



America's **JobCenter**  
of California<sup>SM</sup>



## Los Angeles County Workforce Development Board

### Draft Minutes

December 15, 2023

10:00 AM – 1:00 PM

### Hybrid In-Person and Virtual Meeting

Department of Economic Opportunity Headquarters

510 South Vermont Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90020

#### A. CALL TO ORDER

Secretary/Treasurer Mary Hewitt called the Los Angeles County Workforce Development Board (LACWDB) December 15, 2023, meeting to order at 10:01 AM.

**Land Acknowledgement was read by LACWDB Director Cheren Kochen:** The County of Los Angeles recognizes that we occupy land originally and still inhabited and cared for by the Tongva, Tataviam, Serrano, Kizh and Chumash Peoples. We honor and pay respect to their elders and descendants- past, present, and emerging- as they continue their stewardship of these lands and waters. We acknowledge that settler-colonization resulted in land seizure, disease, subjugations, slavery, relocation, broken promises, genocide, and multigenerational trauma. This acknowledgement demonstrates our responsibility and commitment to truth, healing, and reconciliation and to elevating the stories, culture, and community of the original inhabitants of Los Angeles County. We are grateful to have the opportunity to live and work on these ancestral lands. We are dedicated to growing and sustaining relationships with Native Peoples and local tribal governments, including (in no particular order) the:

- Fernandño Tataviam Band of Mission Indians
- Gabrielino Tongva Indians of California Tribal Council
- Gabrieleno Tongva San Gabriel Band of Mission Indians
- Gabrieleño Band of Mission Indians
- Kizh Nation - San Manuel Band of Mission Indians
- San Fernando Band of Mission Indians

Please find the Los Angeles City/County Native American Indian Commission website below at:

**Attachments:** [Board Motion](#)

[Los Angeles City/County NAIC Website \(Click Here\)](#)

## B. ROLL CALL

A quorum was established with **12 board members** in attendance during roll call.

**Present (12 in-person and 1 virtual):** Lexi Adsit, Alex-Handrah Aime, Luis Arida, Stephen Cheung, Jeremy Diaz, Secretary/Treasurer Mary Hewitt, Miguel Hurtado, Tami Hutchins-Nunez, Jorge Marquez, Maureen McIntyre, Dr. Armida Ornelas, Jeffrey Thompson (Virtual at 10:50 am), Delbert Whetter

**Absent (6):** Gustavo Camacho (Excused), Berenice Nunez Constant (Excused), Jesse Cuevas (Excused), Kyle Miller (Excused), Darrel Saucedo (Excused), Jeffery Wallace (Excused)

***Conflict of Interest was read by LACWDB Director Cheren Kochen:***

Members shall abide by conflict-of-interest requirements outlined in Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), Section 107(h), which states a member of a local board, or a member of a standing committee, may not vote on a matter under consideration by the local board (1) regarding the provision of services by such member represents; or (2) that would provide a direct financial benefit to such member of the immediate family of such member.

## C. CHAIR'S REMARKS

Secretary/Treasurer Hewitt thanked the board for attending the meeting and wished happy holidays to all. All members were welcomed at the last board meeting of the year.

Ms. Hewitt acknowledged and recognized staff efforts to strengthen delivery, including mechanisms for information sharing, transparency, as well as the support of the board through the modernization efforts of Los Angeles County's workforce system. She thanked the members for providing strong leadership in support of workforce and economic development in the county throughout various changes, including post pandemic impacts, and the change of departments from Workforce Development, Aging and Community Service (WDACS) to Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO), which also resulted in staff changes.

She stated that the development of the Guiding Principles and a strong WIOA Local Plan provided thoughtful impact, providing a theoretical and practical base for the design, development, implementation, and intended impact of programs and services. She also said that DEO's leaders and staff will continue to work faithfully to transform guidance from the board into strategies that promise to be transformational.

The vice chair then introduced LACWDB's newest member, appointed by the 3<sup>rd</sup> Supervisorial District: Lexi Adsit, Executive Director of Trans Can Work Inc, located in West Hollywood.

## D. ACTION ITEMS

### I. Draft minutes of the LACWDB Quarterly Meeting held on September 22, 2023

**Presenter:** Mary Hewitt, Secretary/Treasurer, LACWDB

**Summary:** This item presents for approval, and any other action deemed necessary, the draft minutes of the LACWDB quarterly meeting held on December 15, 2023.

**Discussion:** There was no discussion on the item.

**It was moved by member Marquez and seconded by member Aime to approve the minutes of the September 22, 2023, LACWDB's regular board meeting.**

**In Favor (9):** Alex-Handrah Aime, Luis Arida, Stephen Cheung, Secretary/Treasurer Mary Hewitt, Tami Hutchins-Nunez, Jorge Marquez, Maureen McIntyre, Dr. Armida Ornelas, Delbert Whetter

**Abstain (3):** Lexi Adsit, Jeremy Diaz, Miguel Hurtado

**Recused (0):**

**Opposed (0):**

**Absent (7):** Gustavo Camacho (Excused), Berenice Nunez Constant (Excused), Jesse Cuevas (Excused), Kyle Miller (Excused), Darrel Saucedo (Excused), Jeffrey Thompson (Excused), Jeffery Wallace (Excused)

### II. Approve Fiscal Year (FY) 2023-2024 Los Angeles County Workforce Programs First Quarter (Q1) Payment Status Report through September 30, 2023

**Presenter:** Michelle Jiang, DEO's Department Finance Manager II

**Summary:** This item presents for review and approval, and any other action deemed necessary for the FY 2023-24 Los Angeles County Workforce Programs Q1 Payment Status.

