



June 17th, 2026 WSRCA Board Meeting Minutes

06/17/2026 12:30 PM CDT to 2:30 PM CDT

Workforce Solutions Rural Capital Area

4794 Transportation Way, Building 5, Suite 500, San Marcos TX 78666

Members Present

Tim Ols

Paul Boff

Rene Flores

Alfonso Sifuentes

Lisa Stewart

Rhonda Estelle

Margaret Lindsey

Amy Payne

Mary Helen Martinez

Eben Riggs

Leslie Abbott

Becky Garlick

Steven Brockman-Weber

Woody Engebretson

Frank Leonardis

Sam Dowdy

Nikki Stallings

Mike(Larry) Crane

Kyle Swartz

Mike Grant

Megan Gandy

Members Absent

Melissa Johnson

Laura Lucas

Sean Miller

Elva Zdeb

Christian Fletcher

Susan Kimball

Jeff Light

Kwee Lan Teo

Marco Cruz
Heather Watson
Joshua Paselk

1. Call to Order/Roll Call/Establish Quorum

Presented By Frank Leonardis, Alfonso Sifuentes

- Board members and participants were called individually, and attendance was confirmed for each.
- Alfonso Sifuentes announced that a sufficient number of members were present to constitute a quorum.

2. Public Comment Period

- No members of the public signed up to provide comments.

3. Information Sharing

3.1. National Recognition for Advancing Veteran Employment

Presented By Paul Fletcher, Frank Leonardis, Katharine Tamez, Director of Veteran Employment Services with TVC

- Catherine Thomas, Director of Veteran Employment Services with Texas Workforce Commission, was introduced to recognize Isaac Marquez Diaz for exceptional achievements in veteran employment services.
- Isaac Marquez Diaz was recognized as both the state of Texas winner and the national winner for the American Legion's local veteran employer representative award for the year, competing against approximately 40 peers in Texas and others nationwide.
- Isaac's measurable outcomes included a 60% employer effectiveness ratio, 93 quality referrals and job developments, 5 partner trainings, 115 employer outreaches, 5 employer events, 4 employer awards, and 12 case conferences during the most recent reporting period.
- Isaac will travel to Kentucky to receive his award from the American Legion.

3.2. Recent Board Member Resignations

3.3. Recently Appointed Board Members

Presented By Frank Leonardis

- Dr. Mary Helen Martinez was acknowledged.

4. Budget*

5. Consent Agenda*

Presented By Frank Leonardis

- Technical difficulties with audio for remote participants were discussed, impacting their ability to hear and vote. The board worked to resolve these issues to ensure all members could participate.
- Motion - Motion and second to approve the consent agenda, including minutes and financials, were previously made and the board proceeded to vote after resolving technical issues.
- Second - Motion to approve the consent agenda was seconded.
- Clarification provided that the consent agenda includes the minutes from the April board meeting and the March and April financials, previously approved by the executive committee.
- Decision - Approval of the consent agenda was confirmed, indicating sufficient votes were received.
- Action Item - Board members were instructed to register their votes electronically through the onboard system, rather than verbally.

6. Board Leases*

- Motion - Motion to approve the renewal or relocation of board property leases in Burnet, LaGrange, and Llano.
- Second - Motion seconded.
- Discussion included plans to renew leases in Burnet and LaGrange at existing facilities, and to relocate the Llano office to a more visible and larger location for slightly higher cost. The details of the lease renewals were provided in the board packet.
- Decision - Motion to approve the board leases carried.

7. Executive Committee/Chair's Report

Presented By Frank Leonardis

- Executive Committee met last week to review financials and board leases. No policy or monitoring updates were reported; business proceeded as usual.
- Information has been distributed to begin scheduling meetings for the ad hoc budget committee, which will start planning for the next fiscal year's budget.
- Frank Leonardis attended the WIN Texas State Association quarterly meeting in May, which included a tour of Fort Hood and Temple College. She reported positive experiences and insights from the event.
- Next Executive Committee meeting is scheduled for August 12th.

8. Business Education Services Committee Report

Presented By Nikki Stallings

- The Business Education Committee did not provide a report for this meeting.

