

Minutes for the Northeastern  
Workforce Development Board  
September 15, 2020

**Call to Order.** Chairman Zach Bray called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. The meeting is being held electronically per COVID-19 restrictions. Presence of a quorum was determined by roll call with **thirteen (13) members present:** Chair Zach Bray, Dr. Kimberly Gregory, Dave Carroll, Sandi Brickhouse Smith, Larry Donley, Diane White, JD Williamson, Dr. David Loope, Terri Gallop, Sean Lavin, Tameka Gibbs, Montique McClary (joined at 6:25 p.m.), and Richard Thorne. **Members Absent with Notice:** Debra Keenan, Larry Lombardi. **Members absent without notice:** Janet Russ, Vernon Brinkley, Rex Anderson, **Guests/Partners/Staff:** Lora Aples, Sheryl Stevens, Cindy Gossage, Annette Barnes, Kenny Kee, Emily Nicholson, Amber Morse, Matthew Fowler, Erica Banks, Brandi Bragg, and David Whitmer.

**Welcome/Introduction.** Chairman Bray welcomed everyone to the meeting.

**Approval of Agenda (VOTE).** Chairman Bray asked for a motion to approve the agenda. Motion by Dave Loope, seconded by JD Williams, to approve the agenda. With a roll call vote, the motion passed unanimously.

**Approval of Minutes (VOTE):** Motion by Dave Carroll, seconded by Terri Gallop, to approve the minutes as written. With a roll call vote, the motion passed unanimously.

**Mission Moment – Success Story, David Meads:** David introduced David Meads, one of NWDB youth participants. He stated that David Meads has been awarded a Youths of Distinction Governor’s Award, Outstanding Young Adult, nominated by his NextGen Career Advisor Erica Banks. This is an annual award from the Governor’s office presented at the NCWorks Partnership Conference. This year our region has been awarded two awards. The second award is to CB Auto for Outstanding Employer, nominated by Amber Morse.

Lora stated that David came to us while he was at COA getting his GED. David is very motivated. Working with Erica, he enrolled in a welding course, earning a 4.0 GPA. Erica got him into a work experience with Hoffer Flow and did very well. In fact, he did so well, he is now employed by Hoffer Flow with an on-the-job training agreement. Even with COVID restrictions he continued his studies with COA. We are very proud of David and all of his accomplishments. Erica has done a great job as his advisor, very effective and Lora thanked her for her dedication to all of her participants. Zach commented that he appreciated the work the staff did to make this possible.

**Presentation: Brandi Braff – NEPZ Career Pathways Facilitator:** David introduced Brandi Bragg, Career Pathways Facilitator, to talk a bit about our Regional pathway’s activities. Brandi presented a PowerPoint presentation of the work of the

Career Pathways program. Last week Education NC shared an article and video about our partnership and hoped that the Board has an opportunity to view it. She reported that we have a new certified pathway; AgroSciences/Biotechnology pathway has been approved. When we do the pathways, we do them regionally, looking at all colleges in the region. It's a great opportunity to bring in new employers that may not have been involved in the initial pathways process. Brandi highlighted a few events she attended in our area including Real World, CTE Advisory meeting in Washington County, speaking with students in Kill Devil Hills, and the Leadership meeting at ECSU for their Aviation program. She shared that they have completed the booth kits that can be checked out by staff to use at events. These can be used by NCWorks staff, workforce staff, as well as CTE teachers to get the word out on what we do. She reported that the career ladders have been updated to 2020 data and are available for use now. These will be available in PDF or digitally in 8-1/2x11 format and in poster format. Plans for PY20-21 is to increase marketing efforts by improving what we are doing by working with a social media manager. Brandi said we are going to try and get Education NC to spotlight us and do a lot of virtual training, including career pathway and Traitify training. She said she is excited to work with the NCWorks Career centers, sitting in or on various committees and just getting more involved in the work of the centers. She said she is going to do a lot of work with metrics this year as well as working more with employers to focus on what it is they need. Brandi said this year we are also going to do four pathways meetings this year.

Dave Carroll commented that he would really like the aviation pathway to be moved up in the priority list – he is involved with Spirit Air System in Kinston, whatever we can do to speed up this pathway to stress aviation careers as it is in our best interest to do so. We need to work as a region, and as a state, by taking high school and college students and help to move them in this direction. This is an opportunity for us and we should focus all of our efforts towards that end.