**Discussion:** Michelle Jiang presented this item on behalf of the department.

- She reported the total expenditure for the first quarter was \$5,586,000.
- One Stop Shop and America's Job Training Centers of California (AJCCs) operations' 1<sup>st</sup> quarter expenditures were \$2,547,000.
- Training Career Pathway and Participants wage expenditures totaled \$684,000. AJCC operation's support and technical assistance allocation expenditures were \$1,040,000.
- The total expenditure for the One Stop operations is \$4,271,000 million, and the business service section's first quarter expenditure for business intelligence and services to businesses was \$243,000.
- Rapid Response and the Layoff Aversion activities were at \$118,000.
- There are no reported expenditures on section intermediary.
- The first quarter for LACWDB's operations includes \$6,027 for support, and \$327,000 in

administrative support.

- The second page is for the board's information on the department's non-WIOA funded workforce programs' expenditures.
- Member Aime asked for comment on the delta between payments and the budget, stating there appears to be a significant difference between what was budgeted and what occurred during the quarter. She asked the reason for the discrepancy; the budget was \$44 million, but payments made were \$5.6 million.
- DEO Assistant Director Kristina Meza explained that the \$44 million is budgeted for the full year and staff just reviewed the first quarter, explaining that the department is at about 14% overall expenditures for the quarter, which is comparable to what has been seen historically. She noted that first quarters typically show slower progress in terms of expenditures, pointing that when looking at similar quarters and related expenditures, once entities start to draw down training dollars and as individuals complete training programs, we start to see expenditures go up – typically in the second and third quarters.
- Member Aime requested a quarter-by-quarter, year-over-year trend line as it is currently difficult to analyze and determine whether 4,000,000 is good, bad, or otherwise, unless a trend/comparison can be seen. She expressed that the board should be able to compare expectation versus performance since there have been many changes in the department in recent years. It is important for the board to visualize the trend to determine whether things are improving or slowing down, so it can determine the type of support it needs to provide to facilitate and accelerate distribution of funds, as the board's ultimate responsibility is to get money to clients.
- Assistant Director Meza said that DEO could do something similar to the Performance Reports where a trend analysis can be added.
- Member Marquez requested confirmation that DEO will perform year-to-date budget analyses that include comparisons to the previous year's budgets for its quarterly updates, including budgets versus actual expenditures' comparisons.
  - Assistant Director Meza confirmed that DEO will provide the comparisons.
- Member Cheung stated that most expenditures were at 12% of the total budgeted expenditures for the year. However, LACWDB's operations are at 36%. He asked to ensure that LACWDB's operations and services coverage are secured as LACWDB's forecasting is developed.
  - Assistant Director Meza confirmed that the budget referenced is closely monitored by the department. Additionally, the amount in each line item can be altered up to a predefined percentage threshold. She will report back to the board regarding the official number but believes it is a maximum of 20% per line item.
- Member Aime pointed out that in the cover page's notes, lower expenditures can be seen under One Stop operations because of lower expenditures reported by the AJCCs, inquiring about the discrepancy.
- Michelle Jiang indicated the first quarter discrepancy is generally due to lag times in invoices submitted by the AJCCs/service providers, causing delays in the proper reflection of the total payments made in the first quarter, compared to the other three fiscal quarters.

It was moved by member Diaz and seconded by member Hurtado to approve the Los Angeles County Workforce Programs Q1 Payment Status Report through September 30, 2023.

**In Favor (12):** Lexi Adsit, Alex-Handrah Aime, Luis Arida. Stephen Cheung, Jeremy Diaz, Secretary/Treasurer Mary Hewitt, Miguel Hurtado, Tami Hutchins-Nunez, Jorge Marquez, Maureen McIntyre, Dr. Armida Ornelas, Delbert Whetter

**Abstain (0):**

**Recused (0):**

**Opposed (0):**

**Absent (7):** Gustavo Camacho (Excused), Berenice Nunez Constant (Excused), Jesse Cuevas (Excused), Kyle Miller (Excused), Darrel Sauceda (Excused), Jeffrey Thompson (Excused), Jeffery Wallace (Excused)

### III: Approve FY 2023-2024 Los Angeles County Workforce Fiscal Year 2023-2024 Programs Updated Budget

**Presenter:** Michelle Jiang, DEO's Department Finance Manager II

**Summary:** This item presented for review and approval, and any other action deemed necessary, the FY 2023-24 Los Angeles County Workforce Programs Updated Budget.

