

MINUTES
ARKANSAS WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD
May 3, 2023

The Arkansas Workforce Development Board convened on May 3, 2023, beginning at 10:03 a.m. The meeting was conducted in person. Chairman Tom Anderson presided with the following members voicing their presence: Mr. Thomas Anderson, Commissioner Joseph Baxter; Mr. Len Blaylock, Ms. Karen Breashears, Mr. Miles Crawford, Dr. Charisse Childers, Judge Brandon Ellison, Mr. Randy Finegan, Mr. William French, Mr. Mike Rogers, proxy for Governor Sanders, Rachel Mize, Ms. Candice Lawrence, Ms. Latanyua Robertson, Mr. Brian Marsh, Dr. Trenia Miles, Mr. George Nunnally, Mr. Justin Majors, proxy for Mr. Clint O'Neal, Mr. Kelly Sharpe, Mr. Robert Thorne, and Dr. Megan Lamb, proxy for Dr. Cassandra Williams.

Mr. Randy Henderson, Ms. Abby Houseworth, Ms. Rebecca Ives, Ms. Holley Little, Ms. Julie Roberson, Ms. Shana Chaplain, Mayor James Sanders, and Mr. Charles Johnson were unable to attend.

A quorum was established.

Chairman's Opening Comments: Chairman Anderson moved to the first agenda item.

Agenda Item 1-ACTION-Full Board Meeting Approval: Chairman Anderson asked if there were any revisions/corrections that needed to be made to the February 21, 2023 minutes.

Hearing none, a motion was made by Justin Majors to approve the minutes and seconded by Robert Thorne. The motion carried unanimously with none opposed.

Agenda Item 2-INFORMATIONAL

Chairman's Report- Chairman Anderson acknowledged the state's Chief Workforce Officer- Mr. Mike Rogers, former AWDB Director, Mr. Arnell Willis and thanked Gan Nunnally for helping to host the meeting in Bentonville, AR.

Director's Report- Dr. Charisse Childers acknowledged senior executive staff of ADWS. She continued by sharing her goals of serving employers by connecting jobseekers to available job opportunities and through training and upskilling. Dr. Childers shared the national priorities of USDOL, focusing on four pillars of workforce development. She concluded by reporting the current unemployment rate and labor participation rate and challenged the AWDB and agency representatives to engage in activities that will help put Arkansans back to work. Ms. Lawrence and Mr. Crawford asked follow-up questions concerning staffing and available jobs within the workforce centers.

Report of Staff- Assistant Director, Eddie Thomas provided the board with updates related to the WIOA Title I-B program. Mr. Thomas gave a brief overview of three major projects that the local workforce development boards are working on: Local Board Certification, One Stop Center Certification and Regional & Local Plan modifications. Mr. Thomas also provided an overview of WIOA PY 23 allotments for Title I & III. He concluded by explaining the methodology behind grant awards to states and how WIOA formula funding is calculated.

Report of the Board Director- Director Brown spoke on changing the narrative of what success looks like. Secondly, he discussed how we can find ways to identify what success looks like to the individual we are helping. Lastly, he discussed how we can continue working to increase labor force participation. Director

Brown opened the floor to Ms. Candice Lawrence and Mr. Miles Crawford to discuss their presentation on looking at the local workforce centers from the outside in with the local office managers.

Chairman Anderson opened the floor for comments to Ms. Candice Lawrence and Mr. Miles Crawford.

Agenda Item 3-INFORMATIONAL- Committee Reports: Chairman Anderson reported that the Executive Committee did not meet.

Strategic Planning Committee: Ms. Karen Breashears reported that the strategic planning committee has added new members. Topics discussed at the meeting:

- 1) Common themes across the workforce centers
- 2) Minimum standard that all workforce centers adhere to
- 3) Bringing in new business

Performance Committee: Mr. Len Blaylock provided the update on the committee in Ms. Houseworth's absence. Topics discussed at the meeting:

- 1) Evaluating performance of the One Stops
- 2) Identifying ways to overcome barriers to access
- 3) Efficiency in digital efforts-engagement with Robert McGough

Director Brown announced that the next committee meeting would be a joint meeting with the Strategic Planning Committee and the Performance Committee to discuss item 3 further.

