



NORTHEAST INDIANA WORKS BOARD

APRIL 12, 2024

9:00-10:30 AM

IN PERSON AND VIRTUAL MEETING

FINAL MINUTES

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Richard Beck, Phil Brown, Patrick Buesching, Dale Buuck, Holly Christianson, Angie Dane, Jordi Disler, Lance Halsey, Leroy Jackson, Alayne Johnson, Richele Orn, James Phillips, Rebecca Schroeder, Corey Schoon, Michael Venturini, Jim Walmsley and Tonya Weaver.

STAFF PRESENT: Rick Farrant, Erica Lillie, Edmond O’Neal, Lori Rice, Kim Tempel, and Megan Voirol

I. Call to Order

Board Chair Jordi Disler called the meeting to order at 9:02 a.m. A quorum was present.

II. Consent Agenda: Board Minutes, Financial Report

The minutes of the January 12, 2024 meeting and financials were provided in the packet of advance materials. Leroy Jackson moved to approve the minutes and financial report. Rebecca Schroeder seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. Referring to the information in the packet of materials, Disler said it was good to see all the great work being done by Northeast Indiana Works.

III. 990

Northeast Indiana Works Chief Financial Officer Lori Rice presented the 990 for Program Year 2023-2024. Schroeder moved to approve the 990, Richele Orn seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

IV. Chief Elected Official’s Remarks

Commissioner Richard Beck echoed Disler’s earlier remarks, noting the excellent work being done by the Northeast Indiana Works team. Northeast Indiana Works President and CEO Edmond O’Neal outlined the significant responsibilities of a chief elected official related to the governance of the regional workforce system.

V. Employer Seminar Update

Kim Tempel, Northeast Indiana Works senior director of business services/human resources, announced the next employer seminar will be October 3 at Sweetwater. Among the speakers will be Indiana Department of Workforce Development Commissioner Richard Paulk. Among the seminar topics: effective use of AI and social media.

VI. Governor’s Workforce Cabinet

Whitney Ertel, executive director of the Governor’s Workforce Cabinet, updated the board on the new One Stop To Start digitally based statewide initiative that leads individuals and employers to various workforce-related resources, including WorkOnes. She said the initiative is one of the governor’s top priorities and is intended fill in any resource/awareness gaps, not duplicate the efforts of workforce boards. She also updated the progress of the statewide four-year workforce plan and she announced that a new methodology is forthcoming in determining in-demand jobs. Rebecca Schroeder, Northeast Indiana Works board chair elect and a member of the Governor’s Workforce Cabinet, briefed the board on a cabinet working group she’s involved in that is focused on the adult workforce. It is one of several working groups devoted to identifying recommendations to promote innovative and impactful workforce development. She said one of the things she’s trying to champion is depoliticizing immigration in the interests of addressing worker shortages.

VII. President and CEO Report

O'Neal broached a number of subjects, including a meeting he had with Gov. Eric Holcomb at which the governor commended the workforce development work in Region 3. O'Neal also said work on updating board bylaws is underway; the state's monitoring of Northeast Indiana Works will begin later in the month; updating the organization's four-year plan will begin soon; and he expressed concerns about HB6655 (A Stronger Workforce for America Act) which, if passed by the full Congress, would dedicate 50 percent of adult and dislocated worker funding toward upskilling workers. Following O'Neal's comments about meeting with the governor, Board Member Patrick Buesching inquired if the new methodology for in-demand jobs would take into consideration unique regional needs. O'Neal and Board Member Jim Walmsley were not confident that would happen, although they expected an appeal process would remain intact.

VIII. Board Chair's Remarks

Disler noted that Program Year 2024-2025 board meeting dates will need to be approved at the next meeting.

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. June 7, 2024. There will be a virtual option, but all are encouraged to attend in person.)