**Discussion:** Michelle Jiang presented on behalf of the department.

In the proposed budget, WIOA funding was \$44 million; in the revised budget, funding was increased by a total of \$2.3 million with the standing, revised budget at \$46.4 million. WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker funding has increased by \$511,000. The WIOA Youth funding also increased by \$983,000, but the WIOA Rapid Response funding decreased by \$898,000. There is a carryover funding increase of \$1.7 million.

With this revised budget, funding for One Stop Operations increased by \$1.193 million for the AJCCs. There was also an increase in the training career paths and wages, by \$980,000, and.

The budget for innovation projects was restored back to \$1,000,000 total.

*Under One Stop Operations, there was an increase in the budget of \$1.19 million for the AJCCs and a total of One Stop Operations budget of \$2.964 million.*

There are no changes to the business services timeline, but DEO is monitoring.

There is a reduction in the budget by \$712,000 for the Rapid Response and the Layoff Aversion activities due to the reduction in funding levels.

The other revision in the budget is an increase of the administration line item by \$59,000.

- Member Marquez mentioned that it seems that \$596,000 is to be received from federal WIOA sources and asked if the board must request the funding.
- Ms. Jiang informed the board that this funding is from the State Workforce Board.
- Member Aime asked for a description of the innovation project funds, stating that it looks like most of the incremental allocation is going to the innovation project fund where there is an increase of \$791,000.
  - Ms. Jiang answered that this happened during the proposed budget. The proposed budget was reduced from the prior year's budget from \$1,000,000 to \$299,000 and approved during the prior meeting.
  - Director Meza answered that the innovation fund is a \$1,000,000 fund that was proposed by the board, to set aside dollars to support specialized training programs across the region. It is WIOA training dollars, and the funds can be used to support innovation around the current training programs or new training programs across the region that the board approves through AJCC networks.
- Member Cheung asked for more information about the reduction for Rapid Response and layoff aversion funding.
- Assistant Director Meza acknowledged there is a reduction in Rapid Response funding and explained that its funding allocations are based on regional needs. The Employment Development Department (EDD) conducts analyses where they forecast potential business closures and/or layoffs, resulting in possible reductions in Rapid Response funding as decreased layoffs/business closures may be anticipated compared to previous years. She also explained that there was a slight increase in recent years that was attributed to the pandemic, but we are currently returning to pre-COVID levels.
- Member Aime requested to discuss the innovation fund again, and asked how the fund was being tracked.
  - LACWDB Director Kochen explained that as presented, it is combined in the training career pathways and wages line item. If the board wants to view it as a sub line item, separate and apart, DEO can accommodate.
  - Member Aime said the day's discussions reinforced the importance of tracking the innovation fund, as the board should be able to see whether and how it's being spent, to secure compliance with the original intent of the expenditure.
  - Secretary/Treasurer Hewitt agreed.

**It was moved by Member Diaz and seconded by Member McIntyre to approve the LA County Workforce FY 2023-2024 Programs Updated Budget**

**In Favor (12):** Lexi Adsit, Alex-Handrah Aime, Luis Arida, Jeremy Diaz, Secretary/Treasurer Mary Hewitt, Miguel Hurtado, Tami Hutchins-Nunez, Jorge Marquez, Maureen McIntyre, Dr. Armida Ornelas, Jeffrey Thompson, Delbert Whetter

**Abstain (1):** Stephen Cheung

**Recused (0):**

**Opposed (0):**

**Absent (6):** Gustavo Camacho (Excused), Berenice Nunez Constant (Excused), Jesse Cuevas (Excused), Kyle Miller (Excused), Darrel Saucedo (Excused), Jeffery Wallace (Excused)

#### **IV: Approve FY 2023-2024 L.A. County Workforce System Q1 Performance and Rapid Response Reports Through September 30, 2023**

**Presenter:** Kristina Meza, DEO Assistant Director, Workforce Branch

**Summary:** This item presented for review and approval, and any other action deemed necessary, the FY 2023-24 L.A. County Workforce Programs updated budget.

**Discussion:** Assistant Director Meza reported on behalf of DEO

Since the last meeting, the system has helped 11,800 individuals across the system in this first quarter. This reflects new enrollments, plus carryover individuals from last quarter that were supported or rolled in the previous fiscal year but are still accessing services through the system.

There are some comparisons of overall served in this current year's first quarter versus the first quarter last year. There were 11,800 served, which is an increase of nearly 1000 from what was experienced in the first quarter of last year, and there is data broken out by sub region across the WIOA programs relating to the demographics served.

Assistant Director Meza recognized that the second quarter exit placement rate of adult and dislocated worker programs were shy of meeting the department's respective goals across the system. The placement rate for the quarter was 79.8%, (0.2%) short of the 80% department goal for placing dislocated workers.

She stated that the department will conduct a review to try and determine why the goals were not met since DEO was much closer to meeting the goals last year. The review will include an examination around economic conditions, as well as trend analysis. DEO will report results back to the board at the next quarterly meeting in the spring.

Assistant Director Meza highlighted that the department is surpassing its average earnings' goals. The Adult Program is at \$8,095, where the goal was \$6,205. For the Dislocated Worker program, reported median earnings were \$8,515; the goal was \$8,142. For the Youth program, the median earnings were \$4,169, while the original goal was \$3,638.

