



FRESNO REGIONAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

Workforce Development Board
March 6, 2024 @ 4:00 p.m.

SUMMARY MINUTES

The meeting was called to order at 4:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL: PRESENT – Shayn Anderson, Stephen Avila, Alysia Bonner, Rodney Branch, Carole Goldsmith, Jeff Hensley, Mike Karbassi, Kurt Madden, Terry Metters, Jr. (arrived at 4:03 p.m.), Alisha Morgan (arrived at 4:16 p.m.), Joe Olivares, Sal Quintero, Chuck Riojas, Vasili Sotiropulos, Sandra Vicente (arrived at 4:11 p.m.), Lydia Zabrycki, Chris Zeitz, and Legal Counsel Ken Price.

ABSENT – Lacy Barnes, Edgar Blunt, Douglas Dart, Wyatt Meadows, Scott Miller, and Dennis Montalbano.

Director Metters arrived (4:03 p.m.)

COMMENTS BY FRWDB CHAIR AND/OR EXECUTIVE STAFF: Second Vice Chair, Stephen Avila, chaired the meeting in Chair Montalbano's absence.

Blake Konczal, Executive Director, Fresno Regional Workforce Development Board (FRWDB), distributed to the Directors a list of acronyms used by FRWDB staff and service providers.

AGENDA CHANGES
REMOVAL OF ITEMS OR
EMERGENCY ADDITIONS: None

ABSTENTIONS/ DISCLOSURES OF
POTENTIAL CONFLICTS
OF INTEREST/RECUSALS: None

PUBLIC COMMENTS: None

Item Description/Action Taken

6. Committee Reports

Adult Council: Director Riojas shared that the Adult Council (Council) met on January 25th. There was a presentation by Annette Watkins, Central Labor Council, Partnership (CLC), providing an overview of CLC's Dislocated Worker program throughout Fresno County. The Council saw videos highlighting the First Quarter Outstanding Achievement Award winners for Adult Participant and Adult Business. They reviewed and recommended for approval the standing quarterly reports, and recommended the ratification of Director Rodney Branch to the Council.

Executive Committee: Director Avila reported that the Executive Committee (Committee) met on January 17th, when they reviewed and accepted the November 2023 Financial Report and Agency Budget and Expenditures Reports. The Committee approved two (2) contract awards: the Microsoft Office 365 Services and the Student Training and Employment Program. Mr. Konczal provided the Committee with the Director's Quarterly Update, highlighting the areas Mr. Konczal focused on during the previous quarter.

Director Vicente arrived (4:11 p.m.)

Skills Development Council: Director Zabrycki shared that the Skills Development Council (SDC) held their meeting on February 7th. At that time, they were presented with several in depth reports: Participant Training and Expenditure Report, Special Grants Report, Discretionary Grants Report, and an overview of trainings available for partner and FRWDB staff. The SDC was also presented with the FRWDB marketing update, specifically regarding the newly placed billboards in Modesto, Bakersfield, Parlier, Sanger, Kerman and Firebaugh.

This was an information item.

7. Board Member Spotlight

Director Carole Goldsmith, Chancellor of the State Center Community College District (SCCCD), shared a PowerPoint presentation about the District's vision and an overview of new facilities throughout the four (4) campuses: Fresno City College, Reedley College, Clovis Community College and Madera Community College. She indicated that Fresno City College was the oldest community college in the state of California, and Madera Community College was the newest in the state. Currently, the District served more than 60,000 students, in an area that covers over 5,700 square miles.

Director Goldsmith highlighted some of the District's new facilities. Reedley College has a new Math, Science, and Engineering building, and approximately 40% of the Engineering students at Fresno State come from SCCC. Director Goldsmith invited the FRWDB to visit the facility in the future. Also in Reedley is the new Center for Fine and Performing Arts, as well as the Child Development Center.

Director Bonner arrived (4:16 p.m.)

The First Responder's campus is located in southeast Fresno, where the valley's paramedics, firefighters, and police are trained. The West Fresno Campus, which now has 1,000 students, was an \$87 million project with a mix of local and state funds, and funds from the Transformational Climate Change grant. Director Goldsmith noted that the SCCC had one of the largest nursing programs in the state.

Located at the Madera Community College campus, is the brand-new Madera Academic Village 2, which houses the library and academic areas. Also at the Madera campus is The Center for Agriculture and Technology, which came out of Measure C funding. Plans are underway for the groundbreaking for a new Madera Community College campus in Oakhurst.

