

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD 21 SPECIAL MEETING

EAST BATON ROUGE PARISH

Location:

EBRPL (Main Library) (Large Meeting Room)
7711 Goodwood Blvd., Baton Rouge, LA 70806

Thursday, October 21, 2021 @ 10:30 a.m.

1. Welcome – Brett Simon, Aptim, WDB21 Vice-Chair

<i>Local Workforce Development 21 Members</i>	<i>Company</i>	<i>October 21, 2021</i>
1 Mrs. Elizabeth Beckham	Turner Industries	P
2. Mr. Steven Bomar	Performance Contractors, INC	A
3. Mrs. Winifred Brooks	Dept. of Children Family Services	A
4. Mr. Kenneth Champagne	US Agencies	P
5. Mrs. Maydel Chatelain-Schexnayder	Louisiana Rehabilitation Services	A
6. Ms. Ashton Lane – Duhon	Gerry Lane Services	P
7. Mr. Andrew Fitzgerald	Baton Rouge Area Chamber	P
8. Mr. Blaine Grimes	Financial	P
9. Dr. Dawn Hall Fleming	East Baton Rouge Parish School System	P
10. Mr. Kelly LeDuff (Board Chair)	Open Eyes	A
11. Mr. Kenny Lynch	Louisiana Workforce Commission (Wagner Peyser)	A
12. Mr. Joshua Perck	The Brock Group	A
13. Mr. Louis Reine	Louisiana AFL – CIO	A
14. Mrs. Anne Segura/Proxy Attended Judi Lefebvre	Baton Rouge General Hospital	P
15. Mr. Brett Simon (Vice-Chair)	Aptim	P
16. Dr. Willie Smith / Proxy Attended Dr. Girard Melancon	Baton Rouge Community College (BRCC)	P
17. Mr. Shanana Waters (Youth Committee Chair)	Laborers Local 99	A
18. Mr. Jonathan Waddell	Plumbers and Steamfitters Local 198	A
19. Mr. Devin Zito	Assurance	P

2. Introduction of Board Members, Staff and Guests – A quorum was met

Staff Present: Mr. John Williams, Mr. Philip Gore, Vernadine Mabry, Dr. Erica Thomas, Juanita Coverson and Tierra Small

Guests Present: There were no guests present

3. Action Items:

a. Review and Approval of Previous LWDB 21 Meeting Minutes (July 1, 2021)

Mr. Brett Simon stated that Tierra had previously emailed out the minutes and the agenda and asked if anyone had any questions or comments.

A motion to approve the Previous LWDB 21 Meeting Minutes (July 1, 2021) was made by Elizabeth Beckham and second by Andrew Fitzgerald. All were in favor. There were none opposed or abstained

b. Review and Approval of the Amended Local/Regional Plan

Mr. Simon and Mrs. Beckham stated that it was a lot of information to cover in a short period of time and that in the future they would like to see the information go out 1-2 weeks in advance and to highlight changes that were not in the previous document.

A motion to approve the Amended Local/Regional Plan was made by Kenneth Champagne and second by Elizabeth Beckham. All were in favor. There were none opposed or abstained.

c. Review and Approval of Proposed 2022 LWDB21 Meeting Dates (Option 1)

Mr. Simon stated that he did not have any issues with the new dates proposed and that he was opening up this item for discussion.

A motion to approve the Proposed 2022 LWDB21 Meeting Dates (Option 1) was made by Brett Simon. All were in favor. There were none opposed or abstained.