Assistant Director Meza then discussed residents served. The system served 11,800 individuals in this first quarter. 77% of those identified as low income, 25% received some sort of public assistance, 11% were experiencing homelessness. 7% currently are or had been justice involved, and 5% were veterans. Of the participants who reported race or ethnicity, over 81% identified as Black or Latino.

The age range with the highest number of served participants is 18 to 24 years old.

The top occupations with the most unsubsidized placements were Office and Administrative support with 144 placements. Breaking down the placements ranking down, the second top occupation was Protective Services with 112 placements, and the third was Transportation and Material Moving, with 102 placements.



41% of all of placements in employment in this first quarter belong to an identified high growth sector.

The top three high growth sectors were 1<sup>st</sup>, Health Services; 2<sup>nd</sup>, Trade and Logistics; and 3<sup>rd</sup>, Leisure and Hospitality.

Subsidized wages: 4,000 individuals were placed in subsidized employment opportunities across the system, out of which 3,900 were placed just within this first quarter; the top occupation sector that experienced support with subsidized work experience placements was Education and Health services with 1,255 placements; the second occupation sector was Professional and Business Services with 687 placements; the third occupation sector was Trade, Transportation and Utilities with 602 placements.

Of the 3,459 placements in subsidized employment, 2,700 of them (78%), were enrolled in some kind of Youth work-based learning component. This indicates that a training component was built into their subsidized work experience activities. In addition, of those enrolled from subsidized placements, 79% identified as either Black or Latino.

Regarding Rapid Response activities, DEO supported 49 businesses and assisted 1,918 individuals who were impacted by work closures, a decrease from previous years.

She reported the business sectors that were impacted by Rapid Response activities included Retail Trade first at 13 businesses. The second was Manufacturing Industry with 10 businesses in the region, and third was Transportation and Warehousing supporting 5 businesses in the region.

On Layoff Aversion or other Rapid Response services for impacted workers, first was Manufacturing with 686 dislocated workers in the first quarter, second was Transportation and Warehousing with 486 workers impacted, and last was Accommodation and Food services where 229 workers were impacted.

- Member Adsit asked for the definition of a Dislocated Worker.
- Assistant Director Meza stated that a Dislocated Worker is an individual experiencing job loss due to a business closure or layoff.
- Member Marquez commented on the performances and administration of the Rancho Dominguez AJCC and asked what the status of the review/audit of their financials is.
- Assistant Director Meza replied the audit is under review and DEO has to defer to the County Auditor Controller.
- Member Marquez requested a timeline.
- Assistant Director Meza indicated it will be reported back to the board.
- Member Marquez asked how MCS is performing.
- Assistant Director Meza replied that only first quarter data is currently available as they just assumed their roles in September. She stated they are starting to see increases in enrollments. Another report will be produced when an analysis to demonstrate the difference between the vendors can be completed, so the board can visualize the impact.
- Member Marquez recommended an additional investment in oversight and review of the Rancho Dominguez AJCC because of the challenges they experienced



previously.

- Member Aime commended the LACWDB/DEO team for putting together a comprehensive report that provides transparency. She then restated her desire and need to form a financial review subcommittee.
- Member Aime also stated that it appears that the same AJCCs are high performers and the same AJCCs are underperformers, specifically mentioning Rancho Dominguez and West LA which were identified on the bottom three, along with certain AJCCs that are consistently in the top 3. She asked what DEO is doing to support the underperformers.
- Assistant Director Meza replied that DEO launched a couple of different efforts to review and determine some of the trends around low performance. In December or November, there were virtual technical assistance sessions that lasted full days for each of the different sub regions. DEO required staff to participate and engage in open dialogue around some of the challenges experienced, and how DEO can support the system. Further, DEO reinstated monthly in-person mandatory meetings with all the AJCC directors. Providers are required to attend, with the goal of sharing common experiences and lifting up best practices that benefit the system.
- Member Aime stated that it is great to hear that additional support is being provided and would like to continue to track to see whether it has an impact.
- Member Aime pointed out that on pages 17 and 19 of the agenda report, both adult unsubsidized employment and youth unsubsidized placement categories are performing poorly.
- Assistant Director Meza explained that staff anticipates increases in those unsubsidized employment placements in the second and third quarters as ARPA dollars are leveraged. She further stated that DEO has Elevate and Pandemic Relief Rapid Reemployment dollars to utilize to assist in the youth and adult placement unsubsidized categories. DEO is asking AJCCs to support dislocated workers in on-the-job training and other subsidized activities. There is a lot of support in the system to help businesses and the expectation is therefore that the subsidized placements will eventually produce outcomes. However, it is unlikely that said outcomes will come to fruition quickly since the activity just occurred a few months earlier.
- LACWDB Director Kochen added that when looking at the planned numbers, those planned numbers reflect the six-month goal because the system currently contracts through six months.
- Member Aime asked if that would change their performance.
- LACWDB Director Kochen replied that it would change only slightly in terms of percentage achieved, but it won't change the higher performers compared to the lower performers.
- Member Aime stated she wanted to better understand how staff tracks performance after the subsidy is allocated. Specifically, how it is tracked, and how success is defined on the use of the subsidy.
- DEO Assistant Director Meza replied that typically there are job outcomes for any subsidized employment activity. Usually, there is a high percentage rate of clients that go into a subsidized employment activity and leave that employment for another job. DEO can provide information for the board to see the impact of subsidized activities with the populations served.

