



1341 S. Glenburnie Road, New Bern, NC 28562 | (252) 636-6901 | www.ecwdb.org

ECWDB/Consortium Meeting

May 2, 2024, 6:00 p.m.

Met at the ECWDB office and virtually through Zoom

Members Present

In-person:

Al Searles
Alex Showalter (Alternate for
Jessica Adams)
Amy Hartley
Dr. Norma Sermon-Boyd
Frank Emory
Kimberly Riggs
Lesley Hunter
Melanie Sanders

Zoom:

Angela Bates
Brenda Upchurch
Carla Byrnes
Craig Foucht
David Hill
Dr. Jay Carraway
Jason Trull
Joe Wood
Judy Darden
Mike Kraszewski
Wes Watson

Consortium Present

None

Members Excused

Anthony Cruz
Charles Brogden
Dr. Rusty Hunt
Jenna Stafira
Jeremy Johnson
Rick Davis
Samuel King
Sheila Glazewski
Veronica Perez

Consortium Excused

Beatrice Smith
Bevan Foster
Bob Cavanaugh
Candy Bohmert
Jerry Jones
Jesse Dowe
Lisa Carpenter
Mike Haddock
Roland Best

Staff/Guests Present

Staff:

Bill Green
George Kramer
Phil Prescott
Erik Heck
Heather Gallo
Trina Hale
Maureen Bell
Debbie Simpkins
Lisa Harvey
David Jones

Guests:

Iris Carter
Taylor Kennedy
Eddi Moore II
Jamie Wallace
Reeshema Walker
Josephine Wallace-
Koonce
Sharon King
Hedda Bunting
Toni Blount

Introduction

Chairman Al Searles called the May 2, 2024, Board/Consortium meeting to order with a quorum. He led the attendees in a Pledge of Allegiance and explained the Disclosure of Potential Conflict of Interest policy.

Adoption of Agenda/Consent Agenda

Chairman Searles asked if there were any changes to the agenda. **Hearing none, he entertained a motion to accept the agenda as presented. Dr. Norma Sermon-Boyd motioned. Mr. Frank Emory seconded. Motion passed.**

Chairman Searles asked if there were any items needing to be considered separately from the consent agenda. **Hearing none, he entertained a motion to accept the consent agenda as presented. Mr. Emory motioned. Ms. Lesley Hunter seconded. Motion passed.**

Treasurer's Report

Mr. Bill Green presented the Financial Report of March 31, 2024. This financial report showed that ECWDB has spent \$2,711,968.88, or 46.69%, of the available \$5,839,096.51 funds, which leaves \$3,127,127.63 remaining. The report also showed a detailed breakdown of expenditures by service provider. **Chairman Searles entertained a motion to approve the Treasurer's Report. Dr. Norma Sermon-Boyd motioned. Ms. Melanie Sanders seconded. Motion passed.**

Executive Committee Report Item 3 – PY 2024-2028 Comprehensive Local Area Plan Approval

Mr. Bill Green discussed that the ECWDB staff have worked hard to revise the PY 2024-2028 Comprehensive Local Area Plan that is required by WIOA every four years. This plan is a massive document that includes the structure of the board, the implementation of programs, and all other details regarding the board. The plan was submitted for the required public review period and then brought before the Executive Committee for recommendation to be brought before the full board tonight. With the approval from the board, ECWDB will move forward with submitting the plan to the state. **Chairman Searles entertained a motion to approve the PY 2024-2028 Comprehensive Local Area Plan. Ms. Melanie Sanders motioned. Dr. Jay Carraway seconded. Motion passed.**

Executive Committee Report Item 5 – Nominating Committee Report

The Nominating Committee met and determined the nominations for the vacant ECWDB officer positions of Chair, Vice-Chair, and Secretary/Treasurer. These positions would begin July 1, 2024, for a two-year term. Mr. Frank Emory was nominated for Chair, Ms. Veronica Perez for Vice-Chair, and Mr. Jason Trull for Secretary/Treasurer. Discussion ensued. **Chairman Searles asked if there were any additional nominations to be made. Hearing none, he entertained a motion to approve closing nominations for the officer positions. Ms. Melanie Sanders motioned. Ms. Lesley Hunter seconded. Motion passed.**

Chairman Searles entertained a motion to appoint the nominated officers for their respective positions for a two-year term beginning July 1, 2024. Ms. Melanie Sanders motioned. Dr. Norma Sermon-Boyd seconded. Motion passed.

