



FRESNO REGIONAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

Skills Development Council
February 5, 2025

SUMMARY MINUTES

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

ROLL CALL: PRESENT – Stephen Avila, Douglas Dart, Jeff Hensley, Scott Miller (arrived at 4:14), Joe Olivares, and Sandra Vicente

ABSENT – Lydia Zabrycki and Chris Zeitz

AGENDA CHANGES: None

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

COUNCIL CHAIR/ STAFF
COMMENTS: None

PUBLIC COMMENTS: None

Item	Description/Action Taken
1.	<p><u>November 6, 2024, Skills Development Council Meeting Minutes</u></p> <p>Blake Konczal, Executive Director, Fresno Regional Workforce Development Board (FRWDB), presented the November 6, 2024, Skills Development Council (Council) meeting minutes for the Council's approval, or correction and approval.</p> <p>HENSLEY/DART – APPROVED THE NOVEMBER 6, 2024, SKILLS DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES. (UNANIMOUS)</p>
2.	<p><u>Growth Opportunities Grant Course Correct Program</u></p> <p>Ashley Matthews, Senior Special Projects Manager, FRWDB, presented for the Council's recommendation, the approval of the Growth Opportunities Grant Course Correct Program funding allocations. She announced that the FRWDB was awarded a \$2,000,000 Growth Opportunities Grant from the US Department of Labor under the Employment and Training Administration. Ms. Matthews shared that the grant was intended to support the creation of FRWDB's Course Correct Program, and the design would be based on their other successful Special Projects programs. Ms. Matthews informed the Council that the grant contract start date would be March 1, 2025, and that it would be a 42-month funded program which would introduce a 6 (six)-phase, customized training program for justice-touched youth. She stated that several strategies would assist this target population. The strategies included partner referrals, customer assessments, violence prevention workshops, training and work experience, mentorship and leadership, supportive services, and job placement.</p>

Director Hensley asked if the grant, or any other grant, would be affected by the Federal funding freeze. Mr. Konczal replied that it would not, but that FRWDB staff would inform the Council should any of its funding be impacted in the future. Director Vicente asked what age demographic the program would be assisting. Ms. Matthews indicated that the program would assist youth, ages 18 to 25.

HENSLEY/VICENTE – RECOMMENDED THAT THE FRWDB APPROVE THE GROWTH OPPORTUNITIES GRANT COURSE CORRECT PROGRAM. (UNANIMOUS)

Director Miller arrived (4:14 p.m.)

3. James Irvine Foundation Workforce Support 360° Project

Phyllis Stogbauer, Senior Deputy Director, FRWDB, presented for the Council's recommendation, the approval of a \$500,000 grant allocation to the James Irvine Foundation Workforce Support 360° Project. She explained that this staff training grant was a 24-month contract project intended to enhance the capacity of workforce development staff and strengthen collaboration with community-based organizations to facilitate better employment outcomes for low-wage workers and connect them with quality job opportunities to promote economic mobility. Ms. Stogbauer shared that under this project, 20 local community-based organizations would be selected to receive created virtual libraries that would enable individuals to seek services and resources online. Mr. Konczal added that because Fresno served a unique clientele with particular needs, the intent of the project was to create a training program where employed FRWDB staff would be certified in better gauging the needs of clients they serve.

Director Avila asked for examples of what FRWDB staff would be able to identify once certified. Ms. Stogbauer responded that certified staff would be able to understand and identify proper needs assessments and motivational interviewing skills tailored for each individual participant.

OLIVARES/AVILA – RECOMMENDED THAT THE FRWDB APPROVE THE JAMES IRVINE FOUNDATION WORKFORCE SUPPORT 360° PROJECT. (UNANIMOUS)

4. Aspen Leadership Academy

Martha Espinosa, Deputy Director Marketing, Grants, and Business Initiatives, FRWDB, shared a PowerPoint presentation that provided a brief overview of the Aspen Leadership Academy. The presentation described the Aspen Leadership Academy as an assemblage of leaders from across local workforce ecosystems that would be entering into a 10 (ten)-month Fellowship for the purpose of working together to identify local and regional system-based challenges and create shared solutions. Ms. Espinosa shared that the FRWDB had a kickoff meeting to celebrate the award of a \$50,000 grant allocated to the Aspen Leadership Academy and that Fresno was the first county in California to initiate this Academy. She also informed the Council about what the FRWDB would provide for the Academy, which included: Orientations, opening/closing retreats, five (5) academy sessions and labs, and networking receptions.

