

Northeast Tennessee Local Workforce Development Board
Thursday, January 21, 2021
Zoom Meeting
MINUTES

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Amanda Boyer	Daronda Patterson	James Osborne	Lynn Tully
Bethany Bullock	Dean Blevins	Jeff Frazier	Martin Frye
Bob Cantler	Debbie Fillers	Jonathan Van Bremen	Sandra Ray
Brian Decker	Gabrielle Buchanan	Krystal Holder	Tim Jaynes
Brian Wilhoit	Hamblin Wilson	Lottie Ryans	

PROXY VOTES:

None

LEO'S PRESENT:

Patty Woodby, Carter County Mayor	Mike Taylor, Johnson County Mayor
Jim Lee, Hawkins County Mayor	Joe Grandy, Washington County Mayor

GUESTS PRESENT:

Brian Vaughn	Tyra Copas	Dana Wilds	Brandi Christian
Nathan Woods	Bo Shadden	Jerry Leger	Amelia Osborne
Lisa Johnson	Heath McMillian	Jenny Lockmiller	Brandon Harold

BOARD STAFF PRESENT:

Kathy Pierce	Lisa Evans	Greg James
April Shaffner	Tammy Sluder	

Note: Before the meeting, all Northeast Tennessee Local Workforce Development Board (NETLWDB) Members receive an electronic packet, by email, of all documents reviewed during this meeting.

Welcome – James Osborne, Chair & Kathy Pierce, Executive Director

James Osborne, as Chair, opened the meeting and welcomed everyone to the Zoom Meeting of the Northeast Tennessee Local Workforce Development Board (NETLWDB). James thanked everyone for taking time out of their busy schedules to participate on the Board and helping our area in workforce growth. James asked for the invocation.

- **Invocation** - Lottie Ryans provided the invocation.

Kathy welcomed everyone to the meeting and completed a roll call of NETLWDB Members, LEOs, guests, and staff. Kathy reported a quorum of NETLWDB members present.

Voting Protocol – Kathy Pierce

James asked Kathy to review the guidance received from the Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development (TDLWD) for the new General Consent Voting Protocol used by the State for virtual meetings. Kathy stated we would like to propose to use the General Consent Voting Protocol consisting of the following:

1. Ask for a motion and a second on an item presented to the Board,
2. A call for questions/discussion,
3. A vote of nays/objection/opposition is asked for,

4. If none are received, all members in attendance are then considered as yeas/unanimous/consenting to the vote,
5. Also, a member may abstain from the vote,
6. The motion is considered as carried/passed if those voting as nay/opposed, and those who abstained from the vote are less than the remaining members considered as yeas/consenting.

James called for a motion to accept the General Consent Voting Protocol as presented.

MOTION – Motion made by Bob Cantler, to accept the General Consent Voting Protocol. Second by Brian Wilhoit. Questions were called for, there were none. Objections were called for, there were none. Motion passed.

Eagle Stories

James explained what Eagle Stories consist of and stated he would like to start with a story about J.A. Street having training programs in process even before he started with the company and realized there was an opportunity to expand on that training with an apprenticeship training program. He contacted Cindy Necessary, RCAM, and other RCAM Staff, Heath McMillian, Jo Starling, and Christy Parks, and Tyra Copas, TDLWD. James stated he is happy to report that J.A. Street will have apprenticeship programs in Carpentry and Metal Buildings.

Brian Decker, TDLWD, gave kudos to the staff working in the American Job Centers (AJCs) during these difficult times and they are rising to the occasion and getting things done. The State has purchased licenses from Premier Virtual to offer a new Virtual Job Fair platform. There will be a second virtual job fair today focusing on businesses in the manufacturing industry. Companies should reach out to their local AJC if they are interested in having a virtual job fair.

Bethany Bullock, NeSCC, noted that Northeast State has submitted to the State to become a COVID 19 vaccination distribution site. With approval at beginning of March the Blountville, downtown Kingsport, and downtown Johnson City campuses will become a vaccine distribution site in conjunction with the Sullivan County Department of Health. Northeast State Community College decided to apply to be a distribution site upon the discovery that the vials of vaccine have more than one dose and have a short time to be administered once prepared for use. This would help to use the remaining prepared vials to be used with the vaccination of staff, faculty, and students who might be around at the end of the day at these campus locations. The Carter County Health Department has set up a similar distribution center behind the NeSCC campus. NeSCC plans to be back on the ground by fall and is at 30% on the ground now. They are proud to be part of the region and able to help with the COVID vaccination process.

Approval of Minutes – January 21, 2021 – Vote Required

James Osborne called for a motion to accept the Minutes of the NETLWDB January 21, 2021 meeting as distributed to NETLWDB members before the meeting.

MOTION – Lottie Ryans made a motion to approve the Minutes of the January 21, 2021 Board Meeting. Second by Brian Decker. Questions were called for, there were none. Objections were called for, there were none. Motion passed.