Human Services Panel Discussion

Mr. Bill Green introduced several speakers who then participated in a panel discussion on Human Services.

Dr. Norma Sermon-Boyd discussed her efforts to improve the quality of childcare in Jones County, highlighting that all childcare centers are now rated 4-5 stars. She emphasized the importance of the people in these positions actively striving for better care for children. She also mentioned that they provide assistance to childcare centers and have not received any complaints at the state level. Additionally, they have taken on the North Carolina Pre-K program, with four classes in each elementary school funded by various sources. Dr. Sermon-Boyd expressed gratitude towards governors and legislators for funding the partnership for North Carolina Pre-K and stressed the importance of investing in early education. Lastly, she pointed out their parent training program, which requires parents to complete workshops to receive a tablet for their child, aiming to benefit both parents and children.

Ms. Melanie Sanders discussed Caswell Development Center, a state facility for intellectually disabled residents. She shared that the center, established in 1911, is one of the largest employers in Lenoir County and aims to provide a quality of life similar to that of the general population.

Ms. Kimberly Riggs discussed the vocational rehab program, renamed Employment and Independence for People with Disabilities, an organization that helps individuals with disabilities find employment and offers job readiness services. They also aid employers in accommodating the needs of employees with disabilities. Additionally, they offer services like home and vehicle modifications through their Independent Living division. She encouraged referrals of potential clients and emphasized the organization's commitment to connecting clients with resources across different counties.

Mr. Alex Showalter discussed Carteret County Department of Social Services and then presented an overview of their services, including subsidized daycare, food stamps, Medicaid expansion, and work first programs.

Ms. Amy Hartley is the Executive Director of Wayne Opportunity Center, which is a day training program for adults with intellectual developmental disabilities. The center, established 60 years ago, currently has nearly 90 clients and 78 staff. The program offers various services, including job training, social skills development, and basic life skills classes. She also highlighted the center's partnership with social services and vocational rehabilitation to provide job placement and coaching services. The discussion also touched on the center's efforts to promote independence and community integration for its clients.

Ms. Angela Bates introduced Greene Lamp, a nonprofit organization that has been operating since the 1960s to combat poverty. Ms. Bates, the Executive Director of Greene Lamp, explained the organization's various programs, including community services, job training, early childhood education, and a foster parent's program. She highlighted their efforts to assist low-income families to become self-sufficient and addressed the challenges they face, such as finding affordable housing for homeless families.

Executive Director's Report

Mr. Bill Green introduced Ms. Sharon King and Hedda Bunting, both Career Advisors who shared success stories of Shawn Fuller, a future firefighter in Query County, and Kiera House, a nursing graduate from the Carteret Institute.

Mr. Green announced the retirement of Mr. George Kramer, who has worked for the board for 10 years. He also discussed the progress of the year, particularly in the areas of financial and program development.

Chairman's Remarks

Chairman Searles discussed that the Eastern Carolina workforce development region was selected to host the National Association of Workforce Boards' July meeting, showcasing rural North Carolina's workforce development. He highlighted the potential reauthorization of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), with a focus on increasing funding for training and regional control and emphasized the importance of providing support and wraparound services for individuals to succeed in their jobs. Lastly, he encouraged the team to get involved in their communities, highlighting the importance of creativity and community partnerships in utilizing their funds to help individuals achieve their professional goals.

Adjournment

There being no other items for discussion, **Chairman Searles entertained a motion to adjourn. Dr. Norma Sermon-Boyd motioned. Ms. Melanie Sanders seconded. Motion passed.**

Al Searles, Chair

David Jones, Recorder