



Benton Franklin Workforce Development Council (BFWDC)

Executive Committee Minutes

January 28, 2025, 3:00 p.m., Tri-Cities Regional Chamber of Commerce | Zoom

Call to Order & Welcome

Todd Samuel called the meeting to order at 3:07 p.m. Todd welcomed all in attendance and thanked them for taking the time to support the mission and vision of the BFWDC.

Cyndelle conducted a roll call of board members and staff to the board, and a quorum was present. Todd and Cyndelle 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

November 26, 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 Committee meeting on November 26, 2024.

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

BFWDC Budget and Staffing Updates – DeAnn Bock

Fiscal Director, DeAnn Bock presented the Statement of Cash Flows for the Corporate Entity, highlighting a \$4,500 deposit from a grant to be used for WorkSource items. Todd Samuel emphasized the significance of the BFWDC obtaining the \$4,500 in unrestricted funds, as it has been a long-standing goal of the board to secure such flexible funding. She reviewed BFWDC's Statement of Budget to Actual Expenditures (For Period 7/1/24 – 11/15/24), noting they were over budget in the "Dues, Fees, and Subscriptions" category due to interpreter services for a Rapid Response event. The Statement of Budget to Actual for WSCB was also presented.

DeAnn indicated that BFWDC's finances are in a good position, with expenditures at around 50% of the budget, which is on track for the mid-year point. DeAnn introduced Raul, the new staff accountant who has joined the BFWDC team, bringing experience in accounts payable from another nonprofit. She expressed her excitement about Raul's skills in Excel and his ability to support BFWDC's financial management. DeAnn noted that the BFWDC is monitoring some funding balances that may need to be transferred to partner organizations, as they are unlikely to be fully utilized by the BFWDC.

Program Performance – Jessie Cardwell

Jessie provided a comprehensive update on the performance and key initiatives across the adult, dislocated worker, youth, QUEST, and EcSA programs, highlighting both successes and challenges. She noted that enrollments in the adult program are somewhat behind schedule, partly due to larger caseloads from state incentives. Spending is also behind, but it is noted that \$40,000 is planned for adult training services in February. Regarding the dislocated worker program, Jessie highlighted a busy quarter focused on rapid response efforts, serving workers from CPCCo, Lamb Weston, and Tri-Cities Motorsport. She emphasized the valuable partnership with the Washington State Labor Council, which provided a peer outreach worker to connect with the laid-off Lamb Weston employees. The youth program exceeds its goals in most areas, except for training. Jessie explained that youth typically receive



more work experience than formal training. She noted the success of the "Dignified Work" cohort, which offers job readiness, life skills, and financial literacy training for youth. Additionally, the youth program partnered with 4-H ambassadors to provide resume and job readiness training. Enrolments in the state EcSA program have slowed down, due to previously doubling their target due to incentives. For the federal EcSA program, there will be a contract modification to adjust funding and program goals. Jessie also discussed the success of the Community Reinvestment Funds, which have provided over \$1.3million in incentives to customers. She shared a success story about a customer who was able to purchase a car and secure stable housing through the program.

Executive Committee At-Large Members – Todd Samuel

The bylaws currently indicate that the Executive Committee must have one at-large board member representing each of the two counties (Benton and Franklin). Cynthia Garcia introduced Andrew Cook and Megan McCary as the new at-large board members for Franklin and Benton Counties, respectively.

Todd Samuel called for a motion to approve the At-Large candidates as presented.

The group discussed the importance of having engaged board members and the process for their approval.

Amanda Jones motioned to approve candidates. The motion was unanimously approved by the Executive Committee.

Executive Director Updates – Cynthia N. Garcia

Bylaw Updates:

Cynthia expressed gratitude for sharing their feedback on the roles and responsibilities of the Board Members and Officers. All input has been reviewed and incorporated into the Bylaws and will be included in the consent agenda for the following next meeting.

One-Stop Operator RFP:

The current One Stop Operator contract expires on June 30, 2025. The RFP is on track to be released as planned. In the coming week, we'll be reaching out to you (board members) to form an OSO RFP Committee, where we will review all relevant details and the next steps. Having board engagement and input will be crucial as BFWDC staff move forward with this process. As a reminder, the OSO under WIOA (Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act) is designed to help coordinate services provided at our one-stop career center- WSCB. OSO's role is to ensure that various partner organizations work together effectively and efficiently. This coordination helps improve the overall experience for individuals seeking employment services and job training, ensuring they get the support they need seamlessly. It is important to mention that the last time we completed this process was back in March 2021.

Executive Orders:

Cynthia informed the attendees about the issuance of Training Employment Notice 21-24 on January 22, 2025. The Notice mandates all Local Boards to cease activities related to "diversity, equity, and inclusion" (DEI) or "diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility" (DEIA) associated with federal awards, in compliance with recent Executive Orders. These changes follow Executive Orders titled "Ending Radical and Wasteful Government DEI Programs and Preferencing" dated January 20, 2025, and "Ending Illegal Discrimination and Restoring Merit-Based Opportunity" dated January 21, 2025.



Cynthia highlighted that, while we fully embrace and comply with these new requirements, our dedication to creating a workplace where every employee is valued, respected, and empowered to do their best work remains unwavering. In alignment with our commitment to delivering exceptional service to all customers, we will continue fostering an environment grounded in fairness and respect for all. As we assess the broader implications of this Executive Order—and any others that may impact our work—we will provide further updates.

Round Table

No additional discussion or good of the order items was brought forward as the quarterly board meeting is following.

Adjournment

Todd Samuel adjourned the Executive Committee meeting at 3:49 p.m., with the Quarterly Board Meeting following.

Next Meeting

Executive Committee Meeting – Tuesday, February 25, 4:00 p.m. WSCB | Zoom Hybrid
Quarterly Board Meeting – Tuesday, April 29, 2025, at 4:00 p.m. TBD | Zoom Hybrid

Attendance

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

Respectfully Submitted:
Todd Samuel, BFWDC Board Chairman 5/8/2025

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Todd Samuel, Board Chair Date

Signed by:
Lynn Ramos-Braswell, Board Secretary 5/8/2025

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Lynn Ramos-Braswell, Board Secretary Date