



NORTHEAST INDIANA WORKS BOARD

JUNE 2, 2023
9:00-10:30 AM

IN PERSON AND VIRTUAL MEETING FINAL MINUTES

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Commissioner Rich Beck, Phil Brown, Dale Buuck, Angie Dane, Keith Davis, Jordi Disler, Beth Green, Jane Gresham, Tim Hartigan, Lance Halsey, Leroy Jackson, Mark Michael, Richele Orn, Adam Oszakiewski, James Phillips, Alan Siepker, Shelly Stearns, Michael Venturini, Jim Walmsley and Tonya Weaver.

STAFF PRESENT:

Rick Farrant, Erica Lillie, Edmond O’Neal, Lori Rice and Kim Tempel

I. Call to Order

Board Chair Keith Davis called the meeting to order at 9 a.m. A quorum was present. Davis mentioned that this would be his last meeting on the board and he thanked his board colleagues for their support. He recognized other board members who would be stepping down (Brooks Fetters, Beth Green, Jane Gresham, Tim Hartigan and Mark Michael) and welcomed six new ratified board members (Phil Brown, Angie Dane, Lance Halsey, Richele Orn, Adam Oszakiewski and Michael Venturini).

II. Consent Agenda: Board Minutes, Financial Report, Proposed Meeting Dates

The minutes of the April 14, 2023 meeting and financials and proposed 2023-2024 meeting dates were provided in the packet of advance materials. Leroy Jackson moved to approve the minutes, financial report and meeting dates. Tonya Weaver seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

III. 2023-24 Service Provider Presentation

President and CEO Edmond O’Neal described the selection process for a service provider to provide day-to-day operations of the WorkOne Northeast career centers, then reported that an internal committee had recommended Florida-based nonprofit Eckerd Connects. Ryan Salzer, Eckerd senior director of program development and strategy, and Jessica Lodermeier, Eckerd operations director, appeared virtually to brief the board on Eckerd’s history and experience. They noted that Eckerd currently works in 19 states, providing services in the areas of workforce development, juvenile justice, behavioral health and education. Among the organizations Eckerd serves in Indiana are EmployIndy and Southern Indiana Works. Their presentation was followed by questions and significant discussion. Among the inquiries: Davis asked about the abilities of a national organization to serve regional interests. Salzer said Eckerd is committed to adjusting to the specific needs of a community. He said Eckerd is also able to effectively serve both urban and rural communities. O’Neal, who did not participate in the selection process, said Eckerd comes highly recommended and had a well-thought-out transition plan. Mark Michael noted that contracting with a service provider was mandated by the federal government, even though Northeast Indiana Works has an excellent track record of checks and balances. He said oversight issues elsewhere in the country led to the mandate, which he said will create an additional cost for Region 3. Discussion veered into the region’s workforce system in general and O’Neal provided an overview of how the system works. Jordi Disler moved to accept Eckerd as the service provider, Jackson seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

IV. PY 2022-23 Proposed Budget

Chief Financial Officer Lori Rice presented the \$6,051,790 projected program year budget, which is almost \$1 million less than the previous year's budget. O'Neal said he anticipates receiving additional funding from the state during the program year. Jackson moved to approve the budget, Shelly Stearns seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

V. Executive Officers Slate

Jane Gresham moved, Jim Walmsley seconded and the motion to approve these board officers was approved unanimously: Disler, chair; Rebecca Schroeder, chair elect; and Jackson, secretary/treasurer.

VI. Chief Elected Official's Remarks

Commissioner Rich Beck congratulated Keith Davis on his board leadership and urged all board members to stay engaged through the transition to a service provider.

VII. President/CEO Remarks

O'Neal noted that the Indiana Department of Workforce Development had recently completed its annual monitoring of Northeast Indiana Works and that it seemed to go well. A report is expected in six to eight weeks. He mentioned that Director of WorkOne Services Cindy Neal was due to have surgery soon for a cerebral aneurysm. (She had the surgery the same day as the board meeting, recovered quickly and was back to work the following week.) He said the Wabash WorkOne has moved to a new location, discussed the need for a board orientation, perhaps virtually, and hailed a Career and Technical Education signing day arranged by Garrett High School. Michael, who spoke at the ceremonies, talked about his experience at the event. O'Neal also lauded similar events hosted by the Impact Institute. Lastly, O'Neal thanked departing board members, characterizing their service as giving a career's worth of time to the board.

VIII. Board Chair's Remarks

Davis, addressing the new board members and encouraging their commitment, said Northeast Indiana Works board members are highly intelligent people who have remained on the board for significant periods because the work the board does translates to certificates and degrees, employment, and economic growth and prosperity. Beth Green said it has been a privilege to serve on the board, calling it one of the best boards in the state.

IX. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 10:33 a.m.

(The next meeting of the board will be from 9 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. October 6, 2023. There will be a virtual option, but all are encouraged to attend.)