Ms. Espinosa announced the members of the Leadership Academy Advisory Council, which consisted of: Anthony "AP." Armour, CEO/Co-Founder, Neighborhood Industries; Dr. Andre Stephens, President, Fresno Pacific University; Dr. Becky Barabe, Dean of Instruction, Applied Technology Division, Fresno College; Scott Miller, CEO, Greater Fresno Chamber of Commerce; Stephanie Nathan, CEO, United Way Fresno and Madera Counties; Lynne Ashbeck, Senior Vice President, Chief Community Impact Officer, Valley Children's Healthcare; Brenda Budke, Executive Director, Sierra HR Partners; Wyatt Meadows, District Rep, Operating

Engineers Local 3 Fresno; Artie Padilla, Director of DRIVE, Central Valley Community Foundation; Kurt Madden, Executive Director, Career Nexus; and Edgar Blunt, CEO/Co-Founder, IMAGO, Inc.

Mr. Konczal also shared that Janay Conley, Economic Development Coordinator from the City of Fresno Economic Development Office, would also be partnering with the FRWDB.

Director Hensley asked if The Aspen Institute would provide any other professional or intellectual support. Ms. Espinosa replied that they would and that some of the support would consist of bi-weekly team meetings, Zoom calls, and homework assignments. Ms. Espinosa asked Director Miller if he found value in the kickoff meeting which he attended. Director Miller responded that he did.

This was an information item.

5. Individual Training Account Overview

Ms. Stogbauer gave the Council an overview of the FRWDB's participant training activities and expenditures through the Second Quarter of Program Year (PY) 2024-2025. Ms. Stogbauer reviewed the industries in which participants were trained, the total number of individuals enrolled, how many participants completed these training programs, and how many were still actively training. She also clarified that the total Individual Training Account expenditures were paid out during the PY period, and not during the duration of training.

Director Olivares asked if the Tax Preparer occupation fell into the Accounting, Tax Preparation, and Bookkeeping, and Payroll category. Ms. Stogbauer replied that this category included occupations such as Account Clerks in cross-industry occupations. Director Avila asked for clarification of what types of occupations fall into the Manufacturing category. Ms. Stogbauer replied that manufacturing occupations included forklift operators and maintenance mechanics.

This was an information Item.

6. Special Grants Training Overview

Ashley Matthews, Senior Special Projects Manager, FRWDB, spoke about the ValleyBuild Apprenticeship Readiness Program, the Greater Sierra Forestry Corps, and the multiple grants that fund these projects. Ms. Matthews shared a PowerPoint that included overviews of each special grant's regional performance progress. She also announced that a Project Coordinator had been hired for the Fresno Emergency Medical Service Corps, which will train participants for Emergency Medical Services positions. Their first Cohort will start in the Fall of 2025.

Ms. Matthews also shared photos of ValleyBuild and ValleyBuild NOW graduations, Greater Sierra Forestry Corps activities, and televised news coverage about ValleyROP.

This was an information item.

7. Discretionary Grants Report

Ka Xiong, Program Manager, FRWDB, presented an overview of the discretionary grant funding for the Council's review. Ms. Xiong discussed the Quality Jobs, Equity, Strategy, and Training Grant; the Fresno Fatherhood Grant; the Regional Equity and Recovery Partnerships Grant; the Student Training and Employment Program 2.0 Grant; the Prison to Employment Grant; and the English Language Learner Integrated Education and Training Grant. In her overview, Ms. Xiong stated each grant's purpose, target population, and period of performance. Ms. Xiong indicated

that each grant was at various stages of their grant cycle, as she discussed each grants progress through December 2024.

This was an information item.

8. Overview of Staff Trainings

Jose Espinoza, Training Manager, FRWDB, presented an overview of staff trainings scheduled for the Second Quarter of PY 2024-2025. Mr. Espinoza updated the Council on the staff trainings that had already occurred, including the All-Staff Conference at Holland Park West, the mandatory Harassment Prevention, and mandatory Workplace Violence Prevention training for all FRWDB staff. He also presented an overview of other trainings such as Time Management, Leadership Development, and Stress Management training as well. Director Olivares asked what other training was mandatory. Mr. Espinoza replied that no other training was mandatory and informed the Council of plans to structure the scheduling of future mandatory trainings to allow all staff to attend, as they are not always able to attend at the same time.

Mr. Espinoza also presented an overview of staff trainings scheduled for the Third Quarter of PY 2024-2025, which included Eligibility and Intake Procedures, and Serving Priority Populations. Director Avila asked for a definition of Priority Populations. Ms. Stogbauer clarified that Priority Populations consist of individuals the FRWDB is required to serve under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. These populations include veterans, low-income individuals, basic skills deficient, limited English individuals for the adult population; and gang affiliated, pregnant parenting, and low-income individuals for the youth population.

This was an information item.

9. Information Sharing

There were no Information Items to share.

10. May 7, 2025, Agenda Items

There were no items recommended for the May 7, 2025, Skills Development Council meeting agenda.

11. Meeting Feedback

There was no meeting feedback provided.

Meeting adjourned at 5:26 p.m.