are working on client recruitment, noting services are up and running. Ms. Drew noted that DES One Stop services in the Verde Valley resumed a few months ago, but most staff became ill and moved back into a remote work model temporarily. She noted that services are available. Mr. Lefever reported that Title II is experiencing an interest in services, but retaining clients is a challenge. Ms. Drew noted that Title I can provide a stipend for students in the classroom at \$12 per hour and suggested adding that discussion to the next One Stop Committee agenda. Discussion followed regarding possible reasons for poor retention in the Title II classroom. Mr. Lefever concluded his report.

VIII. One Stop Operator Update

Chairman Payne called on Leah Cickavage for the One Stop Committee report. Ms. Cickavage noted that the Quarter 2 report of Program Year (PY) 2021-22 was distributed prior to the meeting and available electronically. She noted steady gains during the October – December quarter for Title I. She attributed the recent marketing campaigns mentioned earlier by Ms. Drew as contributing to the increases in the majority of services provided. Ms. Cickavage noted Title I services in Cottonwood have also increased with negotiated agreements with DES for additional client flow. She also reported favorable satisfaction surveys, Business Assistance Center (BAC) increases, and decreases in COVID-19 Contact Tracing services.

Ms. Cickavage noted the report of Title II services for this quarter were not yet available for this report. Title III Prescott demonstrated a slight gain with the itinerant presence of DES representatives now at the Prescott office, and she expects these numbers to increase more as a result. For Title III services system-wide, Ms. Cickavage reported several decreases in services that are related to Unemployment Insurance Assistance, a positive outcome demonstrating individuals going back to work. Ms. Cickavage noted that the Title IV report actually demonstrated previous year data, no current information is available.

Ms. Cickavage concluded with a demonstration of top job trainings and placements by industry, noting the Healthcare industry leading the way, followed by CDL, Manufacturing and Administrative industries, respectively. She paused for questions, there were none. Chairman Payne thanked Ms. Cickavage and invited her to present the Eligible Training Providers List (ETPL) report.

IX. ETPL Updates

Ms. Cickavage noted that the ETPL updates were also provided ahead of the meeting electronically. There were 19 “pending subsequent approvals” for the ETPL, noting these are classes that will accept WIOA funding for trainings. These have previously been approved, and the state randomly selects programs for subsequent review for in-demand relevance to Yavapai County. She paused for questions, and it was reiterated by Mr. Lefever that these training courses had all previously received approval. Ms. Cickavage confirmed that they had. Chairman Payne called for a **motion and second to approve the ETPL as presented, so moved by Craig Lefever, seconded by Brenda Rhodes. The motion carried unanimously.**

X. One Stop Operator RFP Process Discussion

Chairman Payne turned the meeting over to guest presenter Gabe Loyola of Loyola Associates to speak about the upcoming One Stop Operator Request for Proposals (RFP) process. Mr. Loyola began by congratulating the Board for receiving the award for excellence from the Workforce Arizona Council. He complimented the Board for continually out-performing everyone, noting they should receive the award every year.

Mr. Loyola describe the WIOA requirement for the Board to go out again with an RFP for One Stop Operator (OSO), outlining the selection process for OSO for 2022. He described the role of the OSO to coordinate across one stop partners and service providers, as well as the potential duties of the OSO. Mr. Loyola briefly touched on the process to be utilized which includes the RFP process, proposal dates and deadlines, the pre-proposal conference, receipt of proposals, criteria for submittal of proposals that must be met, evaluation of proposals, evaluation factors, negotiation, best and final offer and finalizing the contract. The evaluation factors include:

1. Competence and Responsibility
2. Past Experience and Performance
3. Proposed Portions of Service Specifications
4. Program Staffing
5. Proposed Budget.

Mr. Loyola paused for questions. Phil Tovrea asked if anyone can apply or have they in the past. Mr. Loyola noted that applications have been received in the past and he anticipates some this time also.

No meetings have been held as of yet. Patrick Ramirez asked how transparent the deadlines are how they are made available with this RFP. Mr. Loyola responded that this process is totally transparent, with the RFP being issued both physically in print and electronically, submitted widely to the state and agencies, etc. Clear details are given with the package. Ms. Drew noted that today's discussion is to inform the public that the Board will be moving forward with this process. Mr. Loyola thanked Chairman Payne and the Board for the opportunity to work with them again as their RFP consultant. Chairman Payne expressed her appreciation for Mr. Loyola and his work for Yavapai County.

XI. Member Comments

Chairman Payne opened the floor for member comments; Mel Ingwaldson noted how nice it is to see everyone in person. Chairman Payne agreed, noting that 2022 is going to be a good year.

XII. Public Comments

Chairman Payne opened the floor for public comments. Mr. Loyola complimented the staff that work behind the scenes, and Teri Drew for her leadership of the Arizona Workforce Association. He noted that the WDB has a great team working for them at every level. Chairman Payne thanked him for the comments. She shared the positive experiences she has enjoyed with the Board.

Phil Tovrea commented that in his home town of Jerome several restaurants and businesses have had to either go out of business or reduce hours of operation because of the lack of workforce. He noted the same thing happening in other areas and businesses. Lengthy discussion followed regarding staffing options with ARIZONA@WORK. Ms. Drew related a story of a client who wanted a Commercial Driver's License certification so that she could make a difference in supply chain challenges. Further discussion followed regarding current workforce issues and trends.

Chairman Payne called for further comments from the public. Leah Cickavage commented that Executive Director Teri Drew recently celebrated 45 years employment at the Northern Arizona Council of Governments. A round of applause and congratulations followed. Ms. Drew expressed gratitude for the recognition.

XIII. Adjournment

Chairman Payne called for a **motion to adjourn; so moved by John Heiney, seconded by Kurt Wilkinson. The meeting adjourned at 11:30 AM.**