



FRESNO REGIONAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

Workforce Development Board
September 10, 2025 @ 4:00 p.m.

SUMMARY MINUTES

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

ROLL CALL: PRESENT – Edgar Blunt, Alysia Bonner, Luis Chavez, Jeff Hensley (arrived at 4:09 p.m.), Kurt Madden, Tyler Maxwell, Scott Miller, Dennis Montalbano, Alisha Morgan, Joe Olivares, Robert Topete, Sandra Vicente, Lydia Zabrycki, Chris Zeitz, and Legal Counsel Craig Armstrong.

ABSENT – Stephen Avila, Lacy Barnes, Rodney Branch, Douglas Dart, Christina Garza, Carole Goldsmith, Wyatt Meadows, Terry Metters Jr., Chuck Riojas, and Vasili Sotiropulos.

COMMENTS BY FRWDB CHAIR
AND/OR EXECUTIVE STAFF: None

AGENDA CHANGES
REMOVAL OF ITEMS OR
EMERGENCY ADDITIONS: Blake Konczal, Executive Director, Fresno Regional Workforce Development Board (FRWDB), removed Item #9 Board Member Spotlight from the agenda.

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

PUBLIC COMMENTS: None

Item Description/Action Taken

6. Committee Reports

Adult Council: Director Olivares provided a brief report on the July 24, 2025, Adult Council meeting. He shared about the presentation and demonstration of virtual reality headsets that can be used to explore 47 careers. The Council recommended the FRWDB approve a modification to the One-Stop Security Services contract. The Council reviewed and recommended acceptance of the quarterly reports.

Director Hensley arrived (4:09 p.m.)

Executive Committee: Chair Blunt reported that the Executive Committee (Committee) met on July 16, 2025, when they reviewed and approved the May 2025 Financial Report and the May 2025 Agency Budget and Expenditures Report. Mr. Konczal recognized Cheryl Beierschmitt, Deputy Director Fiscal Services, FRWDB, and the FRWDB fiscal department for processing \$26 million as of May 2025. The Committee reviewed and recommended FRWDB approval of the Program Year 2025-2026 Budget and Personnel Plan, and submittal of an application to the State of California to provide direct client services. The Committee approved the contract for new photocopy machines, and approved the reallocation of \$185,000 of High Roads Construction Careers - High Road Recovery Partnership Round 2 grant funding.

Skills Development Council: Director Zabrycki shared that the Skills Development Council (SDC) met on August 6, 2025, at which time they reviewed and recommended acceptance of the fourth quarter Eligible Training Provider List Monitoring Report. They also were presented with several reports as information items: The Individual Training Account report, which covered training activities and expenditures for the period of July 2024 through June 2025; a Special Grants report, which provided an overview of each grant's regional performance progress to date; a report on the Greater Sierra Forestry Corps, a Discretionary Grants report, which covered six (6) grants and their progress; and a Staff Training report.

This was an information item.

7. **Approval of the June 4, 2025, Meeting Minutes**

MADDEN/BONNER – APPROVED THE JUNE 4, 2025, MEETING MINUTES. (UNANIMOUS)

8. **July 2025 Financial Report**

Mr. Konczal presented the July 2025 Financial Report for the FRWDB's acceptance. He stated that several of the grants that were highlighted in the agenda item had received no cost extensions. Director Madden asked if the FRWDB had seen a pullback in funding on any of the grants. Mr. Konczal indicated that they had not, but that competition for grants had increased. He used a couple of examples where the total funding amount of grant applications received far exceeded the amount of funding available. He shared that he believed that due to the anticipated funding cutbacks, groups that perhaps in the past had not bid on grants were now applying for them to obtain additional funding.

Director Hensley asked, in regard to more competition in California for grants, will other areas that have more clout than the valley be awarded more grants. Mr. Konczal indicated that each state agency has an idea of how their money should be distributed across the state, with more populous areas receiving more. He noted that this was why regional grants were so important, because the regional proposals allow access to funds that would not be awarded solely to Fresno.

BONNER/CHAVEZ – ACCEPTED THE JULY 2025 FINANCIAL REPORT. (UNANIMOUS)

9. **Board Member Spotlight**

Removed from the agenda, as noted above.

10. **In the Community – Marketing Update**

Martha Espinosa, Deputy Director Marketing, Grants and Business Initiatives, FRWDB, provided an in-depth overview, via Power Point, of the FRWDB's marketing activities that occurred June through August 2025.