4. Discussion Topics (Brief Summaries of Discussion)

(a) National Disaster Dislocated Worker Grant

Mr. Gore stated that we currently have a federal National Dislocated Worker Grant. He stated that this grant is for individuals who have been affected by Covid-19 or long-term unemployed. He stated that this grant will expire in March of 2022, and we are trying to get the word out regarding this opportunity for participants to utilize these funds. Mr. Gore stated that currently there are 14 participants enrolled in this grant. He stated that we have made flyers to distribute and help promote the grant, and we are asking board members to help us get the word out and let people and businesses know about this opportunity. He stated that we would email this flyer out to everyone and ask that you post it at your workplace, and also send this to your colleagues. Mr. Gore stated that this next flyer is for a Job Fair that we are having on October 26th & 27th for the National Dislocated Worker Grant. He stated that we will also like to email this to everyone and ask that you post this and pass it along to anyone you know needing employment, and that could possibly benefit from this opportunity. The Job Fair will be held at the Charles R. Kelly Community Center, 3535 Riley Street in Baton Rouge. There are also radio advertisements to help in our marketing efforts. Mr. Gore stated that this federal grant is a \$1.9 million grant and that we currently have spent \$233k, of which \$183k spent on program costs, and \$50k spent on administrative costs. Therefore, we have a balance of \$1.7 million to expend. Mr. Gore lastly stated that the next slide is a participation report showing that we currently have 14 participants who qualified and are eligible for this grant and that we have placed all 14 in job positions, for a 100% placement score. Discussion was rendered regarding some board members not understanding how their organizations could help but was still open to the option of assisting.

(b) Upcoming New Proposed LWDB21 Policies

- 1. Conflict of Interest Policy**
- 2. Equipment Policy**
- 3. Record Retention Policy**

Mr. Gore stated that the next slide is for upcoming policies that we need to create and bring before the board in our next board meeting on December 9th. He stated that these are three policies that have been identified in our recent audit from the state, LWC. He stated that we currently do not have these policies in place and they are required by the state. He stated that in our next meeting we will present these policies and vote on adopting them to fulfill our requirements with the state. Mr. Gore stated that since August 2nd, we have been audited by the Louisiana Workforce Commission. He stated that the first part of the audit dealt with issues that fall on our program side, and the second part has been with financials, policies and procedures,

that fall on our administrative side. Mr. Gore stated that last week, we sent in the final information requested by the state and that we do not know the findings of the audit yet, but hope to know something after the first part of next year.

5. EmployBR Highlights

Mr. Gore stated that he would like to recognize and introduce some new employees to EmployBR. He stated that firstly, he would like to introduce Ms. Tierra Small, who has been working for EmployBR for about 6 years now. He stated that she has served as a Student Intern and most recently as Board Coordinator and now has a new role of Assistant WIOA Chief Administrator. He stated that he would also like to introduce Dr. Erica Thomas as the new Program Administrator for EmployBR. He stated that she has been with EmployBR for a couple of months. Lastly, Mr. Gore stated that he would lean to Dr. Thomas to introduce Ms. Monique Alexander. Dr. Thomas then stated that she was excited to introduce Ms. Alexander, who is a new Intake Specialist for EmployBR. She stated that she has been with EmployBR for a couple of weeks and was excited to have her on board.

6. One-Stop Operator Report – Juanita Coverson, One-Stop Manager | Eckerd Connects

Ms. Juanita Coverson started with good morning. Ms. Coverson stated that she would be brief and started her report with addressing Staff Trainings. She stated that she sends out the Training Employment Guidance Letters (TEGLs) and Training Employment Notices (TENs) to the staff so they can ensure they are following them appropriately. She stated that she has been involved with collaboration and leveraging resource efforts with partner agencies and non-profit organizations. She stated that Eckerd Connects provided leadership training in the areas of leadership plans, motivational interviewing, 360-degree feedback and how to lead, listen and follow. She stated that Eckerd Connects recently conducted a Corrective Action Plan for EmployBR back in July 2021 and provided to Dr. Thomas for her use. The four areas were: 1.) Training - Leadership & Staff; 2.) Communication; 3.) Responsibility; and 4.) Accountability. In the area of operations, Ms. Coverson discussed the efforts to maintain ADA Compliance at the Satellite and Comprehensive Sites. She also discussed with staff research to ensure the best assessment for clients through SAGE and TABE. She notified staff of ways to test those who have taken the TABE already to attain any skills gains with the TABE Assessments. Ms. Coverson stated that there was a Desk Review for the Memorandum of Understanding. The recommendations provided by Louisiana Workforce Commission were immediately corrected and resubmitted. She stated that we are currently waiting on signatures from Louisiana Workforce Commission. She stated that partner presentations would be rendered where all partners will discuss their services that they provide. She was also happy to say that EmployBR South (Satellite Site) is now open. Ms. Coverson stated that there were outreach and

recruitment efforts such as working with Acadian Ambulance in order to fill the openings and shortages of EMTs and Paramedics in their accelerated 7 week - training program. She also stated that she was exploring the option of obtaining QR Codes for EmployBR. And, in according to the Region 2 Plan between EmployBR and Geaux Jobs, she has been working to mirror efforts so that the functions are the same, as much as possible. Ms. Coverson asked if there were any questions and concluded her report.