OSO Report/NETLWDA Scorecard – Dana Wilds

Dana Wilds reviewed the Northeast TN Local Workforce Development Area (NETLWDA) Report Card of statistical information from partners in the American Job Center. AJCs are still providing services as virtual or on the phone. Job seekers and employers can connect through the Virtual Job Fair with resumes, interviews, etc. Tomorrow there will be a statewide event hosted by the TDLWD and the TN Department of Corrections, they will host a Second Chance hiring event for justice-involved individuals. The State's Virtual American Job Center was rolled out at the end of December and is being offered to help individuals with a self-service model to help connect them with opportunities available at the AJCs,

who they can reach out to for these opportunities, schedule meetings at the local AJC, provide assistance tickets, to provide follow-ups, to assist in a virtual world, and to offer services in the best way possible.

Operations Committee Report – Kathy Pierce – Vote Required

The Operations Committee submitted the following policies for approval by the Board: Adult Priority of Services, Data Validation, Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL), Grievance Complaint Resolution, Monitoring, Pre-Apprenticeship, and Support Services. Kathy reported on the seven policies presented and approved by the Operations Committee. These policies were included in the electronic packet. Kathy asked for a motion from an Operations Committee member who attended the meeting.

MOTION – Motion made by Brian Decker on behalf of the Operations Committee to approve the above listed seven policies as presented. No second is required from a standing committee of the NETLWDB. James called for questions, there were none. Objections were called for, there were none. Motion passed.

Youth Committee Report – Gabrielle Buchanan – Vote Required

The Youth Committee submitted the following policies for approval by the Board: Youth Program Services Design & Framework, and Youth Services-Eligibility. Gabrielle reported on the two policies presented and approved by the Youth Committee. These policies were included in the electronic packet.

MOTION – Motion made by Gabrielle Buchanan on behalf of the Youth Committee to approve the above Youth Services-Eligibility Policy as presented. No second is required from a standing committee of the NETLWDB. Discussion was called for, there was none. Objections were called for, there were none. Motion passed.

MOTION – Motion made by Gabrielle Buchanan on behalf of the Youth Committee to approve the above Youth Program Services Design & Framework Policy as presented. No second is required from a standing committee of the NETLWDB. Discussion was called for, there was none. Objections were called for, there were none. Motion passed.

AJC Relocation – Kathy Pierce

Kathy gave a brief review of the relocations of the Rogersville and Erwin AJCs. The new Rogersville AJC will be located at 107 East Main Street and is scheduled to be open for services by 2/1/2021. The new Erwin AJC will be located in the former Unicoi County Hospital at 631 Sinasta Drive, Suite 6, and is scheduled to be open for services by 2/15/2021. These two new locations have been reviewed for ADA compliance and any issues found will be corrected by the scheduled opening dates of each AJC.

Monitoring & Data Validation – Kathy Pierce

- **State Monitoring Process** – Kathy mentioned the Board has just approved new Monitoring and Data Validation Policies. These two new policies are due to changes in the process and timing the State has made in their new policies for monitoring and data validation processes. The State has included a fiscal review process in the monitoring of our subrecipients. She discussed how these changes will affect how AB&T Staff will monitor our subrecipients and how we will monitor our progress for fiscal monitoring, board roster, providing minutes of all board meetings, etc. AB&T will also do a local quarterly data validation of participant files. The State will send a 5% list of participant files including both active and exited participant files to complete data validation on each quarter. Monitoring & Data Validation is required each quarter and reports are due to the State by the 25th of the month following the quarter. We are being vigorously reviewed by the State on all we do.
- **AB&T Monitoring Report** – Kathy reviewed the monitoring process and reviews from the First Quarter (July-September) conducted by AB&T Staff. AB&T reviewed ETSU as the Career Services Provider in the AJCs and First Tennessee Human Resources Agency (FTHRA) as the Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) provider. James asked for a vote of the Board

to accept the Monitoring Report as presented.

MOTION – Motion made by Daronda Patterson, to accept the Monitoring Report as presented. Second by Martin Frye. Questions were called for, there were none. Objections were called for, there were none. Motion passed.

CARES Act Update – Lisa Evans

Lisa Evans gave a report of the CARES Act Grant for the Reemployment and Incumbent Worker Training parts of the grant.

- Reemployment Grant – Funds were required to be spent by December 31, 2020. We have approximately \$46,000 left in the grant and the State is considering extending the end date to April 30, 2021. TCAT has training on the report that could be completed by the April 30, 2021 deadline. This grant was received a few days before Thanksgiving and with the holiday schedules, it was difficult to spend the funds by the December 31, 2020 deadline.
- Incumbent Worker Training Grant – There will be funds not spent in this grant due to companies not being able to complete their training by the December 31, 2020 deadline. Some companies may be able to complete their training if the State extends the grant deadline to April 30, 2021. For companies not able to use the funds with a new end date, we will use the funds for currently approved companies needing additional funds or try to find other companies who would use the funds.

