

## 02.10.2022 Board Meeting

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*Meeting began 10:32am*

Meeting Location: Virtual – WebEx

Meeting called to order and started at 10:30am by Board Chair, Brett Simon

### WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

#### **Roll Call conducted Brett Simon**

Members Present: Elizabeth Beckham, Kenneth Champagne, Andrew Fitzgerald, Dr. Dawn Hall Fleming, Blaine Grimes, Kenny Lynch, Anne Segura, Shannon Waters, Jonathan Waddell

Staff/Other Present: Leslie Ricard Chambers (Assistant Chief Administrative Officer – ACAO, assuming the role of John Williams, former ACAO), Courtney Scott (Mayor’s Office), Angela Day (Louisiana Community and Technical College System – LCTCS), Vernadine Mabry (Department of Human and Development Services – DHDS), Dr. Erica Thomas (EmployBR), Juanita Coverson (Eckerd Connects), Philip Gore (LWDA 21), Tierra Small (LWDA 21)

*Quorum Met*

### **INTRODUCTION OF LESLIE RICARD CHAMBERS, ESQ. ACAO (MAYOR’S OFFICE)**

Introduction of the new Assistant Chief Administrative Officer (ACAO) – Leslie Ricard Chambers provided by Tierra Small. Mayor Sharon Weston Broome has stated that she has an impressive career and will be a valuable asset to the team. Her history includes: JD from Southern University 2008, served as Assistant Executive Counsel for Governor Jon Bel Edwards, and Assistant District Attorney under District Attorney Hillar Moore for nearly 10 years. This information can be found on [www.brla.gov](http://www.brla.gov). Tierra extended the welcome on behalf of the Board, WIOA, and LWDA 21.

- Mr. Simon also extended a welcome and look forward to the guidance Mrs. Chambers will serve in the same capacity as Mr. Williams did which includes all functions of DHDS.
- Mrs. Chambers thanked everyone for such a warm welcome. The work that she has done as a Public Servant allows her to be very excited to serve as a part of the team and to work with those that create opportunities for those in our area. She is excited to be a part of this work and this team, and look forward to making contributions and implement action where necessary.

### **ACTION ITEMS**

#### **Review and Approval of 12/09/2021 Minutes**

Review and approval of minutes with no corrections

*Motion by Kenneth Champagne, second by Andrew Fitzgerald. Motion carried*

#### **Review and Approval of Supportive Services Policy**

Brief synopsis provided by Tierra Small. She stated that it provides comprehensive guidance to ensure compliance for support for Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth programs.

-Change: Definition updated for Legal Aid Services due to it being so broad

-Change: Limit for Supportive Services to \$2,500

Question (Brett Simon) – Is the \$2,500 coming out of funds that are already obligated or is this a separate line item dedicated explicitly to legal aid services? Response (Tierra Small) – This is a line item for supportive services that is already in the budget that is already allocated for individuals receiving services for Individual Training Accounts (ITA).

Question (Brett Simon - BT) – In the past, have we had success in utilizing these funds and provide benefits to our clients? Response (Tierra Small - TS) Yes, but in the past there was no amount or limit set that would be appropriate for us to utilize the services. Response (BS) Is it the assumption that this amount puts us in compliance to what the audit was recommending from this past summer? Response (TS) Yes.

*Motion by Elizabeth Beckham, second by Blaine Grimes and Anne Segura. Motion carried*

*The Board has accepted the Supportive Services Policy 01-22, with an effective date of January 7, 2022 to be implemented into our policies*

Brett Simon thanked the Vice-Chair of the Board, Elizabeth Beckham, for chiming in.

## **DISCUSSION TOPICS**

### **Safe, Hopeful, Healthy Presentation – Courtney Scott, ACAO, Mayor’s Office**

Brett Simon asked Ms. Courtney Scott to pick up where she left off from the previous presentation and provide a brief overview of the discussion from the previous meeting and go back into the rest of the presentation.

#### Courtney Scott

Overview: We shared information on the Mayor’s Safe Hopeful Healthy initiative that has a component that is focused around stabilizing youth, family, and community. Within that, there is also focus surrounding education, employability, career readiness, and preparing our students for a successful future.

Partnership: Working with EBR Schools, BRAC, and a host of other organizations to establish a continuum of providers to work together for EBR Schools. Courtney and John visited Miami with EBR Schools, BRAC, and other stakeholders from the community to view the Talent Action Collaborative to determine best and promising practices and bring back to Baton Rouge. It was noticed that Baton Rouge already has many of those components and just need to collaborate and provide access sharing and resource sharing.

