



FRESNO REGIONAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

Workforce Development Board
December 3, 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, Rodney Branch, Douglas Dart, Jeff Hensley (arrived at 4:05 p.m.), Kurt Madden, Terry Metters Jr., Scott Miller (arrived at 4:18 p.m.), Dennis Montalbano, Alisha Morgan, Joe Olivares, Chuck Riojas, Vasili Sotiropulos, Sandra Vicente, Chris Zeitz, and Legal Counsel Craig Armstrong.
- ABSENT – Stephen Avila, Lacy Barnes, Luis Chavez, Christina Garza, Tyler Maxwell, Robert Topete, 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

Executive Committee: Chair Blunt reported that the Executive Committee (Committee) met on October 15, 2025, when they reviewed and approved an Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Planning contract award in the amount of \$181,820, and an EMS Training Services contract award to State Center Community College District to provide the EMS Technician training.

Director Hensley arrived (4:05 p.m.)

Chair Blunt shared that the Committee had a discussion item about the Adult and Dislocated Worker Procurement. He stated that the Fresno Regional Workforce Development Board (FRWDB) may procure for a maximum five (5)-year cycle using federal funds. Due to pending federal workforce changes that are still unknown, the FRWDB will release a Request for Proposals in 2026 that will mirror the previous version. FRWDB Directors would be provided the opportunity to serve on the panel to review and rate the proposals.

Skills Development Council: Director Hensley provided the Skills Development Council (SDC) report in Director Zabrycki's absence.

The SDC met on August 6, 2025, at which time they recommended the approval of the Rapid Response and Layoff Aversion funding allocations totaling \$918,860. They also recommended the acceptance of the Eligible Training Provider List Monitoring Report and the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Adult and Dislocated Worker Training 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 2025 through September 2025; reports on Adult Discretionary Grants and Youth Discretionary Grants, providing overviews of each grant's performance progress to date; and a Staff Training report.

Youth Council: Director Sotiropulos shared that the Youth Council met at Clovis Veteran's Memorial on November 20, 2025, for their meeting. The Council received a video presentation on the first quarter Business of Excellence and Youth Achievement Award winners. He commented on the high quality of the video production. The Council recommended the approval of the Student Training and Employment Program Year Three contract award, and recommended the ratification of Erin Evans to the Youth Council.

Director Miller arrived (4:18 p.m.)

Director Sotiropulos reported that there was a discussion about the Local Performance Results Report, and the continuing challenges with the Rural West area being under-served, despite the FRWDB marketing team's efforts to reach individuals in that area. Mr. Konczal noted that for the Youth contracts the FRWDB funds, 98.8% are performing above performance mandates. The FRWDB will continue its efforts in the Rural West to reach the under-served and that may include increased presence in the Rural West area.

This was an information item.

7. Approval of the September 10, 2025, Meeting Minutes

SOTIROPULOS/OLIVARES – APPROVED THE SEPTEMBER 10, 2025, MEETING MINUTES. (UNANIMOUS)

8. October 2025 Financial Report

Mr. Konczal presented the October 2025 Financial Report for the FRWDB's acceptance. He stated that the following three (3) grants had ended, all activities had ended and were in closeout: Fatherhood – Health and Human Services grant, Quality Jobs Equity Strategy Training National Dislocated Worker Grant, and the High Road Construction Careers Round 2 Foundations grant. He shared that three (3) grants received an extension: ValleyBuild Earmark, Equal Representation in Construction Apprenticeship, and One Fresno Youth Job Corps Wraparound Services – City of Fresno. And three (3) grants were under a modification review with the funder: CalFIRE Round 2, High Road Construction Careers – Resilient Workforce Fund, and High Road Training Partnerships.

Director Olivares asked with the ending of the three (3) grants, how the FRWDB was dealing with the impact of the absence of that funding. Mr. Konczal replied that in addition to the other grants the FRWDB currently had, they continue to look for additional funding, so the impact was lessened. Director Madden asked about Youth Job Corps grant and the unspent funds, asking if it would reflect negatively on the FRWDB. Mr. Konczal stated that because the grant funding was municipal in origin, that information would not be reported to the state.

OLIVARES/BONNER – ACCEPTED THE OCTOBER 2025 FINANCIAL REPORT. (UNANIMOUS)

9. 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 October through December 2025, and events upcoming in the next quarter.

She shared that FRWDB partnered with several media outlets. Fox 26 produced a "Workforce Spotlight" segment airing on Tuesday and Thursday mornings. She explained that these are one (1)-minute spots that highlight Workforce programs and provide job search tips. Fox 26 also aired commercials focusing on FRWDB young adult services with the tagline "Everyone starts somewhere. Start here." iHeart Radio and LaBuena were both used to air commercials on the radio and advertisements on their social media. Channels 24 and 47 were utilized through Spotify for targeted Rapid Response and Young Adult Services advertisements. The Business Journal was used for hard copy ads, as well as website advertisements and email blasts.