7. Program Report – Dr. Erica Y. Thomas, EmployBR Program Administrator

Dr. Thomas started with good morning. She stated that she would like to begin with the initial assessment of the Program. She stated that she has been meeting with staff and assessing the program since her start with EmployBR. Dr. Thomas stated that she is in the process of going through a 30 – 90 day restructuring of the program. Dr. Thomas stated that she has been making improvements to the data system. She stated that since January 1, 2021 a total of 1,495 applications had been received, 89 applications were ineligible and that 978 applications were deferred. Dr. Thomas stated that since January 1, 2021 there was a total of 249 participants total in their Case Load and 270 total eligible applications. She stated that there is a total of 47 participants in the Youth Incentive Program. The theme for this Quarter for Financial Literacy Virtual Training will be “Balling on a Budget.” Dr. Thomas stated that we currently have 106 active worksites in Baton Rouge with 48 participants assigned. She stated that there is a total of 31 Work Experience participants assigned, 2 Transitional Worker participants assigned, 1 Adult On- the - Job Training (OJT) participant assigned and 14 National Dislocated Worker Grant Participants assigned. Dr. Thomas lastly stated that she was working on a new initiative with the 19th Judicial Court with Judge Johnson, Judge Haney and Judge Grover. She stated that she was excited about this new initiative. Lastly, she asked if there were any questions and concluded her report.

8. Director’s Report – Mr. Philip Gore, WIOA Chief Administrator

Mr. Gore stated that he would like to start off with giving out some “Kudos” and recognizing some individuals and groups that have gone above and beyond, and provided him with assistance during his start at EmployBR. He stated that during the audit, these individuals have been instrumental in helping gather information and documents requested for the audit: Elaine Clark, Karen Kleinpeter, Tierra Small, Juanita Coverson, Girlie Anderson, Shonda Grimes, Erica Thomas, Vernadine Mabry, Vanessa Pitts-Ponder, Barbara Dunn, Leah Fleig, Kris Goranson, Simone Pillette & John Williams. Mr. Gore stated that, as previously mentioned, they have been going through an audit from Louisiana Workforce Commission since August 2, 2021 through October 18, 2021. Mr. Gore stated that it has been really busy, but also an experience of learning. He stated that although we don’t know the final results of the audit, that they have identified three policies that

need to be adopted by the board, that we currently do not have. He stated those three policies are: Equipment Policy, Records Retention Policy, and Conflict of Interest Policy, that were previously discussed at the beginning of the meeting and will be available to vote on at our next board meeting on December 9, 2021. Mr. Gore stated that the next slide shows a Financial Snapshot of our current WIOA Budget. He stated that the budget is split into three funding streams: Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth. He stated that this shows each funding stream's "allocation", or budget, current year to date expenditures, and the balance of that funding stream. He stated that they wanted to make sure everyone is aware of our next job fair to help recruit participants for our National Dislocated Worker Grant. The Job Fair will be held on October 26th & 27th, 2021. Mr. Gore also stated that, as a reminder, Ethics Training is required for all Board Members once a year, and is due by December 31, 2021 and to please go to the link:<https://aethics.net/EthicsTraining/login.aspx> Mr. Gore lastly concluded his report and asked if there were any questions or concerns.

9. Public Comments

There were no public comments.

10. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 12:08 p.m.

**Next Meeting Date: Thursday, December 9, 2021; Turner Industries Group, LLC. (Training Center)
215 Highlandia Drive., Baton Rouge, LA 70810; 10:30 A.M**