



NORTHEAST INDIANA WORKS BOARD

APRIL 9, 2021

9:00-10:30 AM

VIRTUAL MEETING

FINAL MINUTES

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Rich Beck (RCEO), Patrick Buesching, Jordi Disler, Alan Duff, Darryl Esterline, Brooks Fetters, Beth Green, Jane Porter Gresham, Tim Hartigan, Leroy Jackson, Mark Michael, James Phillips, Corey Schoon, Shelly Stearns, Chris Straw, Jim Walmsley, and Tonya Weaver.

STAFF PRESENT: Rick Farrant, Karen Green, Anne Meyer, Edmond O’Neal, Lori Rice, and Kim Tempel.

ALSO ATTENDING: Kent Sellers.

I. Call to Order

Board Member Alan Duff called the meeting to order at 9:01 a.m.; a quorum was present. Duff mentioned that John Sampson had left the board after resigning from the position of president and CEO of the Northeast Indiana Regional Partnership and new board member Brooks Fetters has taken a new job as regional director of the Center for Energy Education.

II. Board Action – Consent Agenda

The minutes of the January 8, 2021 meeting and financials were provided in the packet of advance materials. Jordi Disler moved to approve the minutes and financial report. Tim Hartigan seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

III. Chief Elected Official’s Remarks – Commissioner Rich Beck

Beck noted that he has signed the board’s letter of recertification. It will be submitted to the Indiana Department of Workforce Development (DWD).

IV. Presentation of 990 for 2019 – Lori Rice

Rice described two changes to the 990 Form related to how expenses and revenues are reported. Jane Porter Gresham moved to approve the 990 file. James Phillips seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

V. Officer Nomination – Executive Committee

The executive committee nominated Duff to be secretary/treasurer of the board, a position that was vacated by John Niederman upon his retirement from Pathfinder Services Inc. The board unanimously approved Duff’s appointment as board secretary/treasurer.

VI. President and CEO Remarks – Edmond O’Neal

O’Neal mentioned that he has been named to a search committee that will be involved in finding a successor to Sampson at the Northeast Indiana Regional Partnership; he said he expects a thorough and efficient process. O’Neal asked Fetters to say a few words about joining the board. Fetters said he looked forward to contributing influence and resources to the board and also spoke about his new career position. O’Neal announced that Kent Sellers, market analyst for DWD who has worked closely with Northeast Indiana Works in Region 3 and was co-located at 200 E. Main Street, has been promoted to an unemployment insurance position within DWD. O’Neal noted Sellers’ importance to the region in providing labor market information. A replacement has not been named.

VII. Youth Service Providers Presentations

■ **Brightpoint – Rachel Bryant**

Bryant detailed the services provided by Brightpoint and in particular the Jobs for America’s Graduates (JAG) program, which helps vulnerable youth and young adults overcome economic, emotional, social and academic challenges. JAG is carried out by Brightpoint and overseen by Northeast Indiana Works. Bryant noted that JAG, which has 15 programs spanning 14 high schools in northeast Indiana, has seen a drop in attendance during the pandemic – to 492 students. She said Brightpoint is working to increase participation. Another challenge during the pandemic was figuring out how to deliver services virtually. Bryant noted that the region’s JAG program has exceeded most of the metrics used to measure outcomes, including completion rate and post-graduation employment rate. She added there will be a send-off for JAG seniors this year at 11 a.m. June 29 at Shoaff Park in Fort Wayne.

■ **SCAN – Lisa Blanchard**

Lisa Blanchard of Stop Child Abuse & Neglect (SCAN) detailed the organization’s services and in particular the Be Someone Now Program for people 16 to 24 who have significant barriers to education and/or employment. SCAN operates the program and Northeast Indiana Works oversees it. Like JAG, SCAN also faced challenges in operating the program during the pandemic, including a drop in referrals. Blanchard added that Brightpoint is considering forming a youth advisory committee for Be Someone Now.

VIII. Board Chair’s Remarks – Alan Duff

Duff noted that DWD Commissioner Fred Payne will address the board at its meeting in June.

IX. Adjourn – Alan Duff

Duff adjourned the meeting at 10:25 a.m.

(The next meeting of the board is scheduled from 9 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. June 4, 2021. It hasn’t been determined if it will be in-person or virtual.)