



**Benton-Franklin Workforce Development Council (BFWDC)**

**Youth Committee Minutes**

May 17<sup>th</sup>, 2023, at 3:30 pm – Zoom.

**Board Present**

Alicia Perches  
Lynn Ramos Braswell  
Leticia (Lety) Torres

**Ex-Officio Present**

Cinthia Alvarez  
David Wheeler

**BFWDC Staff Present**

Becky Tuno  
Cyndelle Howell  
Isaac Estrada  
Cynthia Garcia  
Jessie Cardwell  
Tiffany Alviso  
Carya Bair  
David Chavey-Reynaud

**Guests**

Kayci Loftus  
Heather Woodruff  
Melanie Olson

**Absent**

Robert (Bob) Legard  
Jamie Turner-Ohl

**Ex-Officio Excused**

Paul Randall

**Call to Order**

Lynn Ramos-Braswell called the meeting to order at 3:32 pm.

Cyndelle welcomed meeting participants and provided a roll call of committee members and staff to the board; a Quorum was met.

Cyndelle requested that system partners, guests, and presenters use the chat feature to know who has joined.

**Motion to approve Youth Committee Minutes**

The Minutes from the February 15<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Youth Committee Meeting was provided for members to review.

*Alicia Perches motioned to approve the February 15<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Youth Committee Minutes as presented, seconded by Lynn Ramos-Braswell; the motion was carried unanimously to approval.*

**BFWDC E-Vote Follow-up – David Chavey-Reynaud**

At our April 25, 2023, Quarterly Board meeting, the Board voted to approve the WIOA Title 1B Contracts, including Youth, to Career Path Services, effective July 1st, 2023, to June 30th, 2024.

The WIOA Youth program improves the quality of the workforce and enhances the productivity and competitiveness of Benton and Franklin workforce by preparing eligible youth for unsubsidized employment opportunities, placement into post-secondary education and training, and connections to employers for work in priority industries. WIOA Youth program services include activities that support high school completion, preparation for post-secondary education, occupational skills development, employability skills development, social skills development, and provision of supportive resources.

The BFWDC staff requested your recommendation to approve the contract amount listed below to continue providing services to eligible youth.

Motion to award RFP #2023-01 WIOA Title IB Dislocated Worker/Adult/Youth Services Contracts to Career Path Services, Effective July 1, 2023, to June 30th, 2024

*Lety Torres motioned to award RFP #2023-01 WIOA Title 1B Dislocated Worker/Adult/Youth Services Contracts to Career Path Services, Effective July 1, 2023, to June 30th, 2024, and four years followed; the motion was carried unanimously to approval via eVote.*

**2023 National Association of Job Assistance (NAJA) Conference Take Aways – Cynthia & Jessie**

**Child Care** – National lack of availability, expensive, disproportionate effect on women. This issue must be addressed as access to childcare, and the costs are significant challenges for parents. Some strategies mentioned were to look for grants to support childcare expenses and help those parents afford childcare to reach their employment goals. This helps promote providers’ stability and encourages more involvement in the childcare system. Another strategy was to promote incentives for those in the informal childcare systems, such as family, friends, and neighbors who provide this support, and then invest more in childcare workers.

She explained that part of the problem is access to childcare; childcare agencies are actively looking for talent so that they can open space to enroll more children. In childcare facilities and schools, there's a ratio of the number of kids to staff allowed. And so, this is an issue in their area. Furthermore, when they do get access, childcare costs are so high that it's hard for employees to afford them, and they decide not to return to work.

**Diversified Funding** – Need for funding outside of WIOA Title 1B—for example, ARPA, Youth Build, and state and local funding opportunities.

It was shared that throughout the conference, ARPA money was referenced extensively, as well as Hire 360, a philanthropic company, to provide services that a strict WIOA law cannot. Youth Build, a community-based education program serving the same population currently being served in Benton & Franklin counties, was a hot topic; youths 16-24 who have left high school before graduation have other risk factors. They will keep a close eye on the next round of funding.

- Cynthia and David are working with ESD123 and CPS, and we are pursuing CCWA funding.
  - The intent is to create clear pathways in the Technology, Healthcare, and Trades sectors. This proposal is due 6/14/23.
- Becky is working on a Department of Labor (DOL) grant for Infrastructure.
  - Initial information is due May 31st.

If you are aware of unrestricted funding opportunities, please let a BFWDC Team member know.

**WIOA Reauthorization** - Working on adding flexibility to WIOA Eligibility documentation, marketing and outreach, and Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL)- not this year.

This authorization will positively impact our customers. Some focus areas are to provide more flexibility to WIOA eligibility requirements and flexibility to utilize WIOA funding for marketing and outreach. Jessie shared that the Department of Labor (DOL) is developing an ETPL tool kit to make it easier for training providers to get on the ETPL and give WIOA participants more opportunities to receive training.

**The Power of Partnerships** - Mission alignment amongst partners is essential to build a shared resource network. This work is not a competition between agencies. When agencies have missions that align and can form a network to serve customers, the customers are the ones who benefit the most. They can access various services to help them reach their employment or training goals. Agencies do as well; resources are stretched to serve more people, and best practices are shared and learned from. They are creating a network of partners to design innovative solutions to address business needs, prepare individuals, and connect them to career opportunities through partnerships.