TANF Committee: Mr. Gan Nunnally discussed proposal changes to the TANF eligibility policy and provided an update on federal and state legislation. Congress passed the Consolidated Appropriation Act of 2023 enacted December 29, 2020. It extended channel funding to September 30, 2023. Provided information on legislative acts that affect the TANF program. Act 266 shortened the time span for TEA and Work Pays from 24 to 12 months. Act 832 transfers the TANF program from DWS to DHS effective July 1, 2023.

Chairman Anderson opened the floor for questions.

Agenda Item 4-INFORMATIONAL- Mike Rogers-Chief Workforce Officer: Chief Rogers discussed three topics of discussion.

- 1) Governor Sanders' workforce strategy
- 2) Identifying barriers and becoming a more effective workforce
- 3) Being imaginative; moving beyond where we are presently

Mike Rogers opened the floor for questions and provided responses to the members.

Agenda Item 5- ACTION-ReImagine Arkansas Workforce Grant: Mr. Thomas provided an update on the ReImagine Arkansas Workforce Grant. The grant is provided by the U.S. Department of Education, and it was awarded for three years to the Arkansas Workforce Development Board to serve individuals impacted by COVID. Two subrecipients of the grant are the University of Arkansas and Shorter College. The grant amount was a little over \$13 million dollars. Dr. Valentine, from Shorter College provided a presentation on how the funds of the ReImagine Grant are currently being used. Ms. Mandy Epley from the University of Arkansas presented a video of their program's usage of the ReImagine Grant funds.

Chairman Anderson opened the floor for questions. Board members asked several questions regarding the effectiveness of the program with answers provided by Dr. Valentine and Ms. Mandy Epley. Chairman Anderson charged AD Thomas with following up with the staff at the University of Arkansas to get answers to the members questions regarding the presentation. The board agreed to schedule an executive committee at a later date to discuss requesting a one-year no cost extension for the grant.

Agenda Item 6- INFORMATIONAL-Arkansas 211: Mr. Dallas Mud provided an overview of Arkansas 211 program. Arkansas 211 is a twenty four hour, seven days a week information and referral hotline. At the end of his presentation, Mr. Mudd opened the floor for questions, and he answered questions from the members.

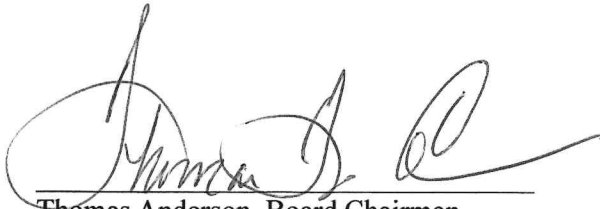
Agenda Item 7- INFORMATIONAL- Upscale Northwest Arkansas: Ms. Carol Morales provided an overview of the Upscale Northwest Arkansas Program. Ms. Morales provided a brief historical background of the program and discussed program eligibility requirements. At the end of her presentation, Ms. Morales opened the floor for questions, and she answered questions from the members.

Agenda Item 8-INFORMATIONAL-WIOA Partners Update: For the sake of time, Chairman Anderson asked the core partners to forego their presentations during this meeting. The board meeting packet contains information regarding each partners' report.

Agenda Item 9-INFORMATIONAL-Northwest Arkansas Workforce Board: Ms. Patty Methvin, Workforce Director, discussed the disparities across the counties in Northwest Arkansas and shared several promising practices occurring in the workforce region.

Public Speaking Opportunity: Chairman opened the floor for public comment; Mr. Dennis Williamson provided remarks on behalf of the Western Arkansas Workforce Development Board and asked the board to support reverse jobs fairs initiatives.

Adjourn: Chairman Anderson asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. A motion was made by Robert Thorne and seconded by Judge Brandon Ellison. The motion carried unanimously with none opposed. Meeting adjourned at 2:30p.m.

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Thomas Anderson, Board Chairman
Arkansas Workforce Development Board

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Charisee Childers', written over a horizontal line.

Charisee Childers, Director
Arkansas Division of Workforce Services

*Minutes recorded by Eddie Thomas/Victoria Hall
Arkansas Division of Workforce Services Staff*