Ms. Espinosa shared a video from a KMPH Fox 26 Workforce Spotlight segment, featuring FRWDB Executive Director, Blake Konczal. She then shared a B95 Tik Tok featuring the Second Chance Job Fair where over 1,500 individuals attended. It was the FRWDB's most successful job fairs to date.

Ms. Espinosa attended the James Irvine Foundation "Better Careers, Better Connections" convening from September 29 to October 1. As a result, the FRWDB had begun developing a video resource library and staff training focused on serving disadvantaged communities.

The FRWDB supported the State of the County event by providing promotional items—soup bowls featuring the pun "Souper career opportunities are available at Workforce Connection." Staff also attended the Advancing Career California Apprenticeship Summit from October 7–9, hosted by the Foundation for California Community Colleges and the Chancellor's Office, where they learned about emerging apprenticeship models.

The Workforce Leadership Academy Retreat was held October 23–25 with 15 emerging leaders from Fresno County. Participants analyzed the workforce ecosystem and prepared recommendations to be presented on December 10.

Ms. Espinosa shared that every quarter, FRWDB hosted a job fair in a different location in the County. In October, they held the JOBtoberfest Job Fair in Selma, which drew 467 job seekers, 26 employers, ten (10) community resources, and four (4) training schools. The City of Selma partnered in the event, and attendee information was collected and shared with providers for follow-up. The FRWDB also sponsored ten (10) Trunk or Treat events in October throughout Fresno County.

FRWDB participated in the Fresno County Office of Education Career Tech Expo, where staff connected with more than 500 students and showcased a virtual reality (VR) headset that allowed participants to explore careers such as electrician work or medical surgery. Ms. Espinosa stated that the headsets were becoming a regular feature at outreach events. FRWDB also participated in the San Joaquin Manufacturing Summit on October 29 and again featured the VR technology and focused on manufacturing and warehouse careers. Ms. Espinosa shared that between October and December, FRWDB conducted 44 outreach events across Fresno County.

November 20th was the All Staff Conference, when 150 provider and FRWDB staff came together to discuss artificial intelligence (AI) and its impact on the workforce system. Keynote speakers included Dr. Keith Clement and Dr. Tim Woods, along with a panel representing healthcare, manufacturing, agriculture, and education. Ms. Espinosa explained that the goal was to ensure staff understood AI before offering the training to participants. Mr. Konczal added that the Department of Labor had recently issued directives requiring Workforce Boards to train clients in AI, and the organization aimed

to exceed compliance by offering high-quality training. Ms. Espinosa noted the conference also reinforced the message that all providers functioned as one unified system.

Some upcoming events announced were the ValleyBuild and Forestry Corps graduation at Pardini's on December 5; the Workforce Leadership Academy Forum on December 10 at the Elite Event Center; the Westside Career Fair planned for February 2026 in Mendota; and FRWDB Annual Achievement Awards in March 2026.

This was an information item.

10. **Consent Items (A1 – B6)**

MADDEN/RIOJAS – APPROVED CONSENT ITEMS. (UNANIMOUS)

11. **Recognition of Board Anniversaries**

Chair Blunt recognized and presented certificates to Directors whose anniversaries occurred in the months of October through December: Kurt Madden – Two (2) years; Alisha Morgan – Three (3) years; and Sandra Vicente – Three (3) years. Mr. Konczal presented a certificate to Chair Blunt, in recognition of six (6) years serving on the FRWDB.

This was an information item.

12. **Information Sharing**

Director Bonner asked about follow-up with contacts made during community job fairs and outreach events. Ms. Espinosa stated that contacts were sorted between young adults and adults, and their information was provided to FRWDB contracted service providers to perform follow-up. While the follow-up was occurring and the information was available, it had not been tracked or compiled into a formal report. Ms. Espinosa indicated that staff would take a more active role in monitoring and analyzing this information to ensure it is regularly reviewed.

Mr. Konczal shared that, by the next Board meeting in March 2026, FRWDB staff expected to have greater clarity regarding workforce funding and new federal training set-asides. He reminded the Board that the Executive Committee had discussed this topic in prior months and has been actively preparing for the anticipated changes. Once additional clarity is available, FRWDB staff would be prepared to present the Board with options, including the pros and cons of each.

This was an information item.

13. **Agenda Items for March 4, 2026, Meeting**

No items were suggested for the March 4, 2026, FRWDB meeting agenda.

14. **Meeting Feedback**

There was no meeting feedback

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