9. Community Awareness Committee Report

Presented By Kyle Swartz

- The Community Awareness Committee met on May 27th via Microsoft Teams, but lacked quorum due to absences related to Memorial Day weekend, so no official business was conducted.
- The committee's main objective is to help organize signing day initiatives across ISDs and nine counties, with progress ongoing to build a framework for this initiative by Workforce Solutions Rural Capital Area staff.
- Brian and Bernice are expanding awareness of Rural Capital's work through social media, video, podcasts, web chats, and newsletters, and are tracking increased impressions and distributing print collateral such as career guide booklets in schools.
- The committee is exploring overlap between communications and response teams to address layoff events and broaden marketing impact.
- The next committee meeting is scheduled for July, with the goal of achieving quorum and providing further updates on signing day activities.

10. Untapped Populations Committee Report

Presented By Diane Cook

- The Untapped Populations Subcommittee met on May 28th with strong attendance, including the introduction of Mary Helen as a new member. The meeting included idea generation on untapped populations and potential opportunities for focus.
- A potential committee chair has been identified and will be confirmed within the next few days. Two volunteers are available if the primary candidate is unable to serve.
- The committee has established a meeting cadence of every other month, specifically on the third Thursday. The next meeting is scheduled for July, with plans to introduce the new chair at the August meeting.
- The committee is working to gather data to support completion of short-term actions and to set initial priorities for the upcoming year.

11. Early Care & Education Committee Report

Presented By Gwen Snyder

- The Early Child Care and Education Committee met on June 4th, with strong attendance. The committee reviewed program highlights, including service to nearly 5,000 children and over 3,000 families, and continued participation of 330 providers in the CCS network. Of these, 250 providers are certified as Texas Rising Star (level 3 or 4), representing a 76% certification rate. The remaining providers are progressing toward certification, which is a requirement.

- The committee discussed quality initiatives, notably the AED initiative, which provided 59 AED units to child care providers, prioritizing those in rural areas with longer emergency response times. There is intent to continue this initiative next year, as nearly 80 providers expressed interest but not all could be accommodated.
- Upcoming events include a training session in partnership with Capital Area scheduled for June 24th and 25th, specifically for directors. Registration for this event has been opened by Paul.
- Shared services initiatives continue with partners Emerge Ed, United Way, and Austin PBS. The committee reviewed the strategic plan, focusing on family and provider journey maps, which were circulated for feedback before and after the meeting. Input was received to improve and streamline these maps for broader usability.
- The committee aims to distribute finalized journey maps at events and through local chambers of commerce, targeting informal child care providers to encourage licensing for improved quality and safety.
- Additional resources were discussed, including the recent launch of a child care resources for employers website by TWC. The committee plans to incorporate QR codes linking to these resources in future materials.
- The next Early Child Care and Education Committee meeting is scheduled for August 5th.

12. Chief Executive Officer's Report

Presented By Paul Fletcher

- The Chief Executive reported on the launch of the southern node of the National Network for Microelectronics (NNME), led by UT Austin, in partnership with the SEMI Foundation and National Science Foundation. The initiative aims to train advanced manufacturing talent to meet local employer needs.
- Efforts continue to keep local elected officials informed about workforce development, including plans for a fall lunch-and-learn session at the State Capitol with Alamo and Capital Area partners, targeting officials before the legislative session begins.
- The first 'From Trade to Entrepreneur' conference was held in partnership with Score Austin, with over 50 attendees signing up for further mentoring and business guidance.
- The organization was awarded a Texas Talent Connection Grant of \$235,000 to support year two of the Rural Pre-Nursing Readiness and Education Program in Berman, Atlanta, and surrounding counties.
- On June 24th, the new executive director of the Workforce Commission, Steve Pier, will visit the Round Rock workforce center for a tour and discussion, aiming to strengthen relationships with TWC.
- The sunset report for the Workforce Commission is expected to be released around June 15th.
- Ongoing engagement with chamber partners, industry associations, and stakeholders across the nine-county area is helping to improve representation and understanding of workforce needs.
- At the Wynn, Texas Q2 meeting, boards statewide submitted performance and success stories, compiled into a report to be shared with TWC and elected officials. The Chief

Executive will share this report with board members electronically and provide hard copies upon request.