Re-establish the vision: Build opportunities, stronger quality of life, and reduce negative outcomes primarily violence reduction through public health

-Create a sustainable wellness plan that is rooted in prevention strategies that aligns resources and fruitful partnerships with stakeholders

3 Touchpoints: In-School / After School (including weekends) / Summer

-Pathways to Bright Futures is what the school systems have identified five career paths that they think are the focus area that work in Baton Rouge – 1) Technology; 2) Construction and Manufacturing; 3) Medical and Pre-Med; 4) Transportation and Logistics; and 5) Liberal Arts and Management.

BRAC has put together a Talent Action Collaborative that consists of leaders from each of these tracks and stakeholders that have resources to get our youth to these careers. There will be 15-20 experts from businesses in each sector and will work to provide pathway learning, internships that align with colleges and universities that is specific to industry needs. It is broken up into two work groups: 1) CEOs for Education; and 2) Strategic

Operations Committee. Vernadine Mabry sits on this committee for EmployBR, Courtney Scott, and Leslie Chambers will take John Williams place on the committee.

Much of these efforts already exist and there is an entity within EmployBR that should be at the hub of this conversation. We should drive in-school and out-of-school youth to this resource and building these best practices. Then, allow BRAC continue to drive our business leaders to create those job opportunities and internship opportunities for our students.

A pilot program was developed this year at Glen Oaks High School. From October to December, with Glen Oaks' 9<sup>th</sup> graders, Big Buddy came in and organized the opportunities for the subject matter experts to expose the students in these tracks. The students identified interest in areas that they would want to work. These opportunities for students were connected directly with partners.

Proposed Measures of Success: How do we develop the continuum? How do we build a pathway from school system to EmployBR to partners and stakeholders, all working together to make sure that we are leveraging the resources that EmployBR has to enroll students and then engage the EBR School System to be one of our biggest referral sources to EmployBR, building this opportunity for our students to work together. The Mayor's vision is one thing. She wants to create an opportunity to build the Dream Passport for our students. This is a document that they are able to have that tracks their academic participation, family engagement, academic achievement, career readiness, attendance, social/emotional well-being, health/wellness, cognitive development, self-awareness, and leadership development. This document will show employers that they are employable, ready for the workforce, and that they are a quality resident in Baton Rouge ready to contribute to our society.

The hope for today is that we walk away with next steps and actions for the EmployBR team and the Mayor's office so we can work together so we can really start to build a pathway of success for our students, using all of these programs.

- Anne Segura (Baton Rouge General) – Working closely with the BRAC group that has the health group. Met with Tenisha from BRAC and Summer with EBRPSS and started with Pathways and can obtain licenses and certifications, with understanding that everyone is not built for a 4-year college and university and that's what is so great about EmployBR and WIOA. This is going to be a great success and amazing feeder. Courtney: We have to figure out how to get that information to the students early on so that they know how to navigate directly to EmployBR. Too much ownership is being put on the student. We need to work more on recruitment for these students. We can get every student in EBR to apply for EmployBR to determine eligibility early. They then have a reason to go to EmployBR. We have all of the tools and we want to keep pushing everyone Ms. Vernadine's way, as she is ready to accept them all.
- Vernadine Mabry (DHDS) – Would like to add that they do not physically have to come to Plank Road. They can complete everything electronically through Case Worthy and upload documents from where they are and the staff can retrieve them from the online applications. Courtney: That's something that we want to continue to try to connect to the school system and work with this group to build strategies on how we get this information to the teachers and guidance counselors before they exit those school doors. V. Mabry: It would be nice if there were dedicated Counselors at each school that can be trained on Case Worthy and they can put the information in the system from where they are with the documentation and that can expedite the process expeditiously.
- Anne Segura – Had students from CTEC to come in and be exposed to the healthcare/medical pathway, even if they were not interested in the pathway, for exposure. It is very practical and fulfilling as to what it looks like in the real world. This would be great for different industries for this to happen for students and see what it looks like to work in these different jobs and industries. V. Mabry: In New Orleans, there is almost a 2-week required orientation that youth have to participate in because it is a commitment. Everyone that enrolls that does not complete the program is a negative in our performance. Courtney:

Would like to look at if there is an opportunity from the Guidance Counselors, being able to adopt these students when they are out of school. They will have their Guidance Counselor that they are accountable to in school, but Big Buddy is ready to position them with their Program Advisors that would become their Guidance Counselors for after-school and weekends and that would help in family support as well (transportation, supportive services, etc) and these are the conversations that come up so that we can fill the gaps. EmployBR can continue on the workforce side of things and any gaps that are there, everyone else is there to support.