Ms. Espinosa provided each Director with a small lint roller, which was the FRWDB's promo item for the 2025 Central Valley Women's Conference. FRWDB continued to market its programs and services through various media outlets, including Fox 26, iHeart Radio, B95, La Buena, and YouTube. Fox 26 will begin doing weekly featured Workforce Spotlights, each running three (3) times a week and focusing on a different FRWDB program or service. Ms. Espinosa showed a spotlight video featuring Rapid Response Coordinator, Garret Lecat, highlighting FRWDB's Rapid Response services.

Ms. Espinosa shared that the FRWDB's Business Services Center (BSC) had just passed its six (6)-month mark. In an effort to ensure that local businesses and organizations are aware of the BSC's resources, FRWDB placed an advertisement in a recent issue of The Business Journal.

Director Olivares asked where the BSC was located. Ms. Espinosa indicated it is located at the Fresno East office. Ms. Espinosa explained that BSC had a team lead for each of the following sectors: Government and Education, Healthcare, and Manufacturing. The BSC team is led by BSC Manager, Sandra Vidrio. The BSC team has begun holding sector orientations to inform the public about opportunities, job application tips, and the services available through Workforce Connection. The team has held several “Meet the Employer” events, which are job fairs where just one (1) or two (2) employers participate.

Part of FRWDB’s strategy to improve rural outreach included a concerted effort to build trust and have a consistent presence in these communities. FRWDB has started providing various sponsorships in the rural areas. Recent sponsorships included \$1,000 for the Parlier High School football team, \$500 for the City of San Joaquin’s backpack giveaway, and sponsorship for the Reedley Pirates basketball team. FRWDB will be participating in several Trunk or Treat events in October.

FRWDB marketing efforts have also included a focus on highlighting training opportunities available through grants the FRWDB has received. The Emergency Medical Services Corps grant funds a training program for individuals wanting to become Emergency Medical Technicians. As part of recruitment efforts, FRWDB held a Stop the Bleed event, where 22 individuals, ages 15-26, attended. Participants received a Stop the Bleed certification that they can include on their resume. FRWDB also promoted opportunities available through the English Language Learner grant. Three (3) trainings were selected to translate into Spanish: Certified Nursing Assistant, Forestry and Wildland Firefighter, and Heavy Equipment Operator. The FRWDB placed ads in The Business Journal with the intent that Community Based Organizations would read about the trainings and refer their participants.

ValleyBuild held its 45th graduation, which was the fourth (4th) all female cohort. The FRWDB also held the Second Chance Job Fair, to help connect justice-involved individuals with employers who are willing to provide this population with a second chance. Twenty-three (23) employers participated and over 1,500 job seekers attended. Ms. Espinosa showed a video of Channel 30’s coverage of the event. Chair Blunt asked if tattoo removal services were offered to participants. Mr. Konczal indicated that FRWDB did offer that service a number of years ago when a clinician and nurse could operate the laser, but state legislature changed the law so that lasers of this type for this purpose could only be operated with a licensed physician in the office. This made providing this service cost prohibitive. VR Headsets were available for attendees to be used for job exploration.

Ms. Espinosa shared that the FRWDB had three (3) presentations at the California Workforce Association’s Meeting of the Minds Conference: Giving Credit When Due: College Credit for Pre-Apprenticeships, The Non-AI Future: Grounding Workforce Strategy in High Demand, Human Centered Jobs; and AI in Action: Advancing Soft Skills and Job Readiness for WIOA Participants. She also shared that the FRWDB was awarded a Google Ad Grant in the amount of \$10,000 for in-kind advertising credit every month for the period of 12 months. Kyle Hamilton, FRWDB Research Analyst, was instrumental in the FRWDB being awarded this grant.

Upcoming events in the last quarter of 2025: Jobfest Career Fair in Selma, FRWDB All Staff Conference on November 20th, Holiday Mixer on December 3rd, and the ValleyBuild and Forestry Corps combined graduation ceremony on December 5th.

This was an information item.

11. **Consent Items (A1 – C1)**

BONNER/MILLER – APPROVED CONSENT ITEMS. (UNANIMOUS)

12. Recognition of Board Anniversaries

Chair Blunt recognized and presented certificates to Directors whose anniversaries occurred in the months of July through September: Scott Miller - 11 years; Joe Olivares – 20 years; Jeff Hensley – 21 years; and Dennis Montalbano – 21 years.

This was an information item.

13. Information Sharing

None.

14. Agenda Items for December 3, 2025, Meeting

No items were suggested for the December 3, 2025, FRWDB meeting agenda.

16. Meeting Feedback

There was no meeting feedback

The meeting was adjourned at 5:02 p.m.