- Member Aime requested to see high growth data broken out by race and by supervisorial district to obtain an equity perspective.
- Member Ornelas commented that there is a lot of great data. She questioned why healthcare is one of the high growth sectors, yet it was not identified as a placement in any of the reports. The board is aware that the vision of the AJCCs is to train and have relevant job placement related to the areas of training, but career path goals or strategies are not clearly delineated in the material. She questioned long-term career path strategies, to ensure the board is truly aligning the goals of DEO placements.
- Assistant Director Meza replied that this is part of the reason and the justification behind launching the Centers of Excellence (COE). DEO will be able to prioritize sectors so they can benefit from the resources of the system, including workers across regions, with increased quality outcomes for clients.
- Assistant Director Meza shared that some training investments can be supported through High Road Training Partnership (HRTP) dollars. Those funds are also part of the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) budget, which will launch a couple of training initiatives targeting the healthcare sector.
- Member Cheung stressed that the department must be able to diversify industries in investments and alignment, proactively mitigating the impacts of issues such as the \$6-\$8 billion deficit that the state will be facing, which will potentially impact healthcare.
- Secretary/Treasurer Hewitt asked when the board can expect the breakdown on race, ethnicity, and supervisorial district data.
  - Assistant Director Meza said it will be soon.
- Member Adsit asked if it would be possible to collect SOGIE data for each of the AJCCs.
- LACWDB Director Kochen indicated that the data was preliminarily reviewed, which revealed that the current reporting rates are fairly low. Nevertheless, Ms. Kochen acknowledged the request and said it will be added to the current reporting so this specific data can be tracked. DEO is working on processes that allow it to accurately determine its impact in serving those specific communities through its system.
- Member Marquez and Secretary/Treasurer Hewitt both asked for an update on the structure of the Business Engagement Committee.
- LACWDB Executive Director Kochen responded that the board is nearing its annual transition to determine new officers and roles. She stated that the time can be utilized to determine committees and their structure. She explained that the formation of a committee needs to come from the Chair, or a motion can be made by any member to create a workgroup to discuss and craft ideas for those committees. She stated she can meet with the Chair to discuss the committees and their membership.
- Member Aime asked the requirements for an ad hoc committee, including any Brown Act requirements.
- LACWDB Executive Director Kochen answered that ad hoc work groups are time bound. They do not need to have a quorum to convene, and they are not subject to the Brown Act. However, standing committees are subject to the Brown Act and have a different structure.
- Secretary/Treasurer Hewitt asked if it would it be possible to establish a deadline, potentially by the third week of January, for an oversight committee to look at forming

the various committees and have them activated and formed within a reasonable time frame, such as by the first or second week of February.

- Chief Deputy Jessica Kim asked for clarification as to whether the request is for an ad hoc workgroup or a committee.
- Secretary/Treasurer Hewitt answered that the request is for an ad hoc workgroup.
- Member Aime added that a deadline should be established, and staff should report to the board to provide that timeline.
- LACWDB Executive Director Kochen stated that a report-back could be brought back to the board at the spring meeting for review.
- Chief Deputy Kim said she appreciates the comments and strategies that have come from the board which led to the department's modernization efforts. She stated that DEO believes the current structure of the system is not where it needs to be, and that improvement can be accomplished, stating that the Business Outreach Committee and each of the COEs are needed to launch these efforts.
- Member Marquez asked about the currently approved sub-committees.
- LACWDB Executive Director Kochen reported there are two standing committees and two workgroups: Business Services (Engagement) subcommittee, Disabilities subcommittee (workgroup), and the Career Pathways committee.
- Member Adsit asked for a definition of Measurable Skills Gain.
- LACWDB Executive Director Kochen responded that it is a complicated definition. When an individual comes into programming, if they enter training, or if they enter an education program, they are activated, and incremental gains need to be measured. For example, in education, did a client complete their first semester of college? If it's training, did they receive a training certificate? She stated that the lines can be blurred at times, but that the board will have definitions added to the performance reviews.
- Member Marquez stated that several years ago the board decided that the high growth sectors would be the health services, trade, logistics, leisure, hospitality, construction, selected manufacturing, entertainment and infotech. He suggested that a reanalysis might be needed since the market has changed quite a bit over the past several years, adding that Gross Domestic Product has changed by industry sector across Los Angeles County, as has job growth. He asked if it would be possible to provide a report that reviews these changes.
- Secretary/Treasurer Hewitt said that she does not see a lot about certification data, and that certification is important within human resources, healthcare fields, and technology. She said there are many certification opportunities, and it would be good to see a breakdown showing whether a training is encompassing certification for individuals that are either reentry, veterans, or at-risk youth.
- Kelly LoBianco, Director of DEO, said in relation to the data question from member Marquez, there are always evolving industry sector and subsector occupations to monitor. The department recently went through an exercise as part of the strategic planning where staff took a deep dive. The board will be informed on the direction related to the COEs, and on how the department wants to prioritize H RTPs and investments.
- Director LoBianco said that DEO works with board member Cheung with the Los Angeles Economic Development Collaborative (LAEDC) to make sure that DEO has its fingers on the pulse regarding economic analyses and credentialing.

