



Benton Franklin Workforce Development Council (BFWDC)

**Executive Committee Minutes**

August 28, 2024, 4:00 p.m., Zoom | WSCB Hybrid

**Call to Order & Welcome**

Todd Samuel called the meeting to order at 4:03 p.m. Todd welcomed all in attendance and thanked them for taking the time to support the mission and vision of the BFWDC.

Cyndelle Howell conducted a roll call of board members and staff to the board, and a quorum was present. Cyndelle welcomed virtual guests, asking them to communicate their names and organization using the Zoom chat feature. She reminded those in attendance to have cameras on, to capture who was speaking.

**Minutes**

July 30, 2024, Executive Committee meeting minutes were presented and reviewed for a motion to approve.

*Todd Samuel called for a motion to approve the Executive Committee meeting minutes from the July 30, 2024, Committee meeting.*

*Meeting minutes were tabled to incorporate recommended updates until the next convening.*

**Occupations in Demand (OID) Committee Recommendations– Gabby Torres**

Gabby provided that the Employment Security Department’s Labor Market & Economic Analysis team once a year produces a list of occupations for local areas to review. The Local Workforce Development Boards are given the opportunity to facilitate, record, and submit recommendations based on local demands.

The purpose of the Occupations in Demand (OID) Committee is to ensure projections and the current economic state in our area are reflected on the Benton-Franklin OID list for purposes of assisting in allocating training resources. Recommendations are inclusive of Committee Members, Board Members, and System Partners.

Including occupations on the in-demand portion of the list enables us to fund training and short-term certificates for local programs. This is a critical process and part of the BFWDC’s regional role in determining and ensuring that this list is as accurate as possible and bringing together our partners to ensure that we accurately reflect what occupations are in demand locally.

The OID Committee convened on 08/21/23 to develop this updated list and recommends a motion be brought forth to approve the 2024 OID list as presented. The next step is to return the approved OID list to ESD by 08/29/2024.

*Todd Samuel called for a motion to approve the OID list as presented.*

*Amanda Jones made a motion to approve the recommended occupations in demand changes, which was seconded and unanimously approved.*



### **BFWDC Finance Reports as submitted for the period ending June 2024 – DeAnn Bock**

The June financials were included in the packet, with some minor year-end adjustments still to be made. The fund balance report showed that most of the grant funds were nearly depleted by the end of June, except for the state EcSA grant which had 24% remaining due to lower-than-anticipated expenses. The statement of budget to actuals through August 15th was presented, with comparisons to the prior two fiscal years. The Fiscal Director noted that she is keeping a close eye on the administrative costs, as they are limited to 10% of the WIOA grants, and last year they ran out of admin funds. The insurance costs came in higher than budgeted, at 109% of the \$8,000 that was allocated.

### **Banking Research Update – Nidia Dick**

BFWDC is considering switching its banking from Hapo to a new provider. Staff Accountant Nidia explored Banner Bank and Community First Bank, but the recommendation is to move to US Bank due to their nonprofit-specific accounts. DeAnn plans to meet with US Bank to discuss details before finalizing the decision. The current banking with Hapo and Bank of America has been problematic, particularly due to Hapo's lack of electronic fund transfer options. The goal is to find a bank that better meets the organization's needs for efficient financial management.

### **BFWDC Updates – Jessie Cardwell (on Behalf of Cynthia N. Garcia) /All**

#### **Organizational Changes**

Jessie Cardwell has been promoted to Director of Programs, with her taking on additional responsibilities. Cynthia had previously discussed Jessie's new role and the differences between the Program Manager and Program Director positions. Gabby Torres has been designated as the Local Equal Opportunity (EO) Officer, as she has been taking on this role and responsibilities since she started. The transition of the EO Officer role from Cynthia to Gabby is seen as a positive move, as Gabby has the necessary background and compliance experience to effectively fulfill this function.