**Administrative Reports.** David reported that the new office in Elizabeth City has passed inspection and staff are beginning to move in this week. He thanked Larry Donley and Matthew Fowler for all their work in making this happen. He invited all the board to stop by and think about using for committee and board meetings. Staff continue to telework and offering virtual trainings. It is still be strongly recommended by DWS to continue teleworking until Phase 3. He said staff is keeping track of businesses who have laid off staff due to complications with COVID and now we are working on getting back to the businesses to help them to back up to speed. David reported that the annual financial and program monitoring have been completed. He said there were zero findings. There were some recommendations made, which staff responded to and these have been finalized. He explained the process of developing performance measures. He said the final performance measures should come out in October. He said he is working on the Infrastructure Agreement and it is almost complete with all of the partners. Our #worklocal project has started and we have hired a contractor to work on this project. We are currently focusing on Perquimans County and will soon begin work in Dare County. The goal is to have this program throughout all 10 of our counties we serve. The Finish Line Grant program is going

into the third year and we have requested permission to continue to operate that. So far we have done 102 grants and 17 just in the last month. David said that he wanted to add on the Governor's Awards that CB Auto and David Meads have received letters from the Governor's office on their awards and that they are very excited by that.

Kenny Kee reported that the new signs at Dare are up. The career positions have been filled and staff is ready to get back to work. Staff is doing a lot of training during this time.

Matthew reported that they are in the process of moving into the new center. He thanked NWDB staff, board, and Larry Donley for their support. He invited the board to hold their next board meeting at the new center in their conference room. Matthew said that center staff has been very creative with their teleworking and virtual workshops and job fairs. He reported that services to individuals has gone up 55% in Elizabeth City and 30% in Edenton. He reported that internal job referrals have increase 40% in Elizabeth City and 45% in Edenton. Employer services have increased 42% in Elizabeth City and Edenton was down 40%. He said a lot of the increase is due in part because the State has started to open up and that people are adjusting to the new way of using our services. Matthew reported that they will be holding a virtual Partner meeting on October 14<sup>th</sup>. Matthew said one of the things staff is focusing on is to reach out to the individuals who have not yet accepted some of the services we are able to offer them.

### **Committee Reports.**

**Leadership:** Chair Bray said that he had asked each committee to look over their current goals/plans and be prepared to share at this meeting. He said that the last time the board reviewed the current Vision, Mission, Goals and Values and our core purpose was in early 2019 and would like to have the board review and be ready to discuss any changes or updates that the board feels appropriate. He explained that the Leadership Committee is made up of the chairs of all the committees and is in place to provide leadership where needed and to support the committees and their efforts.

**Career Center Committee:** Chair Tameka Gibbs reported that the committee met in August and September and has been working diligently on new dashboard measurements, using last year's goal for the baseline. Some goals are referrals to NextGen, referrals to FLG and attendance at workshops. Plans are underway for the new dashboard to be completed in presented at the November NWDB meeting. Committee reviewed and updated the training provider policy, which is included in this agenda. The committee reviewed the goals and have identified two goals with action plans (See attached goals for Career Center Committee).

**Business Resources and Opportunities:** Amber Morse reported on the committee's goals and strategic plan (included with these minutes).

**NextGen:** Terri Gallop welcomed Dr. Gregory as the newest member of the NextGen

Youth Committee. She gave an update on their work to develop and implement new goals they are currently working on. She said that some of the goals have been completed and so they are working on updating the two remaining goals; 1) To develop and implement strategies to increase enrollment in the NextGen Program. This would include increased social messaging and increased outreach to businesses and the general public, and 2) Develop strategies to improve NextGen performance measures. This includes secondary and post-secondary education – promote and coordinate more work based learning opportunities, increase participant attendance in soft skill courses and workshops and an increase in virtual presence. Lora asked if the board members know of youth who will benefit from our programs, to please let her know so she can reach out to those youth.

**Finance:** Chair JD Williams congratulated staff on their success with the financial and programmatic audits. As a new committee, he shared the goals the committee has basically agreed on by the committee. He said over the course of the next couple of weeks the committee will be finalizing action items and work plans to achieve those goals (attached to these minutes).

Chair Bray thanked everyone for their effort and said that he would like to see the board.

**Eligible Training Provider Approval Policy (Vote):** David said that this is a proposed eligible training provider approval policy. The policy is put together based on DWS policy statement in order to comply with DWS policy. Motion by Sean Lavin, seconded by Tameka Gibbs to accept as presented. With a roll call vote, motion passed unanimously.

**Environmental Scanning:** Chair Bray shared that there has been a number of retirements and change-over of employees at his business. He said that they are trying to work through the apprenticeship program to fill the open lineman positions.

**Adjourn (Vote):** With no further discussion, Chairman Bray adjourned the meeting at 7:30 p.m.

The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, November 17<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 p.m.

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NWDB Chairman, Gerald Z. Bray

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Date