- Caitlin Swindner, a Texas State University junior, has joined as a summer intern, supporting outreach and engagement initiatives with the communications team.
- Thanks were extended to Mike Grant and IBEW Local 520 for sponsoring the organization's podcast, providing funding for equipment and expansion of outreach.
- The Child Care and Early Learning Director Symposium will be held July 24–25 at Kalahari Resort and Convention Center, in partnership with the Capital Area board. Over 250 directors, teachers, and staff are expected to attend, earning professional development and CEU credits.
- Preliminary planning is underway for the workforce board's 40th anniversary celebration, with a launch at the October board retreat and culminating in a major event at year-end. More information and participation opportunities will be shared in coming months.

13. Performance Reports

Presented By Diane Cook

- The board reviewed the monthly performance report from Texas Workforce Commission, which includes 20 measures. Currently, 12 measures are being exceeded, 2 are being met, and 6 are not being met. Of the 6 not met, 3 are forecasted to be met by year-end, 1 is suppressed pending data validation, and 2 are still being worked on.
- Strategies have been developed with the contractor to improve performance on the remaining measures, including a triage system for claimants, increased staff focus, and contacting newly identified claimants within 48 hours. These efforts are expected to position the board well for the new performance period starting July 1st.
- Good Jobs Challenge grant progress: 73% of the grant period has elapsed, participant enrollment has exceeded targets, and there is an 88.8% employment rate among those who completed training. CDL students represent the largest group of employed participants. Over a year remains to complete the program.
- Apprenticeship expansion update: Across three grants, 464 apprentices have been enrolled out of a 600 total target. 48% have completed training, 60% have attained credentials, and wage growth is 83%, with an average increase of over \$3 per hour. About 140 apprentices remain to be enrolled by March 30, 2027.
- Child care wait list has decreased from over 5,400 children in August 2025 to just over 3,000. The average wait time is a little over 12 months, with May 2025 applications currently being pulled. The board is working with TWC and seeking additional funding sources to further reduce the wait list and expand scholarships.
- Currently, 2,928 children are served daily in child care, which is 94% of the target of 3,108. Numbers typically drop at the end of the school year and are expected to increase during summer programs.
- 76% of child care providers have received a quality designation. There are 334 providers within the board's area and 183 out-of-county providers serving local children. Quality designation rates are consistent across both groups.

- Action Item - Kyle Swartz encouraged board members to notify Workforce Solutions Rural Capital Area in advance if they know of upcoming unemployment actions, so the board can provide onsite services to affected individuals.
- The reduction in the child care wait list is attributed to children aging out at 13, increased provider participation, and improved outreach to families. Some families remove themselves from the list due to changed circumstances.

14. Workforce Board Announcements – Board at Large (what's happening in your area) – Submit your announcements to the Board Secretary prior to the meeting.

Presented By Frank Leonardis

- Announcement of a formal partnership launch between Horseshoe Bay Resort and Texas State University for online hospitality courses, scheduled for July 8th at noon at the resort. The partnership offers micro credits and automatic interviews for course participants, with opportunities for seasonal, part-time, or full-time employment.
- Invitation extended to board members and board staff to attend the partnership launch event at Horseshoe Bay Resort.
- Action Item - Meranda Stanley will reach out to board members due for reappointment via email.
- Action Item - Meranda Stanley will send an email to board members regarding the upcoming annual conflict of interest training, which will be conducted online.

15. Schedule Date/Time for Next Board Meeting

Presented By Frank Leonardis

- Announcement of the next meeting scheduled for August 19th at 12:30, to be held at the Round Rock Workforce Center.

16. Adjourn

Presented By Frank Leonardis

- Motion - Motion to adjourn the meeting.
- Second - Motion to adjourn seconded.

Uncategorized Discussion Points

Open Q&A

- Clarification provided that there were no board resignations; the item was only listed on the agenda.
- Discussion on the significance of the center in the south for information technology related to manufacturing, highlighting its connection to the federal CHIPS Act and the state CHIPS Act fund, and its coverage of a 10 or 11 state area centered on Texas, extending west to Utah and east to Florida.
- Emphasis on the importance of aligning training programs with industry needs and maintaining engagement between educational partners and employers.