



FRESNO REGIONAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

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

SUMMARY MINUTES

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

ROLL CALL: PRESENT – Stephen Avila, Alysia Bonner, Carole Goldsmith (arrived at 4:14 p.m.), Kurt Madden, Scott Miller, Dennis Montalbano, Alisha Morgan, Joe Olivares, Sal Quintero, Chuck Riojas, Vasili Sotiropoulos, Chris Zeitz, and Legal Counsel Ken Price.

ABSENT – Shayn Anderson, Lacy Barnes, Edgar Blunt, Rodney Branch, Douglas Dart, Jeff Hensley, Mike Karbassi, Wyatt Meadows, Terry Metters, Jr., Sandra Vicente, and Lydia Zabrycki.

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: None

PUBLIC COMMENTS: None

Item Description/Action Taken

6. Committee Reports

Adult Council: Director Riojas reported that the Adult Council met on October 24th, at which time they received a report on the Second Quarter Adult Business of Excellence award winner. They recommended for Fresno Regional Workforce Development Board (FRWDB) approval, the revised Program Year (PY) 2024-2025 Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) funding allocations. They reviewed and recommended for FRWDB acceptance the Local Performance Results Reports, Providers of Services' Monitoring Report, and Job Seeker Customer Satisfaction Report. The Council was also presented with two (2) information items: the America's Jobs Centers of California Usage Report and the Adult and Dislocated Worker Demographics Reports. Director Riojas thanked Director Meadows for chairing the meeting in his absence.

Director Goldsmith arrived (4:14 p.m.) QUORUM ESTABLISHED

Executive Committee: Director Montalbano reported that the Executive Committee (Committee) met on October 16th, when they reviewed and accepted the August 2024 Financial Report and Agency Budget and Expenditures Reports. The Committee also accepted the 2024-2025 AJCC Certification

and Continuous Improvement Plan, which is done every three (3) years. Blake Konczal, Executive Director, FRWDB, provided the Committee with an overview of the activities and projects he was most focused on during the previous quarter.

Skills Development Council: Director Olivares provided the Skills Development Council (SDC) update in Director Zabrycki's absence. He shared that the SDC met on November 6th, at which time they were presented with reports on several topics: Individual Training Accounts, special grants, staff training, and discretionary grants. They also recommended for FRWDB approval, the Participant Training Report.

Youth Council: Director Sotiropulos reported that the Youth Council met on November 21st. At the meeting, they welcomed four (4) new members to the Youth Council: Director Shayn Anderson, Director Kurt Madden, Michelle Engel-Silva and Keda Buttles. Staff from America Works provided an overview of the youth services they provide. The Youth Council also received a report on the Youth Program Success Story, highlighting Northpoint Healthcare and Wellness Center. There were a number of reports the Council recommended for FRWDB acceptance: Youth Work Experience Report, Local Performance Results Report, Youth Satisfaction Report, the PY 2023-2024 WIOA Youth Program Performance Results and the Youth Monitoring Report. They also were provided with the Youth Demographics Report, as an information item.

This was an information item.

7. Board Member Spotlight

Director Kurt Madden, Chief Executive Officer, Career Nexus, shared about Career Nexus and their work in placing individuals into jobs through paid internships. The internships are 200 hours long and the interns are paid \$17 an hour. Mr. Madden explained that in most cases, Career Nexus is the employer of record for these internships. He stated that they've found employers are more receptive to the idea of using interns when Career Nexus is the employer of record. He shared that the individuals Career Nexus works with are between the ages of 18 and 28, and about 95% are low income. Over the past three (3) years, Career Nexus has provided almost 1,000 paid internships. Of the individuals who do not get hired full time after their internship, 30%-40% either enroll in community college or go back to community college, which is also a win for the individual.

Career Nexus uses 29 different lessons, designed by IMAGO, they feel are appropriate for their interns on a wide variety of topics, such as conflict resolution, technology, life skills and financial literacy. Career Nexus currently works with about 65 employers who have entry-level positions with opportunities for growth.

Director Madden shared a video highlighting one of their interns, Savanah Ruiz, who ended up being hired full time as a welder for United Western Industries.

This was an information item.

8. In the Community – Marketing Update

Martha Espinosa, Deputy Director Marketing Grants and Business Initiatives, FRWDB, provided highlights of marketing activities and events that occurred during the year. She stated that there were a lot of successes during the year, but also some lessons learned.

She indicated that the tools FRWDB used to market its programs and services included The Business Journal, Channel 26, iHeart Radio, outreach events (FRWDB events as well as other agencies' events)

and billboards. She noted that the billboards were continuing to be used in the rural areas of Kerman, Parlier, and Mendota to emphasize the FRWDB's Rapid Response program as so many individuals in the rural areas have been affected by layoffs. One change coming for the billboards is that in the past, the billboard messages were included in both English and Spanish and it was a bit confusing. Now, the messages will be in English and then later will be converted to Spanish.

