



MID-CAROLINA
Workforce Development Board

Xavier DeBrough
Xavier DeBrough (Oct 2, 2024 12:13 EDT)

10/02/2024

Agenda Item(s): 4A Consent Items –

Approval of the minutes from the July 16, 2024, Mid-Carolina Workforce Development Board Meeting

Presenter(s): Justin Hembree, Interim Executive Workforce Development Director

Responsible Staff: Justin Hembree, Interim Executive Workforce Development Director

Verna Jones, Workforce Development Deputy Director

Mary Beth Haire, Workforce Development Administrative Coordinator

Action Item: Yes

Attachment(s): Mid Carolina Workforce Development Board Minutes from July 16, 2024 quarterly meeting.

Background:

The minutes from our previous meeting serve as an official record of the discussions, decisions, and action items undertaken during that session. Accurate and comprehensive minutes are crucial for maintaining transparency, accountability, and continuity within our organization. These minutes are a reflection of our collective efforts and commitments as a team. All members are requested to review the minutes circulated before this meeting and raise any corrections or amendments if necessary. Following any revisions, a vote will be conducted to approve the minutes.

Staff Recommendation(s):

Staff recommends approval of the proposed amendment.

Suggested Motion(s):

“Move to approve the minutes from our previous meeting as presented.”



Workforce Development Board Meeting

July 16, 2024

11:00 am

Sandhills Community College

3395 Airport Road

Pinehurst, NC 28374

Van Dusen Hall

Room 102/103

Minutes

Members Present:

Mr. Xavier DeBrough (Business)
Ms. Dana Dawson (Small Business)
Ms. Candace Howell (Registered Apprenticeship)
Mr. Hugh Carr (Representative of Business) ~Virtual
Mr. Victor Glover (Division of Workforce Solutions) ~ Virtual
Ms. Vainette Walker (Vocation Rehabilitation Program)
Ms. Jennifer Williamson (Business)
Ms. Savannah Heath (Montgomery County Economic Director)
Mr. Lee Spruill (Business) ~ Virtual
Ms. Carolyn Helms (Business)
Mr. Delvin McAllister (Community Based Organization)
Mr. Gregory McElveen (Higher Education)
Dr. Fallon Brewington (Adult Education/WIOA Title II)
Mr. Ken Adelberg (Business)

Members Absent:

Mr. Michael Piggot (Business)
Mr. Naynesh Mehta (Business)
Ms. Phyllis Godwin (Representative of Workforce – Registered Apprenticeship)
Mr. Tony McKinnon (Representative of Workforce – Labor)
Mr. Jerry Milton (Representative of Business)
Mr. Curtis Brown (Representative of Workforce – Registered Apprenticeship)
Mr. Lonnie Ballard (Community Based)
Ms. Nicole Peterson (Business)
Mr. Jeremy Sanders (Labor Organization- Youth Services)

Ex-Officato Members Present:

Mr. Kevin Brooks (Representative of Business) Virtual

11:02 am

- I. Call to Order and Introductions
- II. Opening Remarks from Justin Hembree
- III. Introduction of New Board Members
Self-Introductions for the board members, and those meeting attendees to include staff, partners and Friends of the Board were made.

IV. Consent Agenda: Justin Hembree

Call to Action Items: **Requires Action**

- i. Approval of Minutes from April 2, 2024, MCWDB Meeting
- ii. Approval of Revised By Law Article VII Section 9
- iii. Approval of Revised Policy #14 Youth Services

Dana Dawson made the motion to approve the consent items. Xavier DeBrough seconded the motion. The motion passed with none opposed.

V. Election of Mid Carolina WDB Officers: Justin Hembree

The Mid Carolina Workforce Development Board will nominate and vote for officers for the upcoming year (July 16, 2024 – June 30, 2025).

Call to Action Items: **Requires Action**

- i. Nomination and Voting for Vice Chair Person of MCWDB

Candace Howell made the motion to nominate herself for the Vice Chairperson. Dana Dawson seconded the motion. The motion passed with none opposed.

- ii. Nomination and Voting for Chair Person of MCWDB

Delvin McAllister nominated Xavier DeBrough for the Chairperson. Fallon Brewington seconded the motion. The motion passed with none opposed.

Meeting was turned over to newly appointed Chairman, Xavier DeBrough. Chairman DeBrough thanked the committee for the opportunity to serve as Chariman and proceeded with the agenda for the meeting.

VI. Director Report – Justin Hembree

- A. Welcome to Workforce Introduction and Training
- B. Review Program Year (PY) 2024 / Outlook for PY2025
- C. MCWDB Proposed Meeting Dates and Locations

Justin Hembree's Remarks:

- **Informal Meeting:** Mr. Hembree emphasized the desire to keep the meeting informal. He noted that the workforce program has undergone constant evolution over the past five years, with the upcoming program year being the first without major changes in three years.