- Brett Simon – On the employer side, do you know about how many existing relationships you have, that present opportunities for the youth we enroll in the program? Courtney: Will need to connect back to BRAC but at this point each of those committees have about 15-20 individuals from different partners, so nearly 100 providers that are able to work and start. The goal is to work with those providers for summer opportunities. Each of the groups are starting to form programs as Anne previously mentioned, and work to develop a track. The group will work to obtain information on how many programs have been created over the 90 days and bring back to EmployBR to see if we can recruit students to move into these different tracks from EBR schools starting with the 9<sup>th</sup> graders for in-school youth and seniors will become out-of-school youth but will be spoken to very early on but they are the focus that we want to apply very early so we're getting their eligibility very early on so we can connect by graduation. The goal is to build at least 100 students per track. Brett: Is BRAC spear heading the effort to identify employers to participate in the program? Courtney: Yes, they are. Anne, can you speak about how BRAC connected to your organization? Anne: All of the healthcare CEOs are on this particular healthcare steering committee. After breaking out for some deliverables, all of the healthcare organizations are represented as well as some of the schools. There are also off-shoots, which are has the School of Radiology or other program attached to it. They are able to look at the pathways as more of a continuum and able to scale up. There is an ability to really affect lots of students at one time. The same thing is happening with IT, Construction and Management. BRAC reached out and said they needed the CEOs to step up and assist. Andrew: Would like to give a quick overview of the Talent Action Collaborative with the 5 tracks. Essentially, BRAC put together a group of CEOs and leaders in the community from all of those industries and there is also a level CEO council. There's also a council that determines what we need, skills needed, curriculum. BRAC provides analytical postings to reach industry of what the job postings are saying regarding skill levels. The third level is the Teacher/Practitioner level which incorporates the information from the HR level into their lesson plans.
- Courtney – How do we connect to the resources, fueling this dynamic? The program would like to explore dollars from EmployBR for in-school youth that if a person is eligible, what boxes can we check and move them forward in the summer or on the weekend and not just focusing on the 8-week summer time so students can get their certifications. Who else can do certifications so we can put all of our resources to the best and highest use? Some of the conversations that Leslie, Philip, Tierra, and Courtney have had are around engaging an opportunity to develop a strategic planning team with EmployBR's team, DHDS team, school system, and Mayor's office. So just imagine what success would look like for this continuum and putting a plan together that we're able to bring back to BRAC and the school system to trial a new level of this programming. That would look like the case planning or career planning that Anne mentioned would bring to the EmployBR team to determine where EmployBR can plug in at the in-school and out-of-school level and what are the needs from these community partners that can bring more referrals to the doors. This is key dialogue to use for next steps and best practices, and looking forward to future dialogue and action.

Brett Simon thanked Ms. Scott for the oversight of the continuum and we do need a bit more dialogue. Brett will get with Andrew to see how we're engaging employers so that the Board can support this as an agenda. It would be a shame to enroll people in the program and not have enough seats to meet the needs of the program. We really need to focus on getting some participation from employers that way it's really a viable option for the youth and look at putting together some type of marketing campaign for recruitment and be able to gain their trust and

interest in the program. Andrew: Looking forward to setting Brett up with Tenisha in the BRAC office, who's heading up the Talent Action Collaborative.

## **ONE-STOP OPERATOR REPORT**

Traffic Count – Quarter 1 – 630

-July, 147 -August, 294 -September, 412

Traffic Count – Quarter 2 – 1,817

-October, 493 -November, 692 -December, 632

The deviation in the traffic count is attributed to the streamline in processes on the Board and Program side. The numbers will continue to be utilized to better our processes and services and push more people to Case Worthy and eradicate any barriers to success, as a client.

Outreach and Recruitment – As Courtney mentioned in her presentation, we're all talking about the same people that we're trying to help. We want to look forward to leveraging our resources and collaborate on our efforts between EmployBR, the school system, and all of our partners. As you know we have mandated partners at EmployBR through WIOA and we want to ensure that all partners are providing said services to our clients.

We are happy to say that we have attained our MOU with CSRS. With the National Dislocated Worker Grant, we will work cohesively to increase the number of participants and recruitment for this grant. The One-Stop Operator (OSO) will work directly with Sheldon Perkins of CSRS on this endeavor.

The OSO will reach out to Courtney Scott and Andrew Fitzgerald to look at other ways to collaborate and leverage resources for our clients.

We are working to reach out to some of our other untapped areas of the parish, including Gardere, Baker, Zachary, and Central.

Brett stated that the traffic count from the two areas of substantially increased and tripled. We're slowly getting back to pre-pandemic standards and flow. How did the staff handle the increase in traffic? Were they able to cope with it? Were the resources allocated properly? Do we need to look at realigning some things from Plank over to the satellite site? Is it good or do we need to look at realigning to ensure the centers are covered properly? Juanita: Dr. Thomas will talk about this a bit more as well but I feel as though the staff that have been here have handled it well, as the services has never stopped. Everything that they were doing prior to the pandemic has been the same level of service and resources that they've been providing during the pandemic. We want to always ensure that what we're doing at one office, we're doing at the other office as well.