NDWG Report – April Shaffner

April Shaffner reported on the National Dislocated Worker Grant (NDWG) Overview board members received in the electronic packet of documents. Our career services sub-recipient, East Tennessee State University (ETSU), is working with Eastman to enroll about 12-13 on-the-job training (OJT) participants over the next six to eight weeks and we may have the opportunity to increase that number as the year goes on. A lot of those participants could be individuals laid-off from Domtar.

Kathy noted the receipt of a second NDWG funding opportunity from the State. These funds will be added to our current NDWG Contract and will be rolled out for additional training opportunities. Our current NDWG was approximately \$367,171.09, we received an additional \$541,342.01 for a new total of \$908,513.10. The total grant was \$1,009,000.00 but the State withheld 10% of the funds to serve dislocated worker participants. The mission of the grant is to serve dislocated workers and the bulk of those funds will be contracted to ETSU, as the career services provider. Additional detailed information will be provided as we move forward through that process.

Bethany Bullock, NeSCC, asked how she and Dean Blevins, TCAT Elizabethton, might have for training and opportunities for partnership that they might be able to leverage with ETSU. Kathy explained these funds were primarily dedicated to immediate work types of activities. There is not, at this time, a funding category to offer the Individual Training Accounts (ITA) we would normally do through the TBR or other institutions. The grant is primarily for activities such as OJT and specialized work-based learning opportunities. Kathy stated we can certainly think about how we might collaborate but at the moment we don't have an opportunity to modify that grant. It is a federal grant being passed through the State and down to us so we don't have as much flexibility in that as we have had in grants past. With a new administration, that could change as guidance around what those dollars can be spent for could potentially change but at the moment not that we can see. Bethany stated, she, Debbie Fillers, Adult Education, and Heath McMillian, RCAM, have been working with Domtar and the dislocated workers there and wanted to make sure there was no duplication of effort, to fall in line where they are needed, and to serve where they are needed. Kathy stated there might be some opportunities for some referral process if there are individuals from Domtar who meet the grant eligibility requirements. The grant is not only for Domtar, it is open to any company, employee, or employer who qualifies through the dislocated worker program eligibility.

Rapid Response Report – April Shaffner

April Shaffner reported on the Rapid Response Report board members received in the electronic packet of documents. The Summary of the activities starting July 1, 2020, specifically with WARN activity. In March when COVID hit we were overwhelmed with WARN notices and other company shutdowns, then beginning in August it went silent. We are currently working with a couple of companies who have a planned shutdown and will be working with them on a staggered lay-off process.

We are currently responding to the emergency shutdown of Hexpol, Jonesborough. Today, the full Rapid Response Team will meet with approximately 70 Hexpol employees to be laid off. There has been a huge reach-out opportunity from local manufacturers offering job opportunities to those affected in the Hexpol layoff. An early February job fair is planned for the affected employees.

Kathy offered that this is certainly an Eagle Story – The community came together for Hexpol and that there is a face-to-face meeting scheduled today with the Hexpol employees.

Mayor Grandy noted the good job April Shaffner and Brian Decker did with Hexpol. How beneficial the early contact with Hexpol HR staff has been. The company has been very pleased with the help they received from the Rapid Response Team.

Kathy offered a thank you to Lisa Evans for the good work she has done for the CARES Act and to April Shaffner for the good work she has done with the NDWG and the Rapid Response Team. There are Eagle Stories all around.

James thanked Kathy and her team.

Other Business/Adjourn

James asked for other business -

- Kathy noted that we are required to collaborate with all of the partners in the workforce system to develop Key Performance Indicators (KPI) that identify targets of the numbers of individuals that each program has to serve in the Northeast area. We are in the process of putting that data together and will bring the information to the Board once the targets are finalized. The State recognizes that we are at a disadvantage in terms of serving large numbers of individuals due to COVID but there are jobs that need to be filled. We will be presenting more detailed information about KPIs to the Board at future meetings.
- We are in the middle of a mid-year review of our work we are doing with ETSU in terms of enrollment and expenditures and will be prepared for a more detailed discussion of where we stand with our budget at our next board meeting.
- Kathy stated that the Program Accountability Review (PAR) Monitoring Team from the State will be in the office next week, January 26-28, 2021, going through all of our records. The work that this group does through the work that you help us do is evaluated from multiple entry points from funding, file maintenance, and making sure we are doing what you tell us to do.
- AJCs are continuing to work under Governor Lee's Executive Order #70 and will continue to maintain ongoing caution. The Executive Committee approved the AJCs to work through virtual means primarily and when needed by appointment only for the duration of this order.
- **Next Meeting – Thursday, April 15, 2021 (Virtual Meeting)**
- **Adjourn** – James Osborne thanked everyone for taking the time to attend the meeting and helping our region with its workforce. Kathy thanked everyone for participating.