She reported that Fresno City College now had a new 900 stall parking structure off Blackstone Avenue, and in progress was the new Science and Engineering building at the Fresno City College campus that was designed to pay homage to the campus' old Administration brick building.

SCCCD is working to advance equitable student access and achievement. Director Goldsmith stated that Community Colleges are the gateway to universities and also prepares students by providing training and support to enter the workforce. They conducted a survey about six (6) months ago and learned that the community's top priorities were: #1 Expanding healthcare programs, especially nursing; #2 Caring for returning veterans; and #3 Expanding vocational programs.

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, focusing on the Second Quarter (Q2) of Program Year 2023-2024.

Ms. Espinosa shared that the FRWDB continued its marketing efforts with paid radio spots, advertising on television, and the use of social media. In addition, FRWDB started a short campaign of YouTube ads to make certain that people were aware of the new job center locations throughout Fresno County. Also new was the use of billboards to promote the FRWDB's training programs. Billboards were being used to outreach to the rural and west areas. Billboards have been placed in Parlier, Sanger, Kerman, and Firebaugh, in both English and Spanish.

She introduced new FRWDB staff, Ailing Cheng, who is the new Marketing Content Creator, who was making certain that the marketing campaigns were consistently running and posting on social media was consistent. Ms. Cheng also attended all Scholarship Panels to take a photo of Scholarship recipients for posting on social media.

Ms. Espinosa showed the television commercial that ran on KMPH to promote the ValleyBuild program. She noted that it was very intentional that a female was used in the commercial to encourage females in construction.

Some of the outreach events held in Q2 included: Fresno Adult School Resource Fair, the Central Unified College and Career Night, handing out flyers at food distribution and trunk-or-treat events, Sanger Job and Resource Fair, and the Reedley High School College and Career Expo.

In February, FRWDB held a job fair at the Ramada Inn that had over 500 registrants and 20 employers and seven (7) training providers. The theme was Leap into a New Career, as it was a leap year.

Ms. Espinosa shared about upcoming events: ValleyBuild Graduation Ceremony on Friday, March 29th; the FRWDB Annual Achievement Awards breakfast on April 17th at Fresno Fields by Wedgewood; and Govaganza Job Fair at Chukchansi Park on April 30th.

In response to Chair Montalbano's request at a previous meeting to have FRWDB staff to bring back former participants to hear about what they are currently doing in their career, Ms. Espinosa introduced Lenny Edelbacher. Mr. Edelbacher enrolled at Workforce Connection in 2019, and was awarded a scholarship to the HVAC program at institute of technology. Mr. Edelbacher shared his journey from enrollment and training to obtaining a job and then going on to start his own business.

Director Goldsmith asked Ms. Espinosa which of the FRWDB's marketing efforts yielded the best return on investment. Ms. Espinosa stated that word of mouth and reputation was the best way to get the word out about the FRWDB's many program offerings. Director Olivares stated that while serving on Scholarship Panels, he consistently hears that participants learned about Workforce Connection from another person.

Director Metters asked what Directors could do to help support the FRWDB's marketing and communication efforts and Ms. Espinosa indicated that attending events and sharing about the FRWDB's events and programs within their own organizations would be a great way to support FRWDB's marketing efforts.

This was an information item.

9. **Approval of the December 6, 2023, Meeting Minutes**

RIOJAS/BONNER – APPROVED THE DECEMBER 6, 2023, MEETING MINUTES. (UNANIMOUS)

10. January 2024 Financial Report

Mr. Konczal presented the January 2024 Financial Report for the FRWDB's acceptance. He reviewed the grants that were highlighted in the agenda item and stated that FRWDB staff had no concerns with grant expenditures.

Director Sotiropulos asked about the Bitwise Grant and would the program end once the funds were expended. Mr. Konczal explained that the contract for the Bitwise funding was two (2) years, but that because it was an Additional Assistance grant, he believed the state would be amendable to extending it, if needed. Mr. Konczal shared that FRWDB staff supporting the former Bitwise employees received a large number of questions about taxes. To respond to these questions, FRWDB staff received authorization from the state to use an accounting firm to give presentations and answer questions about filing taxes and how to get a W-2 from a company that had closed. Those tax seminars were scheduled for March 8th, 9th, and 21st.