- DEO Chief Deputy Jessica Kim asked member Cheung if there is a status on the LAEDC “People in Industry Report” being prepared for the Los Angeles City Workforce Development Board.
- Member Cheung said that it is expected to come out soon, but the report does not cover the entire county region. LAEDC has been asked to become the regional convener for the California Jobs First Program, formerly known as the California Community Economic Resilience Fund. As such, there will be additional data to be released, probably in March, and that data will be applicable to this entire region. He also noted that additional funds do not need to be allocated from another source for the study because it is fully funded by the Community Economic Resilience Fund. He also agreed that depending on the high growth sector and the occupation, the board should make sure that investments in skills should help make individuals competitive for jobs. He stressed the need to continue to grow and the need for continued education.
- Member Marquez added that he agreed that upskilling is critical to the individual as skills typically become outdated within 1-2 years. He is a proponent of apprenticeships and training of incumbent workers, reminding all that Employment Training Panel funds are available for that purpose. Further, he believes that it is an area that needs to grow, as our goal is not only to get people into jobs, but to get people into jobs that they can grow into a career, especially with evolving technologies including Artificial Intelligence (AI).
- Member Aime asked how the AJCCs are leveraging AI into training. She wants to better understand how AI is perceived as a threat and an opportunity.
- Board member Whetter expressed appreciation for the improvement of the data collection of individuals with disabilities. He stated his previous advocacy, explaining that one out of four individuals have a disability, whether visible or not, emphasizing there’s still room for improvement in that training category. He further expressed that some people may not want to self-identify as having a disability because of the stigma and fear that it may impact job opportunities. However, he also believes at times it has to do with outreach; clients with disabilities may not be aware of the programs that are available. He thus requested more intentional and focused outreach for this population, as there's a high unemployment rate for people with disabilities.
- Member McIntyre stressed the importance of co-enrollment as a successful tactic that is being used in other regions involving a much bigger involvement of the Department of Rehabilitation (DOR) in the AJCCs. There was a push a few years back where the board wanted a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with DOR. She believes that MOU currently needs updating due to staff changes, and that this update should be a focus.
- LACWDB Executive Director Kochen shared that a population-focused COE will be launching, with a focus on serving individuals with disabilities. She stated that DEO shares a floor in the same building with the Aging and Disabilities department, who has subject matter expertise in serving those populations.
- Secretary/Treasurer Hewitt closed discussion after no further comment.

**It was moved by Member Cheung and seconded by Member Aime to approve the LACWDB System Performance and Rapid Response Reports through September 30, 2023**

**In Favor (13):** Lexi Adsit, Alex-Handrah Aime, Luis Arida, Stephen Cheung, Jeremy Diaz, Secretary/Treasurer Mary Hewitt, Miguel Hurtado, Tami Hutchins Nunez, Jorge Marquez, Maureen McIntyre, Dr. Armida Ornelas, Jeffrey Thompson, Delbert Whetter

**Abstain (0):**

**Recused (0):**

**Opposed (0):**

**Absent (6):** Gustavo Camacho (Excused), Berenice Nunez Constant (Excused), Jesse Cuevas (Excused), Kyle Miller (Excused), Darrel Saucedo (Excused), Jeffery Wallace (Excused)

## **INFORMATION ITEMS:**

### **Information Item I: Election of Officers**

LACWDB Executive Director Kochen announced that the nominations' period for the election of officers is approaching for the LACWDB. She stated that the LACWDB bylaws decree that elections of all LACWDB officers shall take place at an LACWDB meeting in the spring for the positions of Chair, Vice Chair, and Treasurer/Secretary. A nomination form was placed at each member's desk, and the form can also be sent out electronically. She further stated that the board has four weeks to make a nomination, and that only one nomination can be made per position, per member; if the nominations are not made in accordance with our bylaws, such nominations are rendered invalid. Self-nominations are allowed.

Ms. Kochen described and explained the roles and parameters of each of the officer positions.

- County Counsel Lawrence Green cautioned against making any formal motion or nomination since the item is for informational purposes only.
- Member Marquez asked what the requirements are for the Chair and Vice Chair position since they are called for to be part of the business community.
- LACWDB Executive Director Kochen responded that to qualify as a business representative, you must have the power within your organization to make hiring decisions and be a for profit/private entity, whether a chief executive officer or similar in level of responsibilities and be in active business within the community.
- Member Marquez asked the status of the Vice Chair position.
- LACWDB Executive Director Kochen stated that it is currently vacant.