- **Historical Context:** Initially, Cumberland County was a single-county workforce area when Mid-Carolina entered the sector. Following a year of managing this area, Harnett and Sampson Counties sought to form a local workforce area. This led to a temporary three-county area until Moore County was added due to a state realignment plan. The decision, effective July 1 of the previous year, aimed to bring stability and allow for regional strategic planning.
- **Meeting Purpose:** The meeting will overview the workforce system, explain the board's role, and address any questions. It is intended to be informal, with attendees encouraged to ask questions anytime.
- **Workforce Development System:** Governed by the U.S. Department of Labor and the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), the system is hierarchical and bureaucratic. North Carolina's Department of Commerce, specifically the Division of Workforce Solutions, oversees 23 workforce boards. Effective local management of this bureaucracy is crucial for community impact.
- **Board Composition and Role:** Workforce development boards must have at least 51% private sector and 20% labor representatives. Their responsibilities include economic development, addressing skills gaps, providing labor market intelligence, and supporting workforce programs. The focus should remain on strategic planning, system operations, and economic impacts rather than administrative details.
- **Future Discussions:** Future meetings will focus on core issues rather than administrative matters. Input from attendees is essential for improving service delivery across communities.

Verna Jones's Remarks:

- **Organizational Charts:** Ms. Jones reviewed organizational charts to clarify the board's position within the hierarchy, from the governor and Commerce to Workforce Development Boards. The review included adult employment services and special programs.
- **Local Workforce Development Boards:** North Carolina has 20 workforce boards, each represented by a consortium of chief elected officials, typically county commissioners. For Mid-Carolina, the five county commissioners' chairs form the consortium. They are responsible for forming agreements and appointing workforce board members.
- **Staff Structure:** The workforce board is supported by staff, including Justin Hembree (Director of Workforce Development), Samantha (Deputy Executive Director), and Rochelle Brown (Service Providers Oversight). The structure ensures effective governance and implementation of workforce programs.

Justin Hembree's Follow-Up Remarks:

- **Strategic Direction:** Mr. Hembree emphasized the importance of setting a strategic direction for the workforce program, leveraging the expertise of board members. He stressed the need for including all necessary partners and acknowledged the complexity of managing a large geographic area.

- **Board's Role:** Board members are crucial in holding staff accountable and developing essential partnerships. Mid-Carolina staff do not deliver direct services but oversee compliance and support partners like Equus and county governments.
- **Partnerships and Equity:** Maintaining and managing partnerships is key to the program's success. Board members play a crucial role in ensuring equity and effective decision-making.

Verna Jones's Follow-Up Remarks:

- **Bylaws and Attendance:** Ms. Jones highlighted the importance of understanding bylaws, which outline meeting structure and membership categories. Section 9 addresses attendance, noting that missing three consecutive regular meetings is presumed as resignation. Members can request to remain on the board, subject to local elected officials' discretion.
- **Participation:** Board packets and meeting notifications are sent in advance, and information is posted on the Mid-Carolina website. Members are encouraged to check the website for meeting schedules and procedures.

Justin Hembree's Final Remarks:

- **Meeting Materials:** Mr. Hembree addressed adjustments for appointments and resignations, and the inclusion of general information and an acronym list. He encouraged members to seek clarification on unfamiliar terms.
- **One-on-One Meetings:** He expressed a desire to meet with each board member individually to discuss local areas and operations in detail over the next program year. Initial reactions and questions from members were welcomed.

Strategic Direction and Program Overview:

- **Recap and Priorities:** Mr. Hembree provided an overview of the past program year and discussed the strategic direction for the current year. The materials included detailed activities from the previous year and projections for short-term, medium-term, and long-term priorities.

Internal Reorganization:

- **Reorganization Details:** A recent internal reorganization focused on key functions: Operational, External Facing, and Administrative. Mary Beth's position is now split, with funding sourced from both workforce and other funds.
- **Financial Transparency:** The reorganization aims to create a clear firewall for financial decisions, enhancing compliance and accountability.

Performance Overview:

- **Metrics and Future Measures:** Mr. Hembree reviewed performance metrics using pie charts and dashboards, emphasizing the need for additional measures to evaluate performance effectively.
- **Tracking and Data Integration:** Enhanced tracking tools will monitor services and incorporate data from career centers, addressing synchronization challenges.
- **Results and Improvement:** The past year showed mixed results, with opportunities for expansion and improvement. Carryover funds indicate unspent money that needs balancing to ensure effective service delivery. Analysis of carryover data will help identify service delivery gaps.

Future Focus:

- **Holistic Success Metrics:** The focus should shift from financial metrics to a comprehensive view of program success, including service provision and community impact. Continuous improvement and proactive measures are essential for addressing areas needing attention.

Mr. Hembree concluded by inviting feedback and questions, reaffirming his commitment to working with each board member individually to ensure effective operations and strategic planning.

Chairman Xavier DeBrough's Remarks: Chairman DeBrough addressed the board with concerns regarding expenditure and service delivery within the workforce program. He emphasized the need for proactive measures to enhance service effectiveness and address existing gaps.

