

Minutes for the  
Northeastern Workforce Development Board  
January 16, 2018

- I. **Call to Order:** Chairman Zach Bray called the meeting to order on January 16, 2018 at 6:00 p.m. The meeting was held at the Albemarle Commission in Hertford. The presence of a quorum was determined with ten **(10) members present:** Zach Bray, Rex Anderson, Vernon Brinkley, Dave Carroll, Larry Donley, Tameka Gibbs, Wanda Fletcher, Philip Stovall, Loretta Williams and Debra Keenan. **Members Absent with Notice:** Steve Bryan, Tim Ivey, Glynda Parker, Lee Scripture, Sean Lavin, Jean Taylor, Michael Twiddy. **Members Absent without Notice:** Melanie Ashe **Guests/Partners/Staff:** Cathy Davison, Laura Rollinson, Susan Buckner, Annette Barnes, Lora Aples, Nannette Turner, Kenny Kee, Dave Whitmer, Emily Nicholson, and Derrick Armstead.
- II. **Welcome/Introduction:** Chairman Bray welcomed everyone including the new NWDB staff, Susan Buckner, Finance Officer and Laura Rollinson, Program Administrative Coordinator.
- III. **Approval of Minutes for November 2017 (Vote):** Chairman Bray asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the November 2017 board meeting. Dave Carroll made a motion to approve the minutes. His motion was seconded by Wanda Fletcher and, with no further discussion, was carried unanimously.
- IV. **Approval of Agenda (Vote):** Chairman Bray asked for a motion to approve the agenda. Wanda Fletcher made a motion to approve the agenda. Her motion was seconded by Philip Stovall, and with no further discussion, was carried unanimously.
- V. **Mission Moment – Success Story: Macon Smithwick:** Chairman Bray introduced Derrick Armstead, NCWorks veteran specialist career advisor, who shared the story of a veteran who he recently assisted. He reported that veteran Macon Smithwick had been experiencing Significant Barrier to Employment (SBE) as defined by the Department of Labor (DOL). Mr. Armstead stated that Mr. Smithwick had been seeking employment in the customer service field. After many conversations, Mr. Armstead was able to ascertain Mr. Smithwick was a veteran and would be better suited in a security position. With the assistance of the Career Center and Mr. Armstead, Mr. Smithwick applied for a security position with Sentara BelleHarbor in late 2017. He is currently employed there and expressed his sincere gratitude to both Mr. Armstead and the Career Center for their assistance in finding suitable employment and support along the way.
- VI. **Administrative Reports:** Chairman Bray stated that there will be an oral Director's report and asked Director Whitmer to review his report. Director Whitmer began by reporting that his department is actively advertising a new position, Business Engagement Coordinator. He stated this position will be involved out in the community, working one on one with companies to gauge what type of employees are needed in our workforce and developing relationships with those companies to foster a better understanding of the educational requirements and skill sets employers in our communities are seeking. Mr.

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Whitmer went on to note through recent hires, there will be a stronger presence in the media throughout the counties, including local television channels, radio stations and social media sites and events.

VII. ***Committee Reports:***

**Leadership Committee:**

Chairman Bray stated that the Leadership Committee continues to work through various issues for the upcoming year. He has asked boards across the state to submit forms used in an effort to standardized them. He stated the RFP timeline has been approved. He stated the Department of Labor has begun to planning the training for North Carolina. The tentative training is scheduled for April in Kinston, North Carolina. He stated it appears the training will start with the western part of the state and move towards the eastern part. Mr. Bray stated the Leadership Committee continued their development of presentation of the core values in their meeting this morning. He stated their goal is to produce banners and flyers specifying the core values, who the committee is and what it does.

**Career Center Committee:**

David Whitmere, Chair was not in attendance, presented an overview of the performance review dashboard. The spreadsheet shows the process by monthly goals and actual performance by month and by region. There is data included from 2015, 2016 and 2017. The spreadsheet makes it easier to visualize the staff development, recruitment events, and services provided goals set by the North Carolina Committee for state measures. Larry Donley stated this is a great tool because performance tracking is required for center certification. Chairman Zach Bray inquired if the spreadsheet would be shared. David Whitmere responded the spreadsheet will allow for more comprehensive reports to be pulled. David Whitmere presented the proposal of adding Aviation training to the approved training list. He presented College of The Albemarle's Aviation curriculum outlines. Dave Carroll discussed the starting wages in this field, which are higher than most. He further stated approval of this vote would be a way to keep local talent in the area through career opportunities. Chairman Bray asked for a motion to brought to approve adding Aviation to the approved training list. Dave Carroll made a motion to approve adding Aviation training to the approved training list. Vernon Brinkley seconded the motion, and with no further discussion, was carried unanimously.

**Business Resources and Opportunities Committee (BROC):**

David Whitmere informed the board Benjamin Beasley, Chair, has resigned from the committee. David Whitmere proposed for committee members to make recommendations to fill this spot with a person in the private sector from a county not currently represented.

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**NCWorks NEXTGEN Committee:**

Wanda Fletcher, Chair, began by reporting that they are gearing up for the Youth Summit that will be held in Cary, North Carolina at the Embassy Suites. She stated she normally takes between 12 to 15 participants. She informed the committee the participants learn from the various workshops at the Summit that they do have a fit and their excitement spreads throughout their friends and family members. She stated her team has recently implemented various small changes to their process and she hopes to show these changes are effective through an increase in her next months numbers.

VIII. **NWDB Conflict of Interest Policy Proposal:**

Director Whitmer presented the proposed Northeastern Workforce Development Board's Conflict of Interest Policy. He informed the board a Conflict of Interest policy is required by the Division of Workforce Solution. The proposed policy was reviewed. Chairman Bray requested a motion be made to approve the NWDB Conflict of Interest Policy. Wanda Fletcher made a motion for the NWDB Conflict of Interest Policy be approved. Loretta Williams seconded the motion, and with no further discussion, was carried unanimously.

IX. **Other Business:**

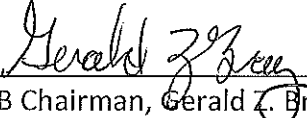
Chairman Bray opened the floor for a discussion on the current job market to the committee members. Several barriers were discussed including a limited number of openings offering a wage above minimum wage, area college graduates leaving the local job market for higher paying positions outside of our area, drug use of potential new hires, lack of transportation options for low income potential employees, lack of self-motivation and soft skills of potential employees into entry level positions. Two committee members stated they are working to increase the starting pay for their entry level positions in a hope that the increase in pay will increase the new hires commitment to the position. Another member stated he has started a program for long term employees to pay for half of drug treatment programs. It was stated that the approval of the Aviation training program will help improve the skill set and starting pay for those who receive the training.

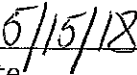
X. **Adjourn (Vote):**

With no further discussions, Chairman Bray asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:20 pm. Rex Anderson made a motion to adjourn. His motion was seconded by Wanda Fletcher and, with no further discussion, was carried unanimously.

XI. **Next Meeting:**

The next meeting will be March 20, 2018. An emailed notification will be sent out.

  
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NWDB Chairman, Gerald Z. Bray

  
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Date