



## Benton Franklin Workforce Development Council (BFWDC)

### Executive Committee Minutes

July 27, 2021

3:15 p.m.

Zoom

#### Present

Commissioner Didier  
Todd Samuel  
Adolfo de Leon  
Melanie Olson  
Dennis Williamson

#### Excused

Commissioner McKay  
Amanda Jones

#### Absent

N/A

#### BFWDC Staff

Tiffany Scott  
Jan Warren  
Diana Hamilton  
Cynthia Garcia  
Jamilet Nerell  
Jessie Cardwell  
DeAnn Bock

#### BFWDC Staff Excused

David Chavey-Reynaud

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#### Call to Order

Todd Samuel called the meeting to order at 3:15 p.m. and thanked everyone for attending. Todd Samuel reviewed the Mission and Vision Statements and thanked everyone for their service.

Tiffany Scott presented a land tribute acknowledging the traditional, ancestral territories of the Cayuse, Walla Walla, and Palouse 1<sup>st</sup> Nations.

Tiffany Scott reported excused absences and conducted roll call of the Benton-Franklin County Commissioners, BFWDC Executive Members, and BFWDC Staff.

#### Minutes

Tiffany Scott provided the minutes from the June 29, 2021, Executive Committee Meeting for members to review.

*Williamson moved to approve June 29, 2021, Executive Committee Meeting Minutes as presented, seconded by Olson. Motion carried.*

#### Finance Reports

Jan Warren presented the May 2021 financials of the BFWDC. The WorkSource partnership included maintenance and the building rent, and these items are paid as usual. Jan stated that some maintenance and cleaning projects were scheduled at the end of June 2021 that will be reflected on statements next month.

Overall, Jan expected spending to end up at about 95% of the budgeted amount for last Program Year (PY) 20 (July 1, 2020 – June 30, 2021).

#### PY21 Budget

Jan Warren created a memo for Executive Board Members and the Full Board membership for the motion at the Full Quarterly Board Meeting to reference. The correspondence outlines the BFWDC philosophy and a bit about our methods as we advance for PY 21 (July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2022).

Jan also shared a document containing the allocations for PY 21. It captures estimated projections for the carry-in of PY 20 resources. The amounts reflected are her best guess. The top blue part of the document is the current year funding, and then you'll see the column for projected expenses for the end of the year. In addition, you will notice what has been obligated for our sub-recipient. Jan commented that the BFWDC does have until August 31, 2021, to submit expenses for reimbursement. This process allows our sub-recipient to close out their books and reconcile their accruals. Down at the bottom of the document in the purple shaded area are the current year awards and the anticipated carrying from the prior year. This is an overview of how awards for our service providers are developed.

Jan presented the proposed BFWDC budget effective 7-2-21. She used the same format that's presented to the Board each year. It has become a little bit clunky as the BFWDC has increased revenue through different kinds of grants. Some have ending dates that are in the middle of the year. This is a bit of an awkward flow when we don't just use formula grants. Jan mentioned that she and DeAnn would be working in upcoming years to create a more useful format and give the BFWDC an idea of the position of each grant within our revenue streams.

Jan pointed out to members that the funding for our local area has decreased slightly from PY20 levels when looking at the prior-year comparison. One large contributor is that the Families Forward Washington (FFW) Grant ended on June 30. In the proposed budget, you will see reflected the remaining Economic Security for All (EcSA) funds and the resources for our two National Dislocated Worker Grants (NDWGs). The BFWDC has a new revenue stream in the Community Development Block Grant CDBG). Jan shared that the Rapid Response (RR) funding was scheduled to end on June 30, but we did receive an extension from the state to continue to use those funds through the end of this calendar year. Jan communicated that the cost pools reflected are the funds available to the BFWDC for operating expenses.

Jan noted that the BFWDC has been very generous this year with awarding the carry-in resources to our subs in their contracts. It felt like this was the best way to utilize those funds, which will effectively eliminate the first quarter cap for the WIOA Adult a Dislocated Worker programs. This will allow our sub-recipient to continue providing training and career services seamlessly without those funding restrictions that we typically experienced in the first quarter.

The monthly rent for Tri-Cities (TC) Futures is reflected in this budget in addition to the allowance for some additional purchases. Jan shared then we did put an allowance for some other purchases.

Regarding the BFWDC rent, a new three-year lease was signed effective July 1, 2021. Jan pointed out other line-item components were staffing, professional services, training and equipment rentals, insurance, and memberships. Jan then asked members if they had any questions she could answer. There were none.

Todd Samuel complemented Jan Warren for doing a great job laying out very clearly the proposed budget. As chair, he called for a motion to approve.