Assessment of Prior Year:

- **Financial Oversight:** Chairman DeBrough expressed concern about unspent funds, highlighting the need for more impactful resource use. He acknowledged that while there are reasons for underspending, it is essential to understand and rectify these issues moving forward.
- **Service Delivery Challenges:** Feedback from county visits and discussions with service providers indicated difficulties in meeting participant needs. Issues such as staff training deficiencies and inadequate utilization of career centers were cited as barriers to effective service administration.

Moving Forward:

- **Strategic Shift:** Chairman DeBrough advocated for a shift from addressing past challenges to adopting proactive strategies for improvement. He stressed the importance of setting new standards and enhancing service delivery across all counties.
- **Collaborative Efforts:** He encouraged collaboration among board members, service providers, and stakeholders to redefine success metrics and ensure services effectively meet community needs. Chairman DeBrough emphasized the board's role in driving these changes and fostering a culture of accountability and service excellence.

Chairman DeBrough concluded by calling for continued dialogue and action to address identified issues promptly, inviting input from board members and stakeholders to achieve comprehensive service improvements in the upcoming program year.

Justin Hembree's Response: Justin addressed Chairman DeBrough's remarks, outlining recent discussions and initiatives aimed at improving service delivery.

Recent Discussions and Initiatives:

- **Clear Communication:** Justin highlighted recent in-person meetings where the board addressed concerns directly. He emphasized the need for clear expectations and operational procedures to avoid misunderstandings with stakeholders and service providers.
- **Contractual Matters:** He explained the process of extending a letter to incur costs for service providers in Harnett County, allowing continued operations under the current contract until a new one is negotiated for the upcoming program year. This issue is currently under staff review.
- **Improving Clarity and Expectations:** Justin acknowledged the importance of setting clear expectations for service providers to enhance transparency and operational efficiency. He committed to refining these processes to ensure all parties understand their roles and responsibilities.

Next Steps:

- **Operational Adjustments:** Justin indicated plans for operational adjustments to streamline procedures and improve communication channels. He stressed the board and staff's dedication to creating a supportive environment for service providers while enhancing accountability and service quality.

Further Steps and Considerations:

- **Developing Clear Scope of Work:** Justin emphasized the need for a comprehensive scope of work that defines expectations for consistent and equitable service delivery across all five counties, including performance metrics beyond mere expenditure.
- **Evolution of Contract Structure:** He discussed transitioning to a unified funding approach to pool resources and enhance service delivery across the region.
- **Enhancing Regional Service Efficiency:** Justin illustrated the potential benefits of a regional funding model, which could improve service accessibility and reduce administrative barriers.

Board Discussion:

- **Flexibility in Contracts:** Justin underscored the importance of maintaining flexibility in contract negotiations to respond to unforeseen challenges. He mentioned the potential for using resources more effectively and adapting to localized challenges.

- **Tracking Applications and Partnerships:** The board discussed tracking applications and partnering with Cumberland County Schools for in-school youth programs. Justin acknowledged the need to improve outreach and engagement with educational institutions and community partners.

Victor Glover's Remarks: Victor Glover, the DWS representative on the board, expressed concerns about Equus's performance. He highlighted issues with the contractor in various counties and urged a thorough review of the contract.

Justin Hembree's Response:

- **Contract Reconsideration:** Justin acknowledged the concerns and explained the practical implications of discontinuing the contract with Equus, including potential service disruptions due to the procurement process.
- **Exploring Competitive Options:** He noted the availability of other service providers in North Carolina and emphasized the need to explore competitive options if a suitable scope of work cannot be negotiated.

Rochelle Brown's Remarks: Rochelle Brown, Regional Director, acknowledged challenges from the previous program year and outlined plans for the upcoming year. She proposed a hybrid service delivery model and asset mapping to better utilize resources.

Additional Discussion:

- The board was informed of a change in the certification process for local service providers, now managed at the state level with local acceptance. Candice Howell has been approved as a new service provider
- **Managing Services Internally:** Chairman DeBrough inquired about the feasibility of managing services internally while searching for a new provider. Justin explained that state policy typically requires failing two providers before applying for a waiver.
- **Meeting Adjustments:** A proposal was made to adjust meeting locations and frequencies to better accommodate the larger region. Board members were invited to provide input on whether meetings should be centralized or continue rotating.
- **Youth Committee Formation:** The necessity of forming a Youth Committee, as required by federal and state policies, was discussed. Board members were encouraged to volunteer for this committee, which can include both board members and external stakeholders. Ms. Sara Bandurraga, a representative of Cumberland County K-12 Schools volunteered to be a committee member. As well as Board Members Lee Spruill, Jennifer Williamson, and Dr. Fallon Brewington.

Upcoming Events:

- **Graduation Ceremony:** The board was invited to the graduation ceremony of the My Future So Bright Summer Work Youth Program on Friday, July 19th, at 12:00 PM at Fayetteville Tech. RSVPs were requested to accommodate attendees.

The board will continue to evaluate and implement strategies to support comprehensive and effective workforce development across the region.

VII. Follow-up and Open Discussion

VIII. Adjourn

Dr. Brewington made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Dana Dawson seconded the motion. The motion passed with none opposed.

a. Minutes 07162024 Meeting

Final Audit Report

2024-10-02

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