### **Information Item II: Americans Job Centers of California Modernization Request for Proposals**

Secretary/Treasurer Hewitt called for discussion on the next informational item, AJCC Modernization Request for Proposals update.

DEO Assistant Director Kristina Meza gave the staff presentation on the item starting with the Modernization review, procurement recap, timelines and milestones, snapshot of results, and next steps.

She reminded the group that the department's five North Star principles are quality jobs, building opportunities for economic mobility, ensuring that the system produces equitable outcomes, supporting inclusive economic growth, and climate resiliency.

She discussed the three key or fundamental areas or strategies that are prevalent in the department's procurement:

- The first is the strategy around empowerment including community-based organizations. The requirements are that the applicant must co-apply with a small community-based organization (CBO).  
There was a process to get parties connected to small CBOs that were interested in participating or engaging in the procurement process.
- The second strategy in the procurement process is around establishing industry specific centers of excellence. There were nine centers of excellence dedicated to high growth industries across our region.
- A third investment was installed in the request for proposals (RFP) as high road employers or model high road employers. Each AJCC will lead in a population and an industry COE, they will have one full-time staff supporting the industry work side and one full-time staff supporting the population work portion.

In addition to that, budgeted is a managerial role to support and oversee the two COE's staff.

Assistant Director Meza provided an update on the timeline of the RFP from previous dates and milestones to current timelines and future actions.

She explained details on how the process would allow for greater input from proposers and greater diversity in the proposers itself.

She stated that the process launched March 30th and it closed June 22<sup>nd</sup>; a 12-week timeline in which individuals were able to engage in the process, but also submit final proposals.

A team of 28 evaluators was formed into several review committees to support the review of applications. Evaluators were from diverse locations across the state as well as individuals from the EDD, DOR, and others.

DEO received 31 proposals as part of this procurement process, with 16 different agencies

represented.

- Member Ornelas asked about a comparison between the County's and the City of Los Angeles' AJCC system.
- Assistant Director Meza answered the County oversees a network of 18 AJCCs. The city administers what are called WorkSource Centers which, although differing in name, are essentially the same in terms of function and operation. The City of Los Angeles is a larger Workforce Development Board in terms of population served while the County is larger geographically, supporting 58 cities, as well as all unincorporated areas in the region. LACWDB makes up about 80% of the entire service area for all of Los Angeles County, so Los Angeles City and Los Angeles County are the two biggest workforce development boards in the region. As a side note, Ms. Meza noted that the City of Los Angeles is currently preparing the procurement for its work source centers.
- Assistant Director Meza explained the timeline of the RFP proposal process:
  - In March, the department released the Los Angeles County AJCC Modernization RFP. Proposals were due in July.
  - In August and September, the review committees conducted their evaluation. In October and November, the department supported the validation of scores resulting from the evaluations from the review committees, supporting the closure of the review and scoring process.
  - Assistant Director Meza stated that in December of 2023 the department released award and non-award notices. These are the formal notices that tell proposers whether they received the highest score in the sub region in which they applied.
    - Applicants can request a conference or debriefing once a notice of award or denial is received. DEO anticipates the conferences or the debriefings for those applicants who request them will occur after the holidays. DEO extended the deadline to request reviews due to the holiday season.
  - The expected closure of the protest process and resolution is March of 2024.
  - Submission of final notification will go to the Board of Supervisors regarding the results of this procurement, as the Board of Supervisors is the final approving authority. LACWDB will be notified as well.
  - April and May will likely be a time for contract negotiations, which are expected to last around two months. Another two months are anticipated as well, to allow appropriate time for onboarding and launching.
  - Six-month extensions were provided for current operators to ensure continuity of service.
- Member Aime asked if discussions with those AJCCs that may have a change in providers can begin.
- Assistant Director Meza explained that each AJCC's procurement review of results started when there could be a potential change in providers.
- Member Aime asked how the current performance of the providers was weighed into the process.
  - Assistant Director Meza explained that there were performance-targeted



questions included in the procurement which applicants were required to respond, and they were weighed in the evaluation process. More information can be shared in the future.

