



SOUTHEASTERN ARIZONA

SOUTHEASTERN ARIZONA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

Minutes

Cochise College Downtown Center
2600 E. Wilcox Drive, Room A102
Sierra Vista, AZ 85635

Zoom Online Virtual Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/2259468635?pwd=ajZGStVHaHF2eURJNXFlcFVGWHBSUT09>

Meeting ID: 225 946 8635

Password: 1yGxxQ

Thursday, March 18, 2021

10:00 AM

Members Present

Ron Curtis
Kathleen Bullock
Doris Tolbert
Wick Lewis
Jack Bauer
Tony Boone
Jelensky Irons
Brad Dale
Elizabeth Kinder
Merritt Essig
Martha Lujan
Sam Curtis
Amanda Baillie (*Ex Officio*)

Members Absent

Matt Bolinger
Jason Bowling
Evonne Cummins
Edward Dummitt
Mark Gallego
Janice Lawhorn
Jacob Williams

Guests Present

Jim Mize
Coye Trujillo
Dr. Susan Wood
Mark Pollinger
Anita Baca

Staff Present

Vada Phelps
Vickie Simmons
Michelle Huff
Megan Hollingsworth

A. Call to Order

President Ron Curtis called to order the regular meeting of the ARIZONA@WORK Local Workforce Board at 10:00 AM on March 18, 2021 in person as well as on Zoom online website.

B. Roll Call

Megan Hollingsworth conducted roll call. The names of present and absent members, as well as guests and staff, are listed above. 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. Action Item: To Approve March 18, 2021 Agenda

Motion to Approve: Jack Bauer

Seconded: Doris Tolbert

Approved: Unanimously

D. Action Item: To Approve December 17, 2020 Minutes

Motion to Approve: Doris Tolbert

Seconded: Kathleen Bullock

Approved: Unanimously

E. Financial Report: 2021 Budget and Expenditures

Wick Lewis shared that he had assessed the report, and he asked why the expenditures on salary were 60% spent when we are not yet through 60% of the year. Michelle Huff explained that some recent additions to the staff had caused a shift that would even out by the end of the year. Ron Curtis also added that the Fiscal Year ends in June, meaning that 60% is about where the finances should be, at this point. Wick Lewis said that he was pleased with the rest of the report, and no other questions were posed.

F. Audit Report

Michelle Huff shared there were no new findings. There is still a finding from a few years ago that will drop off this year. A WIOA audit with the state was also conducted, and there were no findings in that audit. She shared that they do not anticipate any findings in the coming year. Ron Curtis and Vada Phelps congratulated Michelle and her staff on a job well done. Michelle also recognized Vickie’s staff and their hard work.

G. Appointment of Board Retreat Committee

The Board Retreat Committee will meet to evaluate where the Board has been and where they would like to go over the next year. The committee will be comprised of Ron Curtis, Amanda Baillie, Tony Boone, Kathleen Bullock, and Jason Bowling. Notification will be sent out when they meet, and all board members are welcome to attend.

H. One-Stop Operator Report

Presented by Jim Mize. In addition to his written report, he shared that the Vocational Rehabilitation Director for the State has been scheduled to speak on disability training on April 5, 2021, as well as on April 9, with the One Stop staff and some of the partners in the local area. No questions were posed.

I. Core Partner Reports

- One-Stop Employment and Training report presented by Vickie Simmons.