KARBASSI/ZABRYCKI – ACCEPTED THE JANUARY 2024 FINANCIAL REPORT. (UNANIMOUS)

11. Government Update

Diane Jensen, Government Relations Coordinator, FRWDB, provided an update on the March 5 election results, and congratulated Director Karbassi on his re-election to the Fresno City Council. She also provided updates on some of the legislation she had been tracking.

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Re-Authorization: HR 6655, A Stronger Workforce for America Act is the proposed reauthorization and enhancement of WIOA. Key components of this bill include modernizing workforce development, updating programs and services to align with current workforce demands, introducing technology-driven approaches for training, expanding access to education and training, and supporting disadvantaged communities and promoting economic resilience. Ms. Jensen explained that the primary area of concern was that it would mandate a new 50% training requirement for Workforce Development Boards (WDBs). Mr. Konczal added that California already had a 30% training set aside and that it took years to get up to that level. He explained that the state's idea behind the training set aside was that more people would receive training, but that in reality, many local areas purchased more expensive training in order to meet the 30%, rather than training more individuals. This, along with the Governor's reserves of 15% of WIOA money going up to 25% would really impact WDBs' budgets. He noted that this is just the House version of this bill, so it is not necessarily the final version.

AB 1228 Fast Food Minimum Wage: Effective April 1, 2024, the fast food minimum wage was approved to increase to \$20.00 an hour. Ms. Jensen explained that this would only impact fast food restaurants that have 60 or more establishments nationally. She indicated that Garrett LeCat, CLC Partnership and John Lorange, City of Fresno Economic Development, have been preparing to assist businesses with strategies for managing increased labor costs and maintaining profitability, as well as providing assistance to workers, to help them understand their rights and entitlements under AB 1228.

She concluded her report by sharing that Director Edgar Blunt and FRWDB Marketing/Grants Manager Martha Espinosa, would be attending the One Voice trip in Washington, DC, where they will be requesting administrative relief from the Department of Labor in three (3) areas: 1) Incumbent Worker Training: Selective Services Registration Certification; 2) WIOA Supportive Service payments; and 3) Tracking of training-related placements at Community Colleges.

This was an information item.

12. Fresno Regional Workforce Development Board Council Appointments Policy

Mr. Konczal presented for the FRWDB's approval, the FRWDB Council Appointments Policy. He explained that in addition to the Executive Committee, the FRWDB had three (3) Councils: Adult Council, Skills Development Council, and Youth Council. Unlike the FRWDB Directors, Council members (non-board members) had no policy to govern the length of their appointment, attendance, or the number of non-board members there could be on a Council. The Executive Committee directed FRWDB staff to draft a policy to address these items.

Some of the new policy recommendations included: 1) The three (3) Councils of the FRWDB would have seven (7) Directors on each Council; 2) A majority of members of any Council must be FRWDB board members (Directors); 3) Board members would be allowed to have formal membership on only one (1) Council at a time; 4) Non-board Council members would have a term of two (2) years, and then they must seek re-appointment to continue serving; 5) Non-board Council members' terms would be staggered initially, so not all re-appointments would occur simultaneously; and 6) A non-board Council member would be considered to have "effectively resigned" after missing two (2) consecutive regular Council meetings over any 12-month period of time.

MADDEN/SOTIROPULOS – APPROVED THE FRESNO REGIONAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD COUNCIL APPOINTMENTS POLICY. (UNANIMOUS)

13. Consent Items (A1 – A3)

BONNER/KARBASSI – APPROVED THE CONSENT ITEMS A1 – A3. (UNANIMOUS)

14. Recognition of Board Anniversaries

Second Vice Chair Avila 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 January through March: Shayn Anderson – one (1) year; Carole Goldsmith – one (1) year; Chris Zeitz – one (1) year; Terry Metters, Jr. – two (2) years; Wyatt Meadows – two (2) years; Stephen Avila – three (3) years; Alysia Bonner – four (4) years; Mike Karbassi – four (4) years; Sal Quintero – five (5) years; Vasili Sotiropulos – six (6) years; and Chuck Riojas – 17 years.

This was an information item.

15. Information Sharing

Director Riojas shared that he was invited by the High Speed Rail Authority to present on pre-apprenticeship training programs in Washington, DC. He stated that representatives from all over the world will be there and that he would be sharing about the good work being done in Fresno in the area of pre-apprenticeship training.

This was a discussion item.

16. Agenda Items for June 5, 2024, Meeting

Director Hensley indicated that presentations from the FRWDB's different contractors would be helpful.

This was a discussion item.

17. Meeting Feedback

No meeting feedback was provided.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:28 p.m.