FRWDB held its first all staff meeting in 2024, and over 150 individuals attended from FRWDB and provider staff. The event was an opportunity for all staff to discuss together the goals and mission of Fresno workforce development.

The FRWDB hosted 25 events in 2024, which included four (4) job fairs, the Transform Fresno AI Workshop with the City of Fresno, the Trade and Career Technical Education Expo at the westside campus of Fresno City College, FatherFest, Greater Sierra Forestry Corps Graduations, Annual Achievement Awards breakfast, among others. Ms. Espinosa stated that the purpose of these events was to connect individuals to employers and to get the message out to the community about what Workforce is and the services and programs available.

Ms. Espinosa introduced Brandi Carpenter from Fox 26. Ms. Carpenter shared a little about her background in marketing through print and digital media. She shared about the different marketing tools being used to promote FRWDB services via streaming TV, web searching, and social media.

Upcoming events for the month of December were a Small Business Procurement Workshop in Mendota on December 5, the Valley Build Graduation on December 11, the Workforce Wellness Workshop on December 12, and the Greater Sierra Forestry Corps Graduation on December 17.

Ms. Espinosa thanked the FRWDB Marketing team, along with the FRWDB General Services, Fiscal and Administrative teams for their support of the FRWDB's department's marketing efforts.

This was an information item.

9. Approval of the September 11, 2024, Special Meeting Minutes

BONNER/MADDEN – APPROVED THE SEPTEMBER 11, 2024, SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES. (UNANIMOUS)

10. October 2024 Financial Report

Mr. Konczal presented the October 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. There were no questions from the Directors.

RIOJAS/MADDEN – ACCEPTED THE OCTOBER 2024 FINANCIAL REPORT. (UNANIMOUS)

11. Government Update

Feleena Sutton, Government Affairs Manager, FRWDB, provided the FRWDB with a chart showing the investments made in the Valley Build and the Forestry Corps programs by county, so the impact throughout the valley could be easily seen. She invited Directors to share their ideas on making the chart better, as she will be updating it every year to bring it back to the FRWDB.

Ms. Sutton reported that Governor Newsom was in Fresno November 21 to announce the California Jobs First Economic Blueprint, which is a new regional investment plan. The Governor plans to invest \$58 billion over the next 20 years with \$5 million going to the central San Joaquin Valley region, which could have a major impact to the Valley's economy. She also shared that the Governor announced in January the Master Plan for Career Education, the purpose of which is to prepare California's students and workers for living wage by addressing the structural issues that create unequal opportunities to learn.

This was an information item.

12. Fresno Regional Workforce Development Board First Quarter Meeting Schedule Revision

Mr. Konczal presented for approval a revision to the FRWDB's meeting schedule. Mr. Konczal explained that every year, the California Workforce Association holds its Meeting of the Minds Conference during the first week of September, and due to FRWDB staff and Directors attending and presenting at the conference, FRWDB has had to reschedule its September meeting each year. To avoid having to reschedule each year, FRWDB staff recommended revising the meeting schedule by moving the September FRWDB meeting from the first week to the second week.

RIOJAS/BONNER – APPROVED THE FRESNO REGIONAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD FIRST QUARTER MEETING SCHEDULE REVISION (UNANIMOUS).

13. Election of Fresno Regional Workforce Development Board Chair, First Vice Chair, Second Vice Chair and Two At-Large Members for the Executive Committee

Mr. Konczal reported that Chair Montalbano had appointed Director Hensley to Chair an Ad-Hoc Nominating Committee to develop a ballot, nominating individuals as candidates for the FRWDB positions of Chair, First Vice Chair, Second Vice Chair, and two (2) At-Large Executive Committee members. He asked if there were any other members of the FRWDB who were interested in running for one of the open offices. No Directors added their name to the ballot.

Nominating Committee recommendations were: Chair – Edgar Blunt; First Vice Chair – Stephen Avila; Second Vice Chair – Alisha Morgan; At-Large Executive Committee member from City appointees – Rodney Branch; and At-Large Executive Committee member from County appointees – Carole Goldsmith.

BONNER/OLIVARES – APPROVED THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE'S RECOMMENDATION FOR FRWDB CHAIR, FIRST VICE CHAIR, SECOND VICE CHAIR, AND TWO (2) AT-LARGE MEMBERS FOR THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE (UNANIMOUS).

14. Consent Items (A1 – C7)

BONNER/RIOJAS – APPROVED THE CONSENT ITEMS A1 – C7. (UNANIMOUS)

15. 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: Kurt Madden – one (1) year; Sandra Vicente – two (2) years; and Edgar Blunt – five (5) years.

This was an information item.

16. Information Sharing

No information was shared.

17. Agenda Items for March 5, 2025, Meeting

No items were suggested for the March 5, 2025, FRWDB meeting agenda.

18. Meeting Feedback

Director Quintero thanked the FRWDB and recognized the work done by the FRWDB for the improvement of the workforce in Fresno County. He recognized Mr. Konczal for his leadership of the FRWDB and presented him with a key to the County of Fresno.

This was an information item.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:26 p.m.