FRESNO REGIONAL
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

Workforce Development Board
June 3, 2026 @ 4:00 p.m.

SUMMARY MINUTES

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

ROLL CALL: PRESENT – Lacy Barnes, Edgar Blunt, Rodney Branch, Douglas Dart, Christina Garza, Jeff Hensley, Michael Kelley (arrived at 4:06 p.m.), Kurt Madden, Scott Miller, Dennis Montalbano, Joe Olivares, Chuck Riojas, Vasili Sotiropulos, Robert Topete, and Legal Counsel Craig Armstrong.

ABSENT – Stephen Avila, Alysia Bonner, Luis Chavez, Tyler Maxwell, Terry Metters Jr., and Sandra Vicente, Lydia Zabrycki, and Chris Zeitz.

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:	
PUBLIC COMMENTS:	None

Item **Description/Action Taken**

6. Committee Reports

Adult Council: Director Riojas shared that the Adult Council (Council) met on May 28th when they were shown a video highlighting the Adult Business of Excellence Award winner, The Vineyards, a skilled nursing facility. The Council reviewed and recommended Fresno Regional Workforce Development Board (FRWDB) approval of three (3) items: The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Adult and Dislocated Worker funding recommendations for Program Year (PY) 2026-2027, the Adult and Dislocated Worker Contract Award Recommendations for PY 2026-2027, and the IMAGO Video Lessons contract award. The Council reviewed and recommended FRWDB acceptance of the quarterly reports. Director Riojas noted that there had been more responses to the participant survey for the Job Seeker Customer Satisfaction Report since the FRWDB began using an electronic survey.

Executive Committee: Chair Blunt reported that the Executive Committee (Committee) met on April 15th, when they reviewed and approved the February 2026 Agency Budget and Expenditures Report and the February 2026 Financial Report. The Committee also approved: the Legal Services contract award to Baker, Manock & Jensen, an updated Conflict of Interest Policy, and revised Procurement Policy, which reflected modifications in the federal and state procurement guidelines.

Director Kelley arrived (4:08 p.m.)

Staff presented FRWDB's new Generative AI Policy as an information item to the Committee. The Policy included guidelines for responsible and ethical AI usage. Blake Konczal, Executive Director, FRWDB, noted that any type of personal information into an AI system, becomes a part of that AI.

Youth Council: Director Sotiropulos shared that the Youth Council met on May 21, 2026, at which time they were presented with a Youth Success Story video highlight of a young adult's journey to employment as a Certified Nursing Assistant. The Council reviewed and recommended approval of the WIOA Young Adult Services funding recommendations for PY 2026-2027. They also recommended approval of the One Fresno Youth Job Corps Program Navigation contract award in the amount of $108,663.15. The Council received the Youth Demographics report and updates on the EMS Corps, Growth Ops, One Fresno Youth Job Corps Program and the Student Training and Employment Program (STEP), as well as a report on the FRWDB's marketing efforts on the rural west side.

This was an information item.

7. Approval of the March 4, 2026, Meeting Minutes

Mr. Konczal presented for approval, the minutes of the March 4, 2026, meeting. Director Kelley noted a correction to the minutes, which reflected Central California Almond Growers Association was the largest seller of almonds in the world.

MADDEN/SOTIROPULOUS – APPROVED THE MARCH 4, 2026, MEETING MINUTES, AS CORRECTED. (UNANIMOUS)

8. April 2026 Financial Report

Mr. Konczal presented the January 2026, Financial Report for the FRWDB's acceptance. He reviewed the list of grants that had ended, grants that received an extension, and grants that would be ending June 30, 2026. Director Madden asked about the grants that ended and some funding was de-obligated and did that mean the FRWDB would not have to return the money to the funder. Mr. Konczal explained that it meant the FRWDB would be returning the money to the funder. He shared that in the past, when other workforce areas had de-obligated funds, the state had reallocated those funds to local areas that could expend them before the federal funding expiration date or "shelf life". He noted that state contracts were issued with end dates earlier than the federal funding "shelf life" to allow time for closeout and reporting. In the past, FRWDB had previously expended 100% of its allocated funds on various grants and had, on several occasions, accepted and spent reallocated funds returned by other areas.