Brett wanted to see if there are any success stories under the CSRS MOU. Have they been able to get any wins? Juanita: Yes, there is a new contract with Here Today, Gone Tomorrow and ready to get the ball rolling for warehouse positions.

*Tierra stated that there was a change with the Agenda and that she would move forward with her report.*

## **ASSISTANT WIOA CHIEF ADMINISTRATOR REPORT**

Board Membership Matrix – Tierra brought awareness regarding compliance of board membership. Currently, there are 11 private-sector members and 8 public sector members. There is optional membership and currently looking at 5 vacancies which include 4 private-sector members and 1 public-sector member. For the private-sector members, Tierra is working closely with Baton Rouge Area Chamber, Mr. Fitzgerald, who has put her in

connection with Ms. Tenisha Ellis and have reached out to the Board and Executive Committee team who came up with the idea of being intentional with recruiting and identifying industries that we would like to target to have seats on our Board.

#### Upcoming LWDB 21 Proposed Policies

Individual Training Account (ITA) Policy – This policy has not been updated since 2016 and work together to ensure that we are in compliance with our federal statutes, regarding this policy. It will take a bit of work, but the team is working to streamline those processes. We would like to look at the provisions to training services and monitoring.

Youth Eligibility – Box 7 language – Includes youth that needs additional assistance within the Youth Eligibility policy to enroll/maintain with an education program or secure employment. Section A focuses on out-of-school youth eligibility criteria, and Section B focuses on in-school youth eligibility criteria.

The statutes that were added: 1) A child of an incarcerated parent/guardian; 2) a child living with their grandparent(s); 3) a child/parent that is unemployed; 4) a victim of sex trafficking; 5) a person that is 18 years or older that is not enrolled in school and is having to repeat core courses; 6) A resident of a federally declared disaster area within the last 5 years.

### **PROGRAM REPORT**

Applicants - We are at a great starting point and have received about 113 applications since January and there are 8 ineligible applications and 32 eligible applications.

Youth Incentive Program – There are 35 participants and we are getting ready to begin advertising for the Summer Employment Program so those numbers should rise. Marketing will take place via radio, social media, and billboards to boost the youth program.

Virtual Job Fair – The Virtual Job Fair will take place on February 23<sup>rd</sup>, focusing on healthcare and transportation and will be held through our vendor, Brazen and they will help host that job fair. There will be a job fair at our Wooddale location on 02/11 through Schneider Trucking, from 9am-2pm.

19<sup>th</sup> JDC – Ms. Mabry and Dr. Thomas are still working on their efforts with the 19<sup>th</sup> Judicial District Court to receive direct referrals with the court system.

### **DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

Welcome everyone and welcome again to Mrs. Chambers and it's been a pleasure working together thus far.

#### WIOA Budget Financial Snapshot

- Budget is split into 3 funding streams – Adult, Dislocated Worker (DW), and Youth
- Adult – all funds spent
- DW - \$382,333.18 (balance)
- Youth - \$310,114.56 (balance)
- The funds have to be expended by July. Once the funds are spent, we go directly into the new budget for the next year.

Dislocated Worker Grant – Spent \$382,355.71, with a balance of \$1,561,533.79.

We are currently working on a Hurricane Ida grant with LWC and working on getting the contract finalized and should be finalized by the end of March.

Met with the Executive Committee and spoke regarding revamping our Youth Standing Committee. The Chair, Shannon Waters, was in that meeting and the committee spoke about goals to attain and looking forward to get success from those goals.

Board Member Training – Will be held 02/16/2022. We received an email from LWC and an email will be sent to all Board Members. This is not a mandatory training, but is strongly advised to attend by LWC.

## **CLOSING COMMENTS**

(Brett Simon) Youth Committee - Thanks to Shannon Waters for chairing the Youth Committee. We've always wanted to get the committee up and moving but we've slowly got it moving. Dr. Melancon has many great ideas that he can pass along. For the rest of the members on the call, if you would like to serve in a greater capacity, please reach out to Mr. Waters and also anyone that may be in your organization or new to the industry, especially if they are a Youth and can bring about some fresh ideas. It helps them out. It helps your organization out. It will ensure that we have qualified workforce in the future.

(Brett Simon) Next Meeting – Tentatively scheduled for April 21<sup>st</sup>. Mr. Simon expressed to Philip and Tierra that he wanted to have the meeting at his facility but they are transitioning to the Water Campus, next to LSU, in May. Hopefully, he will get everyone to the new campus after May and meet in the beautiful facility, located in the heart of downtown and experience what Aptim does.

(Elizabeth Beckham) Thanks for keeping everything on track and we look forward to seeing the new facility at the Water Campus.

*Meeting adjourned 11:37am*

