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### Workforce Development Board

**December 6, 2023 @ 4:00 p.m.**

###### SUMMARY MINUTES

The meeting was called to order at 4:02 p.m.

ROLL CALL: PRESENT – Stephen Avila, Shayn Anderson, Edgar Blunt, Alysia Bonner (arrived at 4:27 p.m.), Rodney Branch, Douglas Dart, Carole Goldsmith, Jeff Hensley, Mike Karbassi, Kurt Madden, Wyatt Meadows, Terry Metters, Jr., Scott Miller (arrived at 4:17 p.m.), Dennis Montalbano, Alisha Morgan, Joe Olivares, Chuck Riojas (arrived at 4:10 p.m.), Vasili Sotiropulos, Sandra Vicente, Lydia Zabrycki (arrived at 4:08 p.m.), Chris Zeitz, and Legal Counsel Ken Price.

ABSENT – Lacy Barnes, Sal Quintero, and Shelly Tarver.

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| COMMENTS BY FRWDB CHAIR AND/OR EXECUTIVE STAFF: | None |
| AGENDA CHANGES  REMOVAL OF ITEMS OR  EMERGENCY ADDITIONS: | None |
| ABSTENTIONS/ DISCLOSURES OF  POTENTIAL CONFLICTS  OF INTEREST/RECUSALS: | Director Zeitz – Item A1 |
| PUBLIC COMMENTS: | None |

