



Benton Franklin Workforce Development Council (BFWDC)

Executive Committee Minutes

August 31, 2021

4:00 pm.

Zoom

Present

Commissioner McKay
Todd Samuel
Adolfo de Leon
Melanie Olson
Dennis Williamson
Amanda Jones

Excused

Commissioner Didier

Absent

N/A

BFWDC Staff

Tiffany Scott
Jan Warren
David Chavey-Reynaud
Diana Hamilton
Jamilet Nerell
Jessie Cardwell
DeAnn Bock

Board Member

Jennie Weber

BFWDC Staff Excused

Cynthia Garcia

Call to Order

Todd Samuel called the meeting to order at 4:03 pm and thanked everyone for attending.

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

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

Tiffany welcomed guests and asked that they communicate their name and organization using the Zoom chat feature.

Minutes

Todd Samuel provided the minutes from the July 27, 2021, Executive Committee Meeting for members to review.

Adolfo de Leon moved to approve July 27, 2021, Executive Committee Meeting Minutes as presented, seconded by Melanie Olson. Motion carried.

Finance Reports as of 6/30/21

Jan Warren presented the corporate entity balance sheet. It shows a couple of updates from the prior month. The fourth quarter does show the accrued vacation adjustment and the receivable, which is the amount of the adjustment that has already been transferred to the main account in July. Jan reviewed the year-to-date interest and the expenses that the BFWDC has in the corporate entity account. On the WDC main account balance sheet, the grants receivable reflects the June portion of pending payments from the Employment Security Department (ESD) and Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS), and the funding source for Families Forward Washington (FFW).

Jan presented the WDC final expenditure and revenue report for Program Year (PY) 20. It was a challenging budget to create. When it was prepared, the BFWDC had a lot of uncertainty about when the facility would open and what would be needed to do it safely. It turned out the facility was closed for the entire year. The BFWDC did do its best to continue conducting business as usual. We ended up upgrading our software and technology to communicate and hold meetings and provide virtual services when possible. Jan acknowledged the commendable work of our sub-recipients, Career Path Services,

Benton-Franklin Workforce Consortium, and Goodwill. During the pandemic, they spent almost 95% of what had been budgeted for the year.

For the formula grants, those unused funds were passed on to the PY21 contracts. That will alleviate some of the spending restrictions that we usually experience in the first quarter. FFW has ended. There will be no more activity for that grant.

Also included are grants that continue through this current year. Those are Disaster Recovery, Employment Recovery, Rapid Response, and Economic Security for All (EcSA). The higher salaries and benefits were due to the adjustment for the accrued vacation. The BFWDC had a significant increase in the funds set aside for accrued vacation payables, and over the four quarters, that amount increased \$33,000 from what it was at the beginning of the year. Jan mentioned that the BFWDC board did increase the maximum to 450 hours. There has been minimal use of vacation time amongst the BFWDC staff. Jan does expect that as the current year goes on, things will stabilize. Travel and supplies ended up under budget as expected.

Discussion commenced between Todd and Jan regarding a question related to available resources in corporate entity when considering the accrued vacation amount. In looking at it roughly, Jan summarized that the BFWDC would have \$60,000 available. Todd wanted to know what was available should the board choose to obligate a portion of these resources as this is the only unrestricted fund source the BFWDC has.

Jan presented the WorkSource balance sheet and stated that it does not change much from month to month. The expenses are consistent, and our partners pay very regularly. The BFWDC does not usually have a lot of receivables or other obligations other than our accounts payable. The building expenses ended up very much where she anticipated even though the facility was closed. The two line items that were not spent on the budget were the supplies, dues, fees, and subscriptions that cover assessments that are done on-site. Also, shredding is only taking place when the building is open. When Jan did the reconciliation for PY19, there was \$23,000 that was unspent. Those dollars were refunded back to the partners in the form of credit.

New Benton-Franklin Workforce Development Council Policies

Measurable Skills Gains Policy

Diana Hamilton explained this policy provides official guidance to our sub-recipients on the requirement of documenting the participant's progress while attending education and training services as required for Federal Reporting. The Adult and Employer Linkage Committee approved this policy on August 19, 2021. She also informed the Executive Committee that all the information in this policy has already been provided to our sub-recipient in the form of a program notice or technical assistance. She requested a motion to approve this policy.

Melanie Olson moved to approve the Measurable Skills Gains Policy (#2021-02) as presented, seconded by Amanda Jones. Motion carried.

Data Element Validation Policy

Jamilet Nerell explained this policy was created to guide Data Element Validation (DEV) requirements specific to Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Title I-B Youth, Adult, Dislocated Worker, Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA), and discretionary programs. Local workforce boards must implement local policies and internal procedures to fulfill the State's annual assessment to identify the accuracy of prescribed data elements. This policy was approved by the Adult and Employer Linkage Committee on August 19, 2021. She requested a motion to approve this policy.

Amanda Jones moved to approve the Data Element Validation Policy (#2021-01) as presented, seconded by Adolfo DeLeon. Motion carried.

