



Benton Franklin Workforce Development Council (BFWDC)

Executive Committee Minutes

September 24, 2024, 4:00 p.m., Zoom

Call to Order & Welcome

Todd Samuel called the meeting to order at 4:01 p.m. Todd welcomed all in attendance and thanked them for taking the time to support the mission and vision of the BFWDC.

Gabby Torres conducted a roll call of board members and staff to the board, and a quorum was present. Todd and Gabby welcomed virtual guests, asking them to communicate their names and organization using the Zoom chat feature. Todd reminded those in attendance to have cameras on, to capture who was speaking.

Minutes

July 30 and August 27, 2024, Executive Committee meeting minutes were presented and reviewed for a motion to approve.

Todd Samuel called for a motion to approve the Executive Committee meeting minutes from the July 30 and August 27, 2024, Committee meeting.

Amanda Jones motioned to approve; Adolfo de Leon seconded and unanimously approved.

BFWDC Finance Reports as submitted for the period ending July 2024 – DeAnn Bock

Statement of Budget to Actual Expenditures (For Period 7/1/24 – 9/15/24)

The financials were included in the packet. DeAnn Bock presented the finance reports, detailing donations received through PayPal and Stripe. She clarified the donation process and the recent updates to the donation page.

Staff Accountant

DeAnn Bock announced the departure of Nidia and the plan to rehire a staff accountant.

CliftonLarsenAllen (CLA) Audit

The CLA audit has been rescheduled to December, with DeAnn working on the necessary documents.

BFWDC Updates – Cynthia N. Garcia /All

PY23 State Monitoring Report

The state monitored 40 participant files and reported no findings, unresolved questioned costs, or disallowed costs during the monitoring. While there were no major findings, the state did identify some minor issues related to data entry by case managers that the BFWDC needs to address. The BFWDC will be putting a local monitoring plan in place to ensure they are closely tracking and addressing the data entry issues identified by the state. The state will also be reviewing the BFWDC's report on the data entry issues during their next visit to ensure the BFWDC is properly addressing them. Overall, the BFWDC received a very positive monitoring report, with no significant findings or issues identified. Cynthia Garcia and the BFWDC team were commended for their excellent work and quality assurance efforts. The PY23 state monitoring resulted in a clean report for the BFWDC, with only minor data entry issues that the organization is proactively addressing through enhanced local monitoring and oversight. Cynthia expressed gratitude to the team as she is aware that this takes a large amount of focus, quality assurance, collaboration, and knowledge to have no findings.



WSCB Memorandum of Understanding and Infrastructure Agreement (MOU/IFA)

BFWDC Staff are actively updating the WSCB MOU and IFA to reflect the current partnership, responsibilities, and strategic goals, intending to make it a more meaningful and useful document for all involved.

- WIOA Title 1 Youth Services are provided at both Workforce Columbia Basin and TC Futures.
- Connection Sites (Grace Kitchen and Mid-Columbia Library Benton-City)
- Partners' contact information
- Partner responsibilities and goals
- Strategic Goals and Objectives- per our local strategic plan
- IFA allocations by program

BFWDC wants to ensure the MOU and IFA are living documents the partners refer to and use to guide their partnership, rather than just static documents. Cynthia asked for any additional feedback.

Current Funding Opportunities

Digital Equity Grants:

BFWDC submitted two applications for digital equity grants in partnership with the Washington Workforce Association (WWA). These funds intend to ensure equitable access to broadband and digital resources across underserved communities, as well as to create a strong, consistent digital navigator program. The BFWDC is requesting \$681,000 through the WWA grant application for this four-year program.

Goodwill Grant Application:

The BFWDC also submitted a \$299,000 grant application in partnership with Goodwill for a four-year program. The purpose of this grant is similar to the digital equity grants, focused on providing digital skills training, purchasing devices, and making internet access more affordable for customers and the general population.

Three Rivers Community Foundation Grant:

BFWDC, in collaboration with Crystal Bright, wrote a proposal to the Three Rivers Community Foundation to request unrestricted funds. The goal is to have funds available to provide customers with immediate needs, such as transportation, tools, or other items, without requiring them to go through a full enrollment process for a program. The project was named "SUCCEED" (Services Unlocking Comprehensive Community Enrichment and Empowering Dreams).