RIOJAS/SOTIROPULOS – ACCEPTED THE APRIL 2026 FINANCIAL REPORT. (UNANIMOUS)

9. In the Community - Marketing Update

Martha Espinosa, Deputy Director Grants, Marketing and Business Initiatives, FRWDB, provided an in-depth overview of FRWDB's recent outreach and marketing efforts. She began by sharing that there were several graduation ceremonies during the past quarter. ValleyBuild Oakhurst had 18 graduates, ValleyBuild Fresno had 16 graduates, Forestry Corps had 12 graduates, and EMS Corps program had 18 graduates.

She shared that Mr. Konczal, Director Riojas, and Dr. Becky Barabe attended the National Association of Workforce Boards' annual conference and presented From Pre Apprentice to Apprentice: Building a Scalable Pipeline into the Central Valley, which highlighted the FRWDB's regional ValleyBuild program. Director Montalbano shared that the FRWDB had been working on a pre-apprentice program for automotive technicians that was very close to being launched.

Ms. Espinosa continued her overview by sharing about several different items: The FRWDB's participation in the National Apprenticeship Week by co-hosting an event with Fresno City College to allow local unions and other organizations to share about the different opportunities in their field; FRWDB sponsored 42 of its female ValleyBuild graduates to attend the Union Women Stronger Together conference in San Jose; FRWDB held its annual government job fair Govaganza, in which 326 job seekers attended. FRWDB also participated in a west side roundtable to try to better understand that community's needs and make better connections so that residents know about FRWDB's services. One item that was discussed was the low literacy levels and reduced access to obtaining a GED. Mr. Konczal shared that FRWDB had recently been certified as a HiSET testing center and noted that HiSET is similar to GED. Ms. Espinosa continued her report by sharing about the FRWDB's Business Services Center and provided an overview of their activities, including the relaunch of Fresno4Biz and hosting a Poker Run, which was a Business Resource Fair.

Ms. Espinosa then provided an overview of Boots on the Ground, A Framework for Understanding Poverty. This effort was funded by the Irvine Grant. FRWDB and partner staff all participated in this training effort, which included lunch and learns and a live online workshop reviewing Dr. Ruby Payne's book A Framework for Understanding Poverty. The training ended with all 150 FRWDB and provider staff attending an all-day conference and workshops, with keynote speaker, Dr. Ruby Payne.

This was an information item.

10. Crack the Code: Common Workforce Acronyms

Chair Blunt stated that the FRWDB often uses acronyms in its reports, which can be a challenge for new Board members. At a previous meeting, he requested that FRWDB staff put together an interactive game with FRWDB acronyms. Veronica McAlister, Associate Deputy Director, led the activity for Board members.

This was an information item.

11. Consent Items (A1 – B5)

MADDEN/SOTIROPULOS – APPROVED CONSENT ITEMS. (UNANIMOUS)

12. Recognition of Board Anniversaries

Chair Blunt recognized and presented certificates to Directors whose anniversaries occurred in the months of April through June: Douglas Dart - Three (3) years; Lacy Barnes – 12 years; and Lydia Zabrycki – 20 years. He also acknowledged Mr. Konczal for 24 years as Executive Director of the FRWDB.

This was an information item.

13. Information Sharing

Chair Blunt encouraged Board members to attend some of the FRWDB's graduation ceremonies, if they have the opportunity. He noted that it is great to talk with the graduates and their families and how important it is to see the people rather than just seeing the numbers on a report. Director Riojas encouraged Board members to attend the upcoming ValleyBuild NOW graduation on July 1st.

Director Dart shared that he participated in the United Health Foundation's Fun Run and that the nurse who ran the tent to take care of the runners was a previous Workforce Connection participant.

Ms. McAlister shared that FRWDB had recently hosted a colleague from the Anaheim Workforce Board, at their request, to show them some of the great things FRWDB was doing. She thanked FRWDB and provider staff for spending time with the Anaheim colleague.

This was an information item.

14. Agenda Items for September 9, 2026, Meeting

No items were suggested for the September 9, 2026, FRWDB meeting agenda.

15. Meeting Feedback

There was no meeting feedback.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:31 p.m.