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| Item | Description/Action Taken |
| 6. | Committee Reports |
|  | Executive Committee: Chair Montalbano shared that the Executive Committee (Committee) met on October 18th, when they reviewed and accepted the August 2023 Financial Report and Agency Budget and Expenditures Report. The Committee approved funding award allocations for several grants the Fresno Regional Workforce Development Board (FRWDB) received: Department of Health and Human Services’ Fatherhood grant, English Language Learner Integrated Education and Training grant, the Regional Equity and Recovery Partnerships grant, the Equal Representation in Construction Apprentice grant, and the Bitwise Rapid Response Additional Assistance grant. The Committee was informed that the FRWDB would be procuring for Business Services, as those services were no longer provided in-house by FRWDB staff. The Committee had a brief discussion about the highlights from their retreat that was held in October 2023. Director Zabrycki arrived (4:08 p.m.) Blake Konczal, Executive Director, FRWDB, provided the Committee with the Director’s Quarterly Update, which highlighted the areas in which Mr. Konczal focused on during the previous quarter. Some of those areas included the opening of the East Shaw Dislocated Worker job center, the job fair at City Hall for former Bitwise employees, and a press event to announce the Additional Assistance grant FRWDB received to assist the former Bitwise employees. Director Riojas arrived (4:10 p.m.) |
|  | Skills Development Council: Director Zabrycki shared that the Skills Development Council (Council) held their first meeting on November 1st. At that time, they recommended the ratification of five (5) new members to the Council. Mr. Konczal explained that the Skills Development Council used to be the Business and Industry Committee, and that the new Council would focus on how the FRWDB is directing its training money toward different types of training. Ms. Zabrycki stated that the Council received overviews on the following topics: Individual Training Accounts, Special Grants training, training available for FRWDB and provider staff, online training for staff through Knowledge City, and conversational Spanish Language training for staff.  Youth Council: Director Sotiropulos shared that the Youth Council met on November 16th; however, they did not have a quorum, so only information items were reviewed. There was a Youth Provider Spotlight, when Joseph Oaxaca from Equus Workforce Solutions provided an overview of his organization, including the four (4) programs they oversee for the FRWDB: Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) services for Youth in the Urban West sector of Fresno County, the Fatherhood program, Young Offenders program, and the Youth Job Corps.  Director Miller arrived (4:17 p.m.)  The Youth Council saw videos highlighting the Second Quarter Achievement Award winners for Youth Participant and Youth Business. The Youth Council reviewed the Fourth Quarter of Program Year (PY) 2022-2023 and the First Quarter of PY 2023-2024 Youth Demographics reports.  Chair Montalbano stated how extremely important it was to have a quorum to be able to approve items. Mr. Konczal added that FRWDB staff would not proceed with a scheduled meeting if they knew ahead of time that there would not be a quorum.  This was an information item. |
| 7. | Board Member Spotlight |
|  | Director Shayn Anderson, Department of Rehabilitation (DOR), shared about his personal story of overcoming discrimination to becoming Regional Director for the DOR’s San Joaquin Valley District. He has been with DOR for 30 years. He shared that his District goes from Lodi to Bakersfield and all points East and West, and covers a total of 46,172 square miles. The DOR administers the largest vocational rehabilitation and independent living programs in the country, and provides services to help people with disabilities go to work, become self-sufficient and become independent. They also help educate others about disabilities.  Director Anderson serves on the Mother Lode Job Training Workforce Development Board in addition to the FRWDB. He stated that he chose the FRWDB because of its innovation and he wanted to be part of that. He shared that he has actually implemented some things from the FRWDB’s Scholarship Panel process at the DOR. He chose to serve on the FRWDB’s Youth Council, as working with youth has been a passion of his for many years.  Director Bonner arrived (4:27 p.m.)  Director Anderson shared that he looked forward to the future and working on the FRWDB.  This was an information item. |
| 8. | In the Community – Marketing Update |
|  | Martha Espinosa, Marketing and Grants Manager, FRWDB, provided highlights of recent marketing activities and events, but began her update by reporting that the FRWDB had received notice that it received a Student Training and Employment Program (STEPs) grant in the amount of $745,000. With the grant, the FRWDB would serve youth with disabilities to assist them with career exploration, job preparation, and provide valuable work experience. Ms. Espinosa stated that the FRWDB continued its marketing efforts with paid radio spots on B95 and LaPreciosa, ensuring that information is being shared in both English and Spanish; by hosting various outreach events; by attending others’ community events to engage with the public; and by actively utilizing social media (Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn, and Facebook).  Ms. Espinosa shared that in the past few months, work had been done on creating a participant flow and orientation video, which features Provider staff who actually assist participants with the different steps when they first come into a FRWDB One-Stop, such as orientation, eligibility, and career exploration. The video will help Directors understand the process participants go through. A professional videographer is working on the project.  In October 2023, FRWDB staff celebrated the retirement of Stephen DeWitt, who was with the FRWDB for 21 years. Staff celebrated by throwing a NASCAR-themed party and contributed towards a NASCAR race weekend for Mr. DeWitt and his wife. Ms. Espinosa stated that it was important to celebrate and recognize those who have given so much to the organization.  The Valley Build Graduation was held on November 17th during National Apprenticeship Week. To take advantage of the time that apprenticeships are highlighted nationwide, FRWDB worked with the Building Trades Councils and affiliates to host a Valley Build Construction Trade Expo on the afternoon of the graduation. The Expo was held at the Fresno Fair Grounds. Honored attendees included City of Fresno Mayor Jerry Dyer, Assembly Member Jim Patterson, Fresno Unified Trustee Elizabeth Jonasson, Congressman Jim Costa, and State Building Trades President, Chris Hannon. Ms. Espinosa reported that there was a focus on reaching high schoolers with this event and over 200 high school students were in attendance.  Upcoming events include: Forestry Graduation Ceremony on Friday, December 8th; Forestry Graduation Ceremony for the first Forestry Cohort at Columbia College on December 14th; Meet & Greet for former Bitwise employees on December 12th; Leap Into a New Career Job Fair on February 29th at The Ramada Inn on Shaw & 41; the FRWDB Annual Achievement Awards breakfast on April 17th at Fresno Fields by Wedgewood; and Govaganza Job Fair at Chukchansi Park in May. Ms. Espinosa invited all Directors to attend these events.  Ms. Espinosa concluded her update by presenting FRWDB Directors with a holiday gift and thanked them for all the time and effort they give to the FRWDB.  This was an information item. |