- She shared that they had just received the budget for the H-1B One Workforce Grant. The portion awarded to Cochise, Greenlee, and Graham, as well as Pima and Santa Cruz Counties, is \$1,493,000. They are expected to serve 174 participants over the next 4 years. At this time, they are still waiting on a contract. She also shared that they have begun working with the police academy that is housed at Cochise College in Douglas. They have enrolled 6 participants this semester, and it was well received by the police department. She also added that the Life in Cochise magazine featured a story about a young man, that started his own cyber security firm, that was a part of the Youth Career Connect Grant and went on to be in the WIOA Program.
 - Vickie spoke to the fact that most people coming to the job centers are not looking for work, but rather filing for unemployment. There are many jobs available, but they cannot seem to find applicants. Amanda Baillie asked if the people filing for unemployment are coming from any particular sectors, such as retail, restaurants, or hospitality. Vickie responded that overall, the State and Federal unemployment money amounts to roughly \$14 per hour. Despite their promptings to job search, most people would rather not.
 - Ron Curtis asked if DES is working in the offices again. Vickie stated that they are and have been a great help.
 - Vickie shared that they had also undergone a Monitoring Review. From the programmatic side there were five findings, but they were due to the fact that the State and DOL have decided that training items must now be classified as supportive services, rather than training. Vada added that it wasn't a matter of a funding problem, but rather the classifications that were being used for costs.
- Rehabilitation Services report presented by Elizabeth Kinder.
 - She reported that new staff has been hired in both Douglas and Sierra Vista. They are getting people placed in jobs, and it looks like the numbers will be line with the numbers from last year. They have been given the opportunity to participate in a pilot program called Job Readiness Training. This program will help higher functioning clients in their job seeking processes. They are currently in the phase of learning that curriculum. In addition to the pilot, they are currently working on a new approach with Buena High School. Through this they will be working on specialized programs for those that are 14-22 years old.
 - Employment Services report presented by Jelensky Irons.
 - She shared that the Employment Services members are still working virtually. They have met with Eric Grisham, Vickie Simmons, and others to outline some helpful tips and guides for future job fairs. They are working to make virtual job fairs as successful as possible, in their efforts to keep people safe.
 - Adult Education report presented by Brad Dale.
 - In addition to his written report, he shared that the nine foreign soldiers/translators that they were providing instruction for were supposed to

be taking part in a seven-week course, but it had to be cut short due to the soldiers receiving new orders. Despite that, six of the soldiers made measurable skill gains in either reading or math. He also shared that they are using the Arizona Career Readiness Credential (ACRC) curriculum for students in the HSE-Plus program. ACRC curriculum is extremely workforce related. For example, it teaches math in the workplace and reading/language in the workplace. They are also in the process of creating two Integrated Employability Training (IET) programs in Allied Health and HVAC. They are in conversations with BrightStar Care to potentially provide on-the-job training.

- Wick Lewis asked if they have found an IET partner for HVAC. Brad responded that it is a partnership they are still working on obtaining.

J. Executive Director's Report

Executive Director, Vada Phelps, shared that there is a new Conflict of Interest policy that needs to be signed by all board members. The previous policy was lacking statues that are now required by the State, as well as certification regarding to Lobbying, Debarment, and a confidentiality statement.

She also shared with the Board that our area was part of a grant team that applied for two different Federal grants. One of those was the H-1B Grant, and the other one was a Cyber Security Grant. The Cyber Security Grant was not funded. As mentioned in Vickie's report, they have been awarded money through the H-1B Grant.

K. President's Report

Board President, Ron Curtis, gave an update on efforts that had been made toward making broadband available to residents in rural areas. He shared that broadband is moving forward and receiving funding in three areas, none of them being the areas represented by the Board. He told the Board that he believes they would see the most success if they all band together to try and get broadband to their rural areas, rather than trying to work city by city. Tony Boone added that if you can provide the plans, there are grants and funds to make those plans a reality.

Ron Curtis also noted that the Office of Budget and Management is looking to change the Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) from a community of 50,000 to a community of 100,000. This cuts places like Sierra Vista out of access to federal funds that are available to larger cities. Tony Boone added that, across the country, this would impact 144 towns and cities because they don't meet the 100,000 person threshold.

The Board also discussed ways that they might be able to help curb the employment struggles that many businesses are facing, at this time.

Ron Curtis expressed his appreciation to the Board and the ARIZONA@WORK staff.

L. Next Meeting

Annual Board Retreat
June 17-18, 2021
Location TBD

M. Adjourn

President Ron Curtis adjourned the meeting at 11:30 AM.

ARIZONA@WORK is an Equal Opportunity employer/program.

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

Report Submitted by: *Megan Hollingsworth*