An example of this in their area is their Rapid Response Events: Jasmine Sanchez is their local Rapid Response Coordinator, and she does a fantastic job of coordinating services for impacted workers and employers when a layoff occurs. She quickly gets everyone to the table to provide affected workers with information to navigate their layoffs. Partners in this network include ESD to provide UI information, WSCB to provide basic service information, CPS for DW to provide specific program information, Community Health Plan of Washington for healthcare, CBCs worker retraining, and 211.

Revenue Generators - This is the power they bring to their community and was something heard from a speaker from DOL that describes their work. They create revenue generators; this positively impacts their community as they help individuals become productive tax-paying citizens who shop locally and are self-sufficient. Their commodity is what employers want, talented candidates to fill their vacant positions.

#### **WIOA Youth Program Updates- Cynthia Garcia**

Cynthia provided a synopsis of the Out of School Youth program summary report provided with the meeting materials. She overviewed program expenditures, actual outcomes, and targets. Cynthia asked all to review the Program Performance Summary for more details and highlights.

The BFWDC Team started the pre-monitoring work at the end of April, and the state has started reviewing policies virtually; next week, they will be on-site monitoring in-person (the week of May 22<sup>nd</sup>).

#### **Together We Rise – Outreach to Historically Disadvantaged Communities (OHDC)– Isaac/Becky**

Isaac provided an overview of OHDC program activities. Isaac covered outreach, including resource fairs and campaigns to reach more individuals and increase enrollments. In partnership with 211 Greater Columbia, they leverage social media digital advertising to increase SNAP applicants. These advertisements have been proven to be highly effective in reaching their target audience and generating engagement, as over the last month of April, they've received over 386 calls referencing the SNAP program. Other ongoing outreach and marketing efforts have included strategies ranging from digital media and commercials to direct staffing. And with this grant, they've been able to help promote programs and services to increase enrollments in multiple programs such as the National Farmworkers job program and supportive services for family veterans and vocational rehabilitation programs with the Department of Services for the Blind and BFET with ESD and so many others. They're excited to continue to see marketing campaigns result in connecting clients. The other component of their grant included research, and they were able to contract with Sonar Insights, a local market research agency that conducted focus groups and surveys, providing data analysis to help them gain insights into the best communication and outreach practices toward underserved communities within their region. They're sharing the research findings, creating discussions to inform partners and stakeholders, and disseminating one-pagers of the work.

#### **TC Future Updates/Participant Success Story – Melanie/Heather**

Heather shared TC Futures' April highlights and reported on TC Futures (OSY/Open Door) program enrollments and GED month-to-date and year-to-date completions. Work continues with planning for the "Future Fest" event on May 11<sup>th</sup>. They have 24 confirmed training programs, employers, and education providers to network and provide information about their services. Melanie and Heather discussed co-enrollments, both month and year-to-date. The positive work that programs are doing locally was discussed; the WSAC Challenge grant had a kick-off meeting with multiple partners from throughout the community. This event has allowed for great networking and relationship building.

#### **Guest Speaker: Sarah Goedhart, Head Wine Maker, Hedges Winery- Video – Cynthia**

Cynthia introduced Sarah, General Manager of Hedges Winery, to the meeting attendees. Cynthia shared that this is a pre-recorded video, and Sarah has shared great interest in connecting with the Youth Committee and Programs in contributing to the work experience opportunities.

Sarah described her background in the Winemaking industry for 20 years and reviewed the different types of positions they hire for and the qualifications needed. She explained that they are a quality employer offering a 401k and vacation and sick time to vineyard workers, which is very rare. She demonstrated their variety of work and the benefit of working at Hedges Winery. Challenges they face are still with logistics and shipping. They don't always get their supplies on time, which halts some operations.

**Agency Updates/Connections- Business Updates, Challenges, Successes, and Upcoming Events - All**

Cinthia Alvarez, K-12 Partnership Director at CBC, provided updates on upcoming happenings. They have received a Title-5 Grant, which will allow CBC to build a multicultural center – to be named the Equity Center, with positions for the director for equity and dean of diversity, equity and inclusion being filled recently. In December, Cinthia led work by a task force to create more assistance for undocumented students. Through this task force, they were able to research how to meet the needs of undocumented students and could bridge the gap by gaining approval to hire an appointed person to help undocumented youth. They want the equity center to be a space where they bring agencies and partners in to help underrepresented and undocumented students in need.

**Next Meetings**

- Youth Committee Meeting- Wednesday, July 19<sup>th</sup>, 2023, from 3:30 p.m. TC Futures/Zoom Hybrid
- Quarterly Board - Tuesday, July 25<sup>th</sup>, at 4:00 p.m. WSCB/Zoom Hybrid

**Adjournment**

With no further business, the meeting of the Youth Committee adjourned at 4:32 pm.

Respectfully submitted:

DocuSigned by:  
*Lynn Ramos-Braswell* / 27/2023  
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Lynn Ramos-Braswell, Board Member

DocuSigned by:  
*Cyndelle Howell* 7/27/2023  
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Cyndelle Howell, Administrative Assistant