- Secretary/Treasurer Hewitt asked where the Military and Veterans Affairs AJCC is located.
  - Assistant Director Meza replied that it is at the Bob Hope Patriotic Hall.
- Assistant Director Meza then explained where each of the COEs will be located based on population and industry.
- Director LoBianco said that COEs serve specific needs. While AJCCs have clearly defined leads that will build subject matter expertise and a countywide strategy, COEs will assist the AJCCs in working directly with the DEO to build capacity, strategies, projects, and their pilots. The COEs are also intended to measure the impact of DEO's efforts on their specific priority sectors and populations.
- Member Marquez commented that the RFP release was about 1-1.5 years ago, and implementation was supposed to be done by September. In working with his supervisor's office, he learned there were complaints that applicants were not getting the support and services they needed, which created challenges. He asked to elevate this issue, requesting a response on this situation.
- Assistant Director Meza acknowledged that the evaluation process took significant time due to the built-in robustness of the review council and its evaluation process. There were 28 individuals and 31 proposals. All parties involved were committed to ensuring they were doing their due diligence in processing and validating scores accurately. There were also challenges across the system during this timeframe that were not anticipated (e.g., Rancho Dominguez).
- Member Hutchins-Nunez asked what the communication process is when issues, such as this delay, arise. At what point is the board and the agencies to be informed of changes and setbacks?
- Ms. Meza described past communication efforts relating to the procurement, indicating that similar communication strategies will continue to apply. Such communications include one-on-one calls, meetings, and regular monthly AJCC call-ins.
- Director LoBianco said she appreciated everyone's feedback, and that DEO will continue to work on clearer and more proactive communication. She also noted that due to the modernization strategies, DEO is working with smaller CBOs and implementing COEs; as such, the department has extended the contracts of existing providers to July 2024 to secure continuity of services.
- Member Aime asked how long the contract will last, and how does it overlap with the strategic plan. She also asked what the accountability of the CBO is.
- Director LoBianco answered that both the applicant and the co-applicant will have direct contracts with DEO. That should help support accountability for each organization individually.
- Member Aime followed up by asking what would happen should joint applicants or operators have a relationship that falls apart.
- Ms. Meza explained that there is a requirement to establish an MOU between the primary applicants and their sub-applicant CBOs. The contract term for this new system will be one year, with up to three additional one-year extensions—which allows DEO/LACWDB to evaluate performance and make any necessary adjustments.

- Member Aime asked if the renewal process will be faster than the procurement process.
- Ms. Meza stated that the renewal agreement was built into the procurement process.
- Director LoBianco added that there will not be a long period of time in between contracts and this process has a set structure that DEO will use for renewing contracts. Once DEO signs this initial contract, DEO will be monitoring performance and there will be continuous accountability and continuous improvement with the providers throughout the year.
- County Counsel added confirmation that these statements are correct. The additional six months are basically to allow for the avoidance of disruption in services and for the new vendors to prepare. He reiterated that the Board of Supervisors is the ultimate body that awards the agreements, while DEO makes formal recommendations. After all the protests are resolved, if any, and the Board of Supervisors authorizes DEO to engage in the contracts, the contracts will have a start date of July 1<sup>st</sup>.
- Member Marquez asked when all the extension announcements to the current AJCCs are going to be sent out.
- Assistant Director Meza replied that notifications were sent out around 1-2 weeks prior, with extension agreements available for signatures.
- Member Marquez stated that the Santa Clarita AJCC had told him they were waiting for their extension, causing some of their programs to be put on hold.
- Assistant Director Meza said she is aware of the concern and will discuss the situation separately with member Marquez.
- Member Marquez stressed the need for communication to allay some of the angst, as it can have an impact on services.
- Director LoBianco added that if the board hears concerns in the community, DEO wants to be aware of it. She acknowledged the need for the six-month extension as it is a way to make sure the system is minimally disrupted moving forward into the process. She stressed that DEO is working in a sprint to prepare for the transition.
- Secretary/Treasurer Hewitt asked if there was any public comment.
- There was one public comment:
  - Aaron Saenz spoke on the continued relationship between the LACWDB and the Los Angeles Unified School District Division of Adult and Career Education, specifically mentioning a desired new MOU between the LACWDB and the LAUSD Division of Adult and Career Education.

### **Information Item III: Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) Refresh**

LACWDB Executive Director Kochen presented on the WIOA MOU Refresh and its future.

Ms. Kochen explained that the law requires LACWDB to refresh and update its MOU with its local partners. The MOU is to serve as a functional tool, in addition to being a visionary plan for how the board can work with DEO, along with partners, to create a unified service delivery system that best meets the needs of our collective customers.

LACWDB is starting to refresh its MOU to align it with its current efforts, including the AJCC Modernization RFP.

The process will include a deep dive into the MOU's financial component, including financial analyses, e.g., how the AJCCs will share cost.

She stated that the State Workforce Development Board has approved a timeline to review the MOU into June of 2025.

LACWDB's Executive Director Kochen also reported on community stakeholder meetings that were upcoming for the development of the DEO strategic plan and shared the dates of those stakeholder meetings across the 5 supervisorial districts.

- DEO's Chief Deputy Director Kim said some of the dates will change; the board will be updated on the new locations and times, and the information will be shared once corrected and released.
- Member Aime requested a calendar of significant milestones that include various dates at the federal, state, and county level so the board could better understand their interplay.
- Secretary/Treasurer Hewitt asked if the board could take a deeper dive into discussions aimed at obtaining greater impact, rather than superficially trying to cover too many issues or items (e.g., to establish virtual meetings to discuss specific topics).
- Member Marquez mentioned the idea of committees to further explore these topics.
- LACWDB Executive Director Kochen stated those items can certainly be discussed in the ad hoc work group that was mentioned earlier in this meeting, and they can be used as a structure for the committees and subcommittees. She further stated that special meetings can be called for a specific reason if official action is required from the board.
- Member Aime would be interested in learning sessions but is cognizant of the Brown Act.
- LACWDB Executive Director Kochen stated that any member can request a presentation or discussion of information when needed.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Secretary/Treasurer Hewitt adjourned the regular meeting of the LACWDB at 1:31 pm.