

**Business and Industry Committee**

**November 4, 2020**

**SUMMARY MINUTES**

The meeting was called to order at 4:01 p.m.

ROLL CALL: PRESENT - Fely Guzman, Tommy Nellon (4:03 p.m.), Joe Olivares, Michael Silveira (4:03 p.m.), and Lydia Zabrycki

ABSENT - Scott Miller

AGENDA CHANGES: Blake Konczal, Executive Director, Fresno Regional Workforce Development Board (FRWDB), requested that Item 6B be added to the agenda.

ABSTENTIONS/RECUSALS/

DISCLOSURES OF

POTENTIAL CONFLICTS OF

INTEREST: None

STAFF/CHAIR COMMENTS: Erik Cherkaski, Business Services Manager, FRWDB, and Martha Espinosa, Business Services Coordinator, FRWDB, provided information in response to a question Director Silveira had asked at the August 5, 2020, Business and Industry Committee (B & I) meeting regarding childcare and virtual school resources for working parents during COVID-19.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: None

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| **Item** | **Description/Action Taken** |
| **1.** | **August 5, 2020, Business and Industry Committee Meeting Minutes** |
|  | Chair Zabrycki presented the August 5, 2020, B & I meeting minutes for correction and/or approval. |
|  | **OLIVARES/GUZMAN – APPROVED THE AUGUST 5, 2020, BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES. VOTE: YES - 5; NO - 0 (UNANIMOUS).** |
| **2.** | **Remembering Director Richard Keyes** |
|  | Mr. Konczal informed the B & I that FRWDB Director, Richard “Dick” Keyes, passed away September 27, 2020. Mr. Konczal, Chair Zabrycki and Director Hensley each gave a moving testimony of their experiences and their time knowing Director Keyes.  This was an information item. |
| **3.** | **Human Resources – COVID-19 Support** |
|  | Mr. Cherkaski introduced Brenda Budke, Executive Director of Sierra HR Partners, who reviewed COVID regulations’ newest changes and some of the HR issues she has seen on the business side related to COVID. She also explained the modified definition of exposure.  This was an information item. |
| **4.** | **Creek Fire-Resource Support** |
|  | Veronica McAlister, Business Services Coordinator, FRWDB, provided the B & I with an overview of the FRWDB staff actions during the Creek Fire.  Ms. McAlister explained that due to the initial lack of a Presidential Declaration for the Creek Fire, there were limited federal services that could be provided to individuals and businesses impacted. Once a disaster declaration was official, additional federal support from the Small Business Association (SBA) and Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) would be made available. FRWDB Rapid Response Coordinator, Martha Espinosa, developed an online Creek Fire resources assistance webinar, with the Red Cross and AAA Insurance, which was conducted on September 25th, and has been viewed over 1700 times on Facebook. Additionally, FRWDB staff participated at the Local Assistance Center (LAC), hosted by the Department of Social Services in partnership with California Office of Emergency Services, to connect individuals impacted to available support and resources.  On October 16, 2020, President Trump approved California’s Disaster Declaration for Fresno County, clearing the way for FEMA and the SBA to step in and begin assisting all those affected by the fire.  Mr. Konczal informed the B & I that Director Michael Cross of the NORTEC Workforce Investment Board provided information on how they were able to obtain a more accurate picture of the total number of businesses impacted, not just the store fronts, but those that ran their business out of their homes in the mountain area.  Chair Zabrycki inquired as to how local businesses find out about the additional FEMA funding. Ms. McAlister responded that individuals are eligible to apply for FEMA funds, but that the SBA can offer assistance to the businesses, once the declaration has been made.  This was an information item. |
| **5.** | **Rapid Response-Worker Adjustment and Retraining**  **Notification Act Notice** |
|  | Ms. Espinosa reported on Rapid Response services provided in the First Quarter of Program Year (PY) 2020-2021. During the First Quarter and with the COVID shutdown, the Rapid Response Team contacted 29 companies that were either downsizing or closing, and hosted 21 virtual orientations, in which 147 employees and business owners attended.  Director Silveira inquired about the static Unemployment Insurance (UI) numbers for the last few months. Ms. Espinosa explained that some businesses have struggled to bring back employees due to no childcare, the additional $600 in UI benefits per week ending, and fear of being infected. She stated that with the additional UI benefits ending, staff is seeing more people return to work.  The FRWDB Rapid Response team, in partnership with the City of Fresno, has a Virtual Job Fair planned for November 18, 2020. This continues the Virtual Job Fair Series for the Fresno area.  This was an information item. |
| **6.** | **Business Recognition Quarterly Awards - Adult / Youth** |
|  | Mr. Cherkaski presented a video that revealed the Outstanding Business Achievement Award winners for the Second Quarter of 2020: Westside Auto Dismantlers for adult employment and AC Market in Orange Cove for youth employment.  This was an information item. |
| **6B.** | **Ratification of New Business and Industry Committee Member** |
|  | Mr. Konczal reported that Sherry Neil, Chief Operating Officer, Fresno Economic Development Corporation (EDC) was appointed to the FRWDB by the Fresno City Council and the Fresno County Board of Supervisors. Director Neil has expressed an interest in joining the B & I Committee. |
|  | **RECOMMEND THAT THE FRWDB RATIFY SHERRY NEIL TO THE BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY COMMITTEE.**  **VOTE: YES: 5; NO: 0 (UNANIMOUS).** |
| **7.** | **Agenda Items for February 3, 2021, Meeting** |
|  | Chair Zabrycki reminded the B & I that if they have any items to be added to the agenda for the February 3, 2021, meeting, to send those items to FRWDB staff at least two (2) weeks before the meeting. |
| **8.** | **Meeting Feedback** |
|  | Mr. Konczal commended FRWDB staff for how far they have come since the FRWDB’s first tele-conference meeting He also asked the B & I if there were any ways members think that the meetings could be improved. |

The meeting was adjourned at 5:11 p.m.