*Olson moved to approve the July 1, 2021, BFWDC annual budget as presented, seconded by Williamson. Motion carried.*

### **Liaison Report**

Cynthia Garcia summarized information from the WorkSource Columbia Basin section. When comparing the numbers to June 2019, WorkSource was down by 22% in total staff assistance seekers and down by 9% in services provided to job seekers. The business services growth is still strong, with the unique number of businesses up by 45% from 2020. Cynthia shared that a

total of 302 youth and young adult customers were served at TC Futures during PY20. The co-enrollment between WIOA Out of School Youth and Open Doors has doubled. Noted also was that 55 customers attained their GED. Cynthia commented that when looking at all WIOA Title 1 programs, they are 84% of the goal. Of important note is that this is the last time FFW will be including in the Liaison Report. The new CDBG contract with the Department of Commerce will replace it.

There were no changes reported for the top occupations, licenses, and certifications from last month. Unemployment rates have dropped to 5.1% in Benton County and 5.8% in Franklin County. Cynthia articulated that the local retail trade is still going strong. The Tri-Cities has made the most robust recovery in this sector compared to the rest of the state.

There have been 2000 jobs added to our economy from May 2020 to May 2021. And there continues to be a high demand for job seekers in the following sectors hospitality, construction, government, and healthcare industries. The Tri-Cities is above 100% of job recovery for COVID-19 job losses. Cynthia took the opportunity to thank and congratulate our system partners for their ongoing commitment and dedication to assisting our community.

Todd thanked Cynthia for the presentation.

### **CEO Update**

Tiffany Scott shared that the Washington Workforce Association (WWA) is currently in an advocacy space. The association recently presented a motion to the State Workforce Board that was approved. The motion asked for Black Indigenous People of Color (BIPOC) to be added as a WIOA target population. Now, we are waiting for Governor Inslee to communicate the addition officially. Then subsequent policy adjustments will be made both at the state and local levels.

Tiffany commented that WWA continues to push for flexibility during the COVID-19 pandemic. This is done through partnership at the State Policy Committee, and Tiffany is the WWA sponsor lead of this forum. Currently, WWA is waiting on feedback from Employment Security and the State Workforce Board regarding their definition of "open" as it applies to specific Workforce Information Notices and Policy flexibility. This definition, once determined will impact local workforce systems in one way or another.

Tiffany articulated that WorkSource Columbia Basin signage and electronic outreach is drawing customers into the facility. Appointments are being offered, and since the physical facility doors opened in early July, capacity has been at 25% or below following the local physical reopening plan. With federal Unemployment Insurance (UI) benefits scheduled to conclude in September, we anticipate seeing more customers reaching out for services. Tiffany complemented the Benton-Franklin Workforce Consortium (BFWC) and their staff for the strong leadership prior to and during the transition back to WSCB. She also shared details regarding the phases approach bringing back team members and supporting a partner-driven culture.

### **Roundtable**

Melanie Olson commented that there are real struggles in the healthcare industry, particularly with getting employees to fill job openings. Melanie said that there are so many openings at Lourdes that they can't fill, and they are having a lot of people refusing entry-level wages with the expectation that they will get paid quite a bit more elsewhere. Melanie asked if anyone else is experiencing this.

Todd Samuel shared that at Pacific Northwest National Laboratory (PNNL), they are having an unbelievable year this year. He has already hired 14 people, and he has six more openings. These are highly educated scientists and engineers with Master's Degrees or PhDs. Todd commented that PNNL is an unusual kind of employer.

Melanie stated that her need must be addressed strategically. She stressed that just one of her hospital departments has 22 openings. Lourdes is currently offering bonuses at sign-on and during points of retention. Tiffany communicated that the Business Services Team (BST) has this sector's subject matter expertise and can support the immediate employer needs. This could also be an opportunity to do an industry-specific virtual hiring event. Melanie mentioned that she would connect her human resources department to the BST at WSCB.

Commissioner Didier articulated that in Franklin County, they hear the same thing that Melanie shared. It has been reported to him that federal government aid is more substantial than wages.

Commissioner Didier told members that Darigold is building a new plant in Franklin County. This employer will provide enormous employment opportunities. Commissioner Didier is concerned that access to housing could be a challenge as workers move into the community.

**Other Business**

None

**Next Meeting**

Executive Committee Meeting – Tuesday, August 31, 2021, at 4:00 p.m. – Zoom


**Adjournment**

The meeting of the Executive Committee adjourned at 3:51 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted

  
Todd Samuel, Board Chair

9/14/2021  
Date

  
Tiffany Scott, CEO

9/11/21  
Date