



**Workforce Solutions Rural Capital Area Community Awareness Committee
Meeting Minutes**

Wednesday, May 27, 2026 | 11 a.m. - 12 p.m.
Microsoft Teams Meeting

Committee Members Present

- Kyle Swartz, Chair
- Heather Watson
- Josh Paselk

Committee Members Absent

- Steven Brockman-Weber
- Melissa Johnson
- Susan Kimball
- Margaret Lindsey
- Nikki Stallings

Guests Present

- Frank Leonardis

Staff Present

- Berenice Smith
 - Brian Hernandez
-

Call to Order

Committee Chair Kyle Swartz called the meeting to order at 11:03 a.m.

Roll Call / Establish Quorum

Roll call was conducted. A quorum was not established. No action was taken on consent agenda items.

Public Comment

No public comments were made.

Consent Agenda

No quorum was present; therefore, no voting occurred on consent agenda items, including approval of the February 11 and March 10, 2026 Community Awareness Committee meeting minutes.

Information and Discussion Items

Signing Day Initiative and ISD Data Collection

- Brian Hernandez provided an update on the Signing Day initiative.
- Kelly Moreno, WSRCA Chief Solutions Officer, and team are collecting information from all 30+ ISDs to evaluate existing Signing Day activities and regional interest.

- The initiative aims to identify best practices and opportunities for regional collaboration.
- The Committee discussed using the framework for future efforts and referenced feedback from Trident Technical College and the role of CAP as an event convener.

Digital Engagement and Website Performance

- Brian Hernandez and Berenice Smith reported increased website engagement and longer user session times.
- Growth was attributed to improved social media strategies, job fair promotions, and expanded content development.
- Staff discussed continued efforts to strengthen digital storytelling and user engagement across platforms.

Podcast Relaunch and Sponsorship

- Brian Hernandez outlined the relaunch of the Workforce Solutions Rural Capital Area podcast as a video series.
- The series will feature community Q&A discussions and workforce-related topics.
- Local 520 IBEW secured sponsorship for the season through Kelly's outreach efforts.
- The Committee was invited to participate in future episodes.

Social Media Outreach and QR Code Integration

- The Committee asked questions regarding Instagram handles and QR code accessibility.
- Berenice Smith reviewed current outreach practices and audience segmentation strategies.
- Staff agreed to create a QR code linking to all social media accounts for inclusion on committee and public-facing materials.

Newsletter Revamp and Stakeholder Communication

- Berenice Smith outlined plans to redesign the committee newsletter.
- Target audiences include board members, chambers of commerce, and elected officials.
- Planned content includes workforce news, podcast links, testimonials, and event highlights.
- The Committee and staff discussed engaging college students as ambassadors and incorporating intern contributions.

Higher Learning Video Series Launch

- Brian Hernandez introduced the first "Higher Learning" video episode designed for younger audiences.
- Berenice Smith hosted the first episode focused on workforce center services.
- Staff discussed future short-form video production and invited the Committee to participate in future episodes.

K-12 Career Guide Booklets Distribution

- Brian Hernandez shared updates on career guide booklets developed by the K-12 team.
- The guides highlight high-demand career fields and are available in both print and digital formats.
- Materials are intended to support school districts and encourage youth toward in-demand occupations.
- Staff emphasized the importance of supporting a consistent regional workforce narrative.

Career Ready Website Launch

- Brian Hernandez and Berenice Smith reported that the Career Ready website is nearing completion.
- The site is intended to guide younger audiences toward career pathways and connect users with training providers and employers.
- Staff emphasized mobile accessibility and regional collaboration as key priorities.

40th Anniversary Campaign Planning

- Brian Hernandez discussed planning efforts for Workforce Solutions Rural Capital Area's 40th anniversary campaign.
- Proposed activities include county-wide events, stakeholder outreach, proclamations, and logo development.
- The Committee was asked to provide feedback on event formats and campaign messaging.

Job Fair and Hiring Event Coordination

- Brian Hernandez provided updates on current and upcoming job fairs and hiring events.
- Partnerships include school districts and the Texas Veterans Commission.
- Staff emphasized the importance of summer events and encouraged the Committee to share additional opportunities for inclusion in the event calendar.

Layoff Tracking and Outplacement Outreach

- The Committee asked about processes for tracking regional layoffs, including GM-related layoffs and WARN notices.
- Brian Hernandez reviewed the Business Services team's response procedures and outreach efforts.
- Staff discussed trends related to technology layoffs and plans to provide a future report detailing outreach and engagement with affected companies and employees.

Next Committee Meeting

- The Committee discussed scheduling the next meeting.
- Members agreed to hold the next Community Awareness Committee meeting on July 29, 2026.
- The selected date allows additional time for Signing Day data collection and member availability.

Board Staff Follow-Up Items

- **Brian Hernandez:** To send podcast episode view and impression metrics to committee members.
- **Berenice Smith:** Create a QR code linking all Workforce Solutions Rural Capital Area social media platforms for use on committee materials.
- **Brian Hernandez:** Prepare and distribute a report outlining WARN notice response procedures, layoff outreach, and engagement efforts with affected companies and HR departments.

Adjournment

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 11:50 a.m.