BFWDC is actively seeking various diverse grant opportunities to expand its ability to support the community and provide more comprehensive services to its customers.

Programs and Business Services Overview – Jessie Cardwell

Department of Commerce Visit 09/18/24

On 09/18/24, the Department of Commerce Grant Manager, who is responsible for overseeing Community Reinvestment Funds, and the Employment Security Department Grant Manager visited the Benton Franklin Workforce Development Council leadership and Career Path Services. During the 2-hour meeting, they discussed how the local area is utilizing the Community Reinvestment Funds, including the use of incentives and business services. The Department of Commerce representatives were enthusiastic about the local implementation and had candid conversations about participants potentially staying in the program longer due to the \$1,000/month incentives. BFWDC acknowledged the risk but clarified that their aim is not to incentivize people to stay in the program, but rather to enable them to make better



long-term decisions about their careers and education. Jessie reported that the Department of Commerce visit was positive, with representatives expressing excitement about the work being done locally with the Community Reinvestment Funds.

Economic Security for all Tour 10/23/24

Jessie Cardwell mentions the upcoming Economic Security for All tour. The tour will highlight the state's Economic Security for All (EcSA) program and the Community Reinvestment Funds. Legislators and media will be invited to participate in the tour. The tour will start at the WorkSource Columbia Basin office, where John Traugott Washington Workforce Association Executive Director will provide an overview of EcSA. The BFWDC will then overview the local implementation of EcSA, and Career Path Services will discuss their work as a pilot area. The group will then visit one of the businesses that have received Community Reinvestment Funds to discuss the impact on their business. They will also speak with participants about how the Community Reinvestment Funds have affected their lives, with a focus on the ALICE (Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed) population.

Community Reinvestment Funds – Match Investment Savings Accounts

During the meeting, Jessie Cardwell announced that the BFWDC plans to introduce a new "Match Investment Savings Account" as part of the Community Reinvestment Funds. This account will enable participants to save money, and the BFWDC will match their savings 2-to-1, up to \$10,000. The program is open to EcSA (Economic Security for All) and WIOA Title 1B program participants. The primary objective is to assist participants in accumulating capital that they can utilize to start their businesses or achieve other financial goals. The BFWDC is collaborating with a local bank (Washington Trust Bank) to establish the infrastructure for these match investment savings accounts.

Board Elections – October

The annual board elections are scheduled for Tuesday, October 29, Cynthia presented the pending officer positions for election.

- Board of Directors Chair: Todd Samuel
- Vice Chair: Adolfo de Leon
- Board of Directors Treasurer: Todd Samuel
- Board of Directors Secretary: Lynn Ramos-Braswell

This information has gone to the full board of directors, and as of today, staff have not received any nominations or interest from other board members. Cynthia requested current officers to inform BFWDC staff via email whether they are interested in continuing serving in their current role for another year and to submit their interest and nominations by the end of the day on Monday, October 28.

Recruitment Packet

Cyndelle has created a Board of Directors Recruitment packet, containing all the information needed for potential new members interested in joining the BFWDC. The packet aims to help new board members understand their roles and responsibilities and integrate smoothly into the organization. It provides information about the BFWDC's history, values, and governing practices, and includes an application for potential new board members to complete. The BFWDC is seeking feedback from the current board members on the recruitment packet by the end of this week. The goal is to finalize the packet as soon as possible, but additional time can be provided if needed. Once finalized, the recruitment packet will be distributed to the full board. The BFWDC plans to use this packet for the onboarding of new board members going forward.



Board Onboarding and Orientation Outline

Cynthia presented the board orientation checklist for review and discussion. The outline is designed to help new board members understand their roles and responsibilities and smoothly integrate into our organization. It includes familiarizing new board members with the BFWDC's history, values, and governing practices. The goal is to complete onboarding and orientation within 30 days of a new board member joining. However, the BFWDC recognizes that this timeline may be flexible depending on the needs of the new board member. The BFWDC is seeking feedback from current board members on the onboarding and orientation outline by the end of this week. Once finalized, the onboarding and orientation outline will be implemented for all new board members. The BFWDC wants to ensure new members feel confident, informed, and empowered to contribute effectively from the start. The development of this comprehensive onboarding and orientation outline demonstrates the BFWDC's commitment to properly integrating and supporting new board members as they join the organization.

