

Minutes for the Northeastern  
Workforce Development Board  
**January 18, 2022**

**Call to Order.** Chair Sean Lavin called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

**Welcome/Introduction.** Chair Lavin welcomed everyone to the meeting. Presence of a quorum was determined by roll call with **fifteen (15) members present:** Chair Sean Lavin, Vice-Chair Janet Russ, Alvan Overton, Dr. Kimberly Gregory, Sandi Brickhouse Smith, Larry Donley, JD Williamson, Lisa Brown, Richard Thorne, Dr. Tameka Gibbs, Carson Rich, and Montique McClary. **Members Absent with Notice:** Larry Lombardi, Dr. David Loope. **Members absent without notice:** Charlie Long **Guests/Partners/Staff:** Amber Morse, David Whitmer, WV Yarbrough, Rachel Clipston, Erica Banks, Annette Barnes, Latoria Rountree. Sallie Baugham, Tabitha Ashley.

**Approval of Agenda (VOTE).** Motion by Lisa Brown, seconded by Dave Carroll, to approve the agenda. Motion passed with a roll call vote.

**Approval of Minutes (VOTE).** Moved by Tameka Gibbs, seconded by Dr. Kimberly Gregory to approve minutes from the November 2021 meeting. Motion passed with a roll call vote.

**Mission Moment Success Story: Presented by WV Yarbrough and Latoria Rountree:** Elizabeth City and Edenton Career Center Manager, WV Yarbrough, opened the success story and introduced NCWorks Career Advisor Latoria Rountree. Latoria Rountree discussed how the services of the career center help Tabitha Ashley and her new employer Quality Home Staffing. Tabitha Ashley and Sallie Baugham (Quality Home Staffing) both spoke about how they have benefited from the services of the career center.

**Administrative Reports.** Director Whitmer reviewed some of the highlights from the Director's report as included in the meeting packet, including updates on the staffing, financial monitoring, and procurement for training services. Director Whitmer noted that he had been informed by DWS that boards will receive a waiver to allow them not to have to procure Adult/DW, Youth, and One-Stop Operator services this year. DWS has indicated that this waiver is due to the realignment study. Director Whitmer then asked Larry Donley to update the board on some recent DWS staffing issues.

Larry Donley informed the board that due to some budget constraints over the last couple years, DWS had to implement a staffing reorganization statewide. It is being implemented in phases. Phase one has already taken place at the DWS headquarters in Raleigh. 15% of the staff there were notified last week that their positions had been cut. The second phase involves career center staff throughout the state. We are not doing RIF yet, we are doing an RTR, which is a volunteer program that will provide a severance package for those who should choose to leave. Depending on how many people leave voluntarily will determine whether or not to move forward with a RIF.

Director Whitmer then discussed the NCWorks Commission's study on the realignment and re-designation of the workforce development boards. There have been many mixed messages about this study. We have been told that it is just a study with no predetermined outcome, but we have also seen presentations from NCWorks Commission staff, DWS staff, and others that promote aligning the 23 boards with the 8 prosperity zones. Director Whitmer discussed his concerns regarding the impact on our rural communities that could come from consolidating the board into mega-region. Lastly, Director Whitmer state that there are only two ways in which the state can realign the boards. One is if they find boards to have series financial or programmatic issues and the second is with the agreement of the local elected officials.

Larry Lombardi commented that it is very important to have conversations with Economic Development in our region as it could mean the difference between an employer investing in our region or moving on to another region.

### **Committee Reports.**

**Leadership:** Chair Lavin told the board that the Leadership Committee had been focused on some of the staffing challenges we have had, the realignment, Bylaw changes, and a potential retreat.

**Career Center Committee:** Career Center Committee Chair Tameka Gibbs reported that the committee meeting met in January. The committee reviewed and made improvements to the One-Stop Operator Monitoring tool, reviewed and improved the performance dashboard by putting together three-year trends. She then discussed a security issue that occurred in the career center. As a result, staff and committee have worked together to increase security measures.

**Business Resources and Opportunities:** Amber Morse, reporting on behalf of the BROCC informed the board that the committee had reviewed and updated the OJT minimum wage, voted to approve Paige Griffin to join the committee and voted to recommend approval of an employee training grant application.

**NextGen:** NextGen Chair Kimberly Gregory reported that the committee will meet next week. There were two staff who graduated from Facilitating Career Development course. Youth staff attend a national youth forum in December. She then provided updates on the Youth Initiative grant as follows: B3 Coffee had their grant opening on November 18 with a tremendous turnout. There was a Career Café for the healthcare cohort. Social media work from Content Commander is underway.

**Finance:** Finance Committee Chair JD Williamson referenced the financial reports that were included in the meeting packet and reminded everyone that the committee reviews these reports every month. All in all things are going well and expenditures are in line with where they should be. He then informed the committee that we would be bringing a draft budget to the board at the March Meeting.

**Employee Training Grant.** Amber Morse presented the Currituck Chamber of Commerce's employee training grant application as included in the meeting packet. She informed the committee that the BROCC recommends the grant approval. **Motion by Dave Carroll to approve the grant application seconded by Carso Rich. The motion passed unanimously with a roll call vote.**

**NWDB Bylaws Change:** Chair Lavin informed the Board that the Leadership Committee had drafted a letter to the Consortium requesting changes to the NWDB Bylaws.

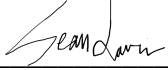
**Environmental Scanning:** Chair Lavin discussed the importance of everyone following and helping to share information from our social media accounts.

Dr. Kimberly Gregory stated that College and Career Readiness has received a grant to offer digital literacy.

Chair Lavin acknowledged board members Rex Anderson, as he is retiring and therefore this will be his last meeting. Chair Lavin congratulated him on his retirement and thanked him for his service on the board. Rex stated that he really enjoyed serving on the board and that really great services are provided through the career centers.

**Adjourn (Vote).** With no further discussion, Chair Lavin adjourned the meeting at 7:04 p.m.

The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, March 15th at 6:00 p.m.



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NWDB Chair, Sean Lavin

03 / 23 / 2022

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Date

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