CEO Updates

Tiffany Scott shared that the BFWDC received a letter from the state Equal Opportunity Officer at Employment Security Department, Teresa Eckstein, on August 17, 2021, articulating the results of the May 27, 2021 monitoring review BFWDC. There were no findings. She stated that she and her team continue to be impressed with the work that the BFWDC is doing to ensure equal access to WIOA

services for all populations in our area and the level of compliance with the equal opportunity provisions. Tiffany recognized the exceptional job that Cynthia Garcia is doing as the Equal Opportunity Officer for Workforce Development Area (WDA) 11. Todd acknowledged his appreciation. Tiffany thanked all the leaders and staff at both WorkSource Columbia Basin (WSCB) and Tri-Cities (TC) Futures for their efforts resulting in positive outcomes in this space.

Tiffany announced that Employment Security Department Commissioner Cami Feek has formally appointed her to the Employment Security Advisory Council (ESAC) as a committee member. Tiffany will provide insight into the entire range of ESD's programs and services. These programs lead to high-quality jobs, a thriving economy, and expanded career opportunities for all Washington residents. Todd congratulated Tiffany on the appointment. Tiffany commented that she is grateful to serve in the role.

Tiffany communicated that the Center Director of TC Futures, Mark Wheaton, has resigned from his position to relocate his family out of State. Educational Service District (ESD) 123 (employer of record) seeks applicants to fill the position. The posting of the description was released earlier in the day on the ESD 123 website. The BFWDC will be sharing the posting on our media soon. Due to the strong partner relationship between ESD123 and the BFWDC at TC Futures, BFWDC staff will be participating in the interview process. The opening is scheduled to close on September 14, 2021. Todd asked if this was a national search. Tiffany responded that she thought it was local, regional, state-based and that there was talent in our community to draw from to get a strong leader hired.

Tiffany mentioned that there had been an update to the Program Year (PY) 21 State Monitoring of the BFWDC. Their visit has been moved from the week of October 4, 2021, to the week of May 23, 2022. This timeline aligns more closely with the cadence of years past (before PY17).

Liaison Report

David stated the traffic at WSCB continues to climb. For the first time since the pandemic began, we've seen an increase in Staff Assisted Job Seekers, Staff Assisted Services, Unique Number of Businesses Served, and Staff Provided Business Services compared to 2020 and 2019 levels.

Since that program has concluded successfully, families' Forward Washington (FFW) data has been removed from the Liaison Report. Information will be shared on the new Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) contract that the BFWDC has with the Department of Commerce.

The Liaison Report includes two graphs tracking unemployment and workforce trends over the last three years. The unemployment rate has returned to pre-pandemic levels and is beginning to mimic past movements.

The Tri-Cities has had a 107% job recovery from the drop in workforce in April 2020. Food services have bounced back more quickly here than in other areas, and most other industries have seen positive trends. Manufacturing and Professional and Business services are still lagging. Manufacturing is experiencing a 3-year low in the labor force. In 2018 there were 9000 jobs in manufacturing, but today there are only 7000.

Todd thanked David for the presentation of the Liaison Report as he frequently refers to it when discussing workforce development with our community.

Crystal Bright, WorkSource Systems Coordinator, was asked to share WSCB happenings. Two significant events took place at WSCB in July. The office reopened for in-person services by appointment only, and the Job Search Waiver ended. WSCB is currently offering a hybrid (virtual and in-person) service delivery. The in-person demand for services started slow. She is seeing an increase in customers accessing in-person services week over week. The end of the job search waiver resulted in an increased demand for workshops, including over 200 additional customers attending local workshops during July and an increase in resume assistance. Crystal pointed out that 33% of incoming customer calls and 50% of drop-in visits regarded Unemployment Insurance (UI) assistance.

Occupations in Demand (OID) Debrief

Jamilet Nerell explained that on August 18, 2021, the OID Committee met to review the recommendations provided by our system partners. This meeting takes place once a year. The OID Committee's purpose is to ensure projections and the current economic state in our area are reflected on the Benton-Franklin OID

list. Recommendations are inclusive of Committee Members, Board Members, and System Partners. Jamilet thanked all the members who provided their recommendations. Jamilet also indicated that the deadline for requests was submitted to Employment Security Department before the August 25, 2021 deadline. This, after approval from the Adult and Employer Linkage Committee and Full BFWDC Board (via e-vote).

Other Business

Adolfo DeLeon shared with members that the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) office is still operating with a skeleton crew with approximately 7 to 10 employees out of 60 in the physical facility. The entire local staff return has been pushed back to October 1, 2021 (previously planned for 9/1/21), with full-service offerings to customers commencing on October 15, 2021. Scheduled appointments will be used to conduct in-person business. The doors will be open from 8 am to 5 pm Monday – Friday.

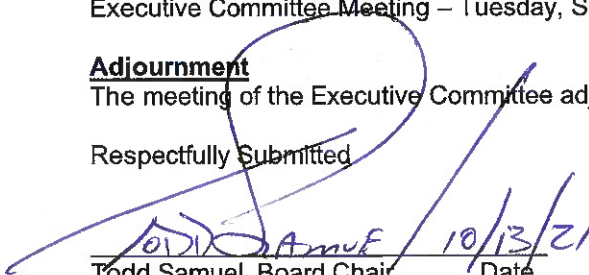
Next Meeting

Executive Committee Meeting – Tuesday, September 28, 2021, at 4:00 pm – Zoom

Adjournment

The meeting of the Executive Committee adjourned at 5:02 pm.

Respectfully Submitted


Todd Samuel, Board Chair

Date

10/13/21


Tiffany Scott, CEO

Date

9/30/21