



APPROVED
July 31, 2024

**Northern Middle Tennessee Workforce Board
 Innovation Committee
 Meeting Minutes
 May 2, 2024, via Zoom 2:00 PM**

Members Attending	Members Absent	Staff & Guests Attending
Tony Adams	Anne Fugate	Marla Rye
Greg Jones	Richie Brandon	Andrea Dillard
Selittia Johnson	Seth Thurman	Meagan Dobbins
	Robin Baldree	Kim Rye
		Alyssa Spaulding

The Northern Middle Tennessee Workforce Board Innovation Committee met via Zoom on May 2, 2024. Attendance was taken, and a quorum was declared. Greg Jones, acting committee chair, called the meeting to order. He made a motion to approve the minutes from the previous meeting on February 8, 2024. The motion passed unanimously.

Contract Service Provider Procurement

Marla began with a brief overview of the procurement timeline for the Contract Service Provider. Thomas P. Miller was contracted to conduct an independent procurement and issued the RFP on April 1st. Four organizations submitted their intent to apply, and those proposals were due May 3, 2024. Thomas P. Miller will then evaluate the proposers individually. Marla mentioned that she would like a group of board members to review their recommendations and make the new CSP selection by May 31st.

Due to the Summer Youth Employment Program, there will be a transition period between providers. The current contractor, EDSI, administers the program to around 300 kids. If providers were changed in the middle of the contract, the youth would have to complete all new documents. Additionally, the transition period would allow the board to work closely with leadership teams and evaluate existing and incoming staff. Full implementation of the new CSP would be October 1, 2024.

Greg Jones asked if the current providers were one of the four organizations that submitted their intent to apply. Marla replied that she was not officially notified but believed both were applying. She would know the list of applicants by the board meeting.

Contract Service Provider Performance Update

Andrea Dillard began by briefly updating federal performance in the Q3 program year 2023. These are the standards that all WIOA entities are held accountable for and run between 1 and 2 years behind. Q3 will not be finalized until mid-May, but each performance standard is being met at 90% or more.

EDSI continues to underperform in their key performance indicators. This is primarily due to their aggressive spending and enrollment between the end of 2023 and the first quarter of 2024. They expended a large

portion of their budget over those two quarters and were forced to cut back on their spending this quarter. Andrea reported that at their last meeting, they were at 562 enrolled (56%) of their goal and that management was aiming for 70-75% of their enrollment goal. MAC, the youth provider in Davidson County, is on track to make all their enrollment and placement goals by the end of Q3.

We have been monitored by the TOSS team, a state-level audit review team. Two findings were made. The first was that EDSI had “paused” enrollments during Q2 after overspending in Q1. The second was a lack of signage at the Nashville AJC, which has since been addressed.

Marla reminded the committee that EDSI had been previously advised to pace themselves after overspending in Q1 on CDL training and surpassing enrollment goals. This caution led to the TOSS finding. EDSI never ran out of funds to serve participants and received technical assistance on how to address the deficit. She added that four temporary employees were hired to assist EDSI with the YEP, allowing EDSI more time to engage and enroll ADWs.

She and Chairman Zobl have reached out to the CEO of EDSI to express their frustration and inquire about EDSI's plans. They raised concerns about paused hiring despite five months remaining in the contract, emphasizing their expectation for positions to be filled and services provided during this time. Marla pointed out that EDSI is a private company with profit built into their contract that is only earned through performance. They have not performed enough to earn extra profits. The CEO will be at the board meeting to discuss his plans moving forward.

Marla opened the floor to questions. Greg Jones began by asking if EDSI knows the budget they have to work with to meet their goals, and Marla affirmed his question. Tony Adams then asked if they could be made to slow up on their spending. Andrea Dillard explained that the policy states that they are allowed to spend up to \$6,000 per individual, so they have not overstepped any policies; they just were not strategic.

Eligible Training Provider Requests

Andrea presented the new provider and the programs the board needed to consider. Crossroads Campus's Dog Grooming program requested to be added to the Eligible Training Provider List. The Tennessee Higher Education Commission has approved the program to apply but does not result in any type of certification. In order to be considered a positive credential, the participant would have to work in the field in which they were trained. The course costs \$6,4000 to attend. Tennessee State University and TCAT Dickson, existing providers, requested two new programs be added. TSU's IT program is considered an in-demand position. TCAT's program is medical patient care technology assistance and is also considered in demand. APSU's project management professional exam prep program required reapproval due to a 50% cost increase. Volunteer State Community College's HVAC-certified tech program submitted paperwork to be reinstated since it expired from the ETPL in 2021.

The floor was open to questions. Tony Adams asked if any existing programs do not award certificates, and Andrea replied that there are existing courses that do not result in a certificate. Greg Jones commented that even though pet grooming is not one of the five major sectors, it is considered an in-demand job that THEC has approved. Tony Adams motioned to approve the requests. Sellittia Johnson seconded. With no further discussion, the Committee passed the motions.

Innovation-Programs and Grants

Marla updated Committee members on current and upcoming happenings. Northern Middle's WIOA Strategic Plan did not receive any public comments and will be presented to the State Workforce Board for approval. The Senior Community Services Employment Program is working on renewing its contract with USDOL. The Adult Education program now has over 4,000 enrollees.

Adjourn

With no further questions, Marla Rye adjourned the meeting.