| **9.** | **Approval of the September 13, 2023, Special Meeting Minutes** |
|  | **RIOJAS/BONNER – APPROVED THE SEPTEMBER 13, 2023, SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES. (UNANIMOUS)** |
| **10.** | **October 2023 Financial Report** |
|  | Mr. Konczal presented the October 2023 Financial Report for the FRWDB’s acceptance. He reviewed the grants that were highlighted in the agenda item, including the City of Fresno Job Corps grant, for which the FRWDB received an increase in funds. Director Bonner asked if the increase will end on |
|  | the contract end date of May 31, 2024. Mr. Konczal indicated that he thought it would, but that the City of Fresno views this as a program that will continue, so there was a good possibility that the FRWDB’s contract end date would be amended, as the work with clients continues.  Director Olivares thanked FRWDB staff for providing more information in the agenda item for each of the grants. Mr. Konczal stated that FRWDB staff does listen to the comments and questions by Directors and always tries to improve on the way items are presented so they are more easily understood.  **KARBASSI/BONNER – ACCEPTED THE OCTOBER 2023 FINANCIAL REPORT. (UNANIMOUS)** |
| **11.** | **Government Update** |
|  | Diane Jensen, Government Relations Coordinator, FRWDB, provided an update of some the of the legislation she had been tracking, and some upcoming events.  Legislation at the federal level FRWDB staff is watching:  HR 5852, 20th Century Skills Act: This bill is to amend the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) to provide training skills linked to employment demand through skills training grants. Currently it is in the House Committee on Education and Workforce. Director Anderson asked if there was any fiscal impact with this bill. Mr. Konczal explained that every Local Workforce Area receives training funds included in their formula budget. The 21st Century Act talks about creating a separate Workforce Training fund, and while additional funds for training is good, there is some concern amongst Workforce Development Board colleagues that after the first year, the training funds included in the formula budget may be questioned why it is there, since there would now be a separate training fund.  Fiscal Year 2024 Appropriation: Congress passed a short-term extension of federal Fiscal Year 2023 funding levels just before the Thanksgiving holiday. The House has recommended large cuts to WIOA funding for Adult and Youth programs, but these cuts more than likely will not be approved.  WIOA Authorization**:** WIOA was passed in 2014 and was supposed to be formally reauthorized in 2019; however, it has been re-authorized for one (1) year only through this year. Currently, there is a bi-partisan effort to make some changes to WIOA before it is reauthorized and it should be out of Committee in early January. Ms. Jensen will bring back updated information as it becomes available.  New Laws in California include expanded Paid Sick Leave, effective January 1, 2024; Reproductive Loss Leave, in the event of a catastrophic event during pregnancy; and two (2) bills related to off-duty cannabis use and drug testing. Going into effect June 1, 2024, is an increase in minimum wage for fast food workers and health care workers.  Ms. Jensen stated that in 2022, the FRWDB started its City Council Tour to share information about the FRWDB and the services it provides so that constituents could be referred to the FRWDB, should a need arise. In 2023, FRWDB has visited the City Councils of Mendota, San Joaquin, Kerman, and Selma. In 2024, the City Council tour will be completed and the FRWDB team will then begin its visits to the school boards in Fresno County.  Ms. Jensen shared that in March 2024, the FRWDB will attend the One Voice trip to Washington, DC. The last One Voice trip was in 2019. This year, the FRWDB’s submitted priority for the trip is in regards to creating business-friendly administrative relief at the US Department of Labor. Specific changes requested are: 1) Regarding Incumbent Worker Training: As the employer is viewed as the client, remove the requirement that existing employers certify selective service registration for employees, many who are long term and beyond draft age; 2) Regarding WIOA Supportive Service Payments: |
|  | Allow such payments for WIOA clients post placement; and 3) Regarding tracking of training-related placements at Community Colleges: Remove requirement that all trainees in a given community college program or class be tracked for training related placement.  Mr. Konczal noted that the FRWDB was not asking for more money, but for administrative relief, which was different from what most other agencies bring to the One Voice trip.  This was an information item. |
| **12.** | **Consent Item (A1)** |
|  | **BONNER/ZABRYCKI – APPROVED THE CONSENT ITEM A1, WITH THE DISCLOSURE NOTED ABOVE. (UNANIMOUS)** |
| **13.** | **Recognition of Board Anniversaries** |
|  | Chair Montalbano recognized Directors for their years of service on the FRWDB with a presentation of certificates. He recognized Directors whose anniversaries occurred in the months of October through December: Alisha Morgan – one (1) year; Sandra Vicente – one (1) year; and Edgar Blunt – four (4) years.  This was an information item. |
| 14. | Information Sharing |
|  | Chair Montalbano introduced new FRWDB Directors Douglas Dart and Kurt Madden, who were attending their first FRWDB meeting. Chair Montalbano encouraged the new Directors to ask questions if there was anything they did not understand, particularly acronyms. Mr. Konczal shared that in the past, FRWDB published a Glossary of Terms and that they would update and bring that back.  Director Hensley shared that he had been at a meeting in Sacramento where he heard a statistic that in the area of socio-economic conditions, the San Joaquin Valley was pulled from the state’s data and compared to the rest of the country. The Valley ranked third from the bottom, compared with all the other states. He indicated that it was an eye-opener for him, and there was a huge hill to climb to bring those statistics up.  Director Riojas shared that the Building Trades Council has a five (5)-year Project Labor Agreement with the City of Fresno for any construction jobs over $1 million. He stated that he just received a report that there was $1.6 billion of construction projects planned in the City of Fresno over the next four (4) years. The trades are going to do their part to get local residents, and the people who graduate from the pre-apprenticeship program, apprenticeship opportunities on these projects.  Mr. Konczal shared that Congressman Jim Costa just secured $3 billion for a High Speed Rail Passenger Station in downtown Fresno. He noted that the Rail Authority adopted a National Targeted Hiring Policy, written by Ken Price, which ensures valley residents are given priority when applying for jobs on the project.  Chair Montalbano shared that, with help from the FRWDB and the South Bay Workforce Investment Board, there was a proposal for an auto mechanic pre-apprentice program currently at the US Department of Labor. He stated that there were currently 66,000 mechanic jobs open in the state of California.  This was a discussion item. |
| 15. | Agenda Items for March 6, 2024, Meeting |
|  | There were no items recommended for the March 6, 2024, FRWDB meeting agenda. |
| 16. | Meeting Feedback |
|  | No meeting feedback was provided. |

The meeting was adjourned at 5:19 p.m.