#### **Connection Site Expansion**

The Mid-Columbia Library in Benton City has been certified as a new WorkSource Columbia Basin Connection site. This is part of the organization's strategic plan to expand access to WorkSource services in the community. An AmeriCorps member will be placed at the Benton City site to provide digital literacy training to the community, two times per month. This second connection site will be supported by funds from the STEM Foundation's regional challenge grant, which BFWDC is a sub-recipient of. The goal is to increase digital literacy and access to WorkSource services for the Benton City community, hopefully increasing those who are getting post-secondary credentials, especially for youth and their families. The connection site launch was seen as a positive step forward, as the BFWDC had been working towards establishing more connection sites in the region for several years. The connection site is expected to help bring more people to the WorkSource center and support them in accessing the services and resources they need.

#### **Current Funding Opportunities- Digital Equity Grant; 3 Rivers Community Foundation**

##### **Digital Equity Grant**

Goodwill is spearheading a proposal for a digital equity grant through the U.S. Department of Commerce. BFWDC is a partner in this proposal and is actively involved in the planning and development. The grant would support the establishment of a tech refurbishment center in the local area, in collaboration with Interconnected, a group from Seattle. The BFWDC is also working with WWA to write a proposal for this grant. It is a different approach, more about device giving and funding Digital navigators to teach digital literacy.

##### **3 Rivers Community Foundation Grant**



BFWDC is planning to submit a proposal to the 3 Rivers Community Foundation for a small grant (around \$8,000) by the September 16th deadline. Last year, the grant was used to purchase laptops for learning. This year, the focus will be on using the funds for more unrestricted purposes, such as providing transportation assistance, hygiene items, and clothing for clients.

**Other Potential Funding**

Jessie Cardwell mentioned that the state CRF (Community Reinvestment Funds) grant may be extended for an additional 3 years if the funds are spent well. The Quest grant is set to end in September 30, 2025, but there may be other national dislocated worker grants that BFWDC could pursue.

**New Board Member Training and Orientation**

Cyndelle Howell has been working on developing a comprehensive onboarding process for new board members. This includes assigning "board buddies" to provide support and guidance to new members. The goal is to ensure new board members are well-informed and integrated into the organization.

**Donation Page and Corporate Sponsorship**

A new online donation page has been created to allow for unrestricted financial contributions. The goal is to generate funds that can be used to support WorkSource staff in assisting clients with needs not covered by restricted funding. There is a push to encourage board members and corporate donors to contribute to this fund.

**Round Table**

Todd Samuel opened the floor for any additional comments or noteworthy updates from the participants.

Crystal Bright provided an update on the Stevens Media Group collaboration and the new WSCB Facebook and LinkedIn pages. Additionally, she reported on the childcare summit and the need for community advocacy on childcare issues.

Jessie Cardwell mentioned the WSCB Business Solutions team's visit to Spokane for training and sharing best practices.

**Adjournment**

Todd Samuel adjourned the executive committee meeting at 4:58 p.m.

**Next Meeting**

Executive Committee Meeting – Tuesday, September 24, 2024, 4:00 p.m. WSCB Room 9 | Zoom Hybrid  
 Quarterly Board Meeting – Tuesday, October 29, 2024, at 4:00 p.m. TC Futures | Zoom Hybrid

**Attendance**

Chief Local Elected Officials	Board Members	Staff to the Board	Guests	Excused
Clint Didier	Todd Samuel	DeAnn Bock	Jan Warren	Cynthia Garcia
Will McKay	Amanda Jones	Cyndelle Howell	Heather Woodruff	
	Lynn Ramos-Braswell	Gabby Torres		
	Adolfo de Leon	Nidia Dick		



Jessie Cardwell

Respectfully Submitted:

*Todd Samuel, Board Chairperson and Treasurer* 10/3/2024

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Todd Samuel, Board Chair & Treasurer Date

Signed by:

*Lynn Ramos-Braswell, Board Secretary* 10/4/2024

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Lynn Ramos-Braswell, Board Secretary Date