Board Buddy – Mentor Program

Board buddies play a crucial role in creating a welcoming and supportive environment for our new board members. The guidance provided by our experienced board members is essential in ensuring that new members feel confident, informed, and empowered to make effective contributions from the beginning of their term.

Currently, there is one new board member, John Raschko representing Business, who still needs to be assigned a board buddy. The BFWDC staff has not expanded the search to other board members yet, as they would prefer to start with the executive committee members first.

Amanda Jones has volunteered to mentor John Raschko.

Calendar of Events – Quarterly Center Tours

Program Year 2024 Board Retreat

Staff are proposing our PY24 Board Retreat on March 12, 2025. They plan to reach out to board members interested in hosting the event at their facility.

Scheduling of Center Tours

The BFWDC has scheduled WorkSource Columbia Basin tours and is coordinating with Crystal Bright to ensure the tour times work for participants. Staff have also coordinated with Melanie regarding tours of the TC Futures location.

New Member Election (Needs a vote)

Cynthia N. Garcia presented Amelia Kittson, Executive Vice President of KIE (Kennewick Industrial and Electrical Supply), a family-owned and operated business since 1955. Amelia is responsible for setting and managing the company's comprehensive strategic direction, vision, and day-to-day operations. She works with management to set individual and collective goals aligned with overall company goals and develops and executes plans to achieve desired results. Amelia identifies areas for process improvement and leads initiatives to enhance operational performance. She develops and manages budgets for various departments and implements cost-control measures intended to optimize resource allocation. Additionally, she handles official communication on behalf of the company, signs official documents, and makes legally binding decisions.

Amelia has expressed a strong desire to continue making a positive contribution in our community by helping shape a workforce development system that meets the needs of employers and individuals.



Cynthia requested a motion to move forward with the process of appointing Amelia Kittson as a board member representing the business sector.

Todd called for a motion to approve the appointment of Amelia Kittson as a board member, representing business.

Todd motioned to approve; Lynn Ramos-Braswell seconded and unanimously approved.

Donation Page and Corporate Sponsorship

DeAnn Bock presented a report on the donations received through the BFWDC's PayPal and Stripe accounts since the donation page was launched. The donations ranged from \$5 to \$300, with the most recent donation being \$99.34. Cynthia Garcia mentioned that the BFWDC wants to update the donation page to include testimonials from clients about how the donated funds have been used, such as to purchase bus passes. They are still waiting to receive additional testimonials to feature on the page. Cynthia Garcia acknowledged that the BFWDC needs to do a better job of promoting the donation page and website to increase awareness and donations. DeAnn Bock noted that the most recent donations came from BFWDC staff, and she encouraged board members to also consider making donations. The BFWDC is open to feedback from board members on how to improve the donation page and the information presented about the use of donated funds.

Round Table

Todd Samuel opened the floor for any additional comments or noteworthy updates from the participants. No comments or good of the order items were discussed.

Adjournment

Todd Samuel adjourned the executive committee meeting at 5:12 p.m.

Next Meeting

Executive Committee Meeting – Tuesday, October 29, 2024, 3:00 p.m. TC Futures | Zoom Hybrid
Quarterly Board Meeting – Tuesday, October 29, 2024, at 4:00 p.m. TC Futures | Zoom Hybrid

Attendance

Chief Local Elected Officials	Board Members	Staff to the Board	Guests	Excused
Clint Didier	Todd Samuel	DeAnn Bock	Jan Warren	Cyndelle Howell
Will McKay	Amanda Jones	Cynthia Garcia	Heather Woodruff	
	Lynn Ramos-Braswell	Gabby Torres		
	Adolfo de Leon	Jessie Cardwell		

Respectfully Submitted:

Todd Samuel, Board Chairperson 10/30/2024
D7F28D83A93B41F...
Todd Samuel, Board Chair & Treasurer Date

Signed by:
Lynn Ramos-Braswell, Board Secretary 10/30/2024
8AD325D6DAE94FE...
Lynn Ramos-Braswell, Board Secretary Date