

**Workforce Development Board (WDB)
Executive Committee
Worknet Merced County
1900 Airdrome Entry,
Atwater, CA 95301
May 11, 2023 4:00 p.m.**



www.worknetmerced.com

Members Present:

Leslie Abasta-Cummings Jack Mobley Vinton Thengvall
Michael Altomare Tim O'Neill,

Members Absent: Daron McDaniel

Others Present:

Erick Serrato, Linda Gutierrez, Mario Pena, Stacie Tury, Patricia Hinson

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1. **Call to Order/ Roll Call** – The Board Chairperson, Mrs. Leslie Abasta-Cummings, called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.
 2. **Public Opportunity to Speak** – None
 3. **Approval of Minutes** – Mobley/Thengvall approved WDB Executive meeting minutes from November 12, 2022.
 4. **Chair Comments:** The WDB Chair shared with members that she attended the welcome event for Assemblywoman Soria who visited the WDB Admin office back in April. She thanked Erick and staff for the invitation. She also attended, expressed gratitude and thanked Erick for facilitating the CERF kick-off event on June 24th and congratulated Erick on his professionalism and for doing a great job facilitating the meeting bringing together people from various counties as well. She encouraged Board members to attend one of the CERF workshops. She shared with members that she joined Erick at the Annual BOS Workforce presentation this past Tuesday. She added that Erick did an awesome job with his report to the BOS. Lastly, she shared with members that she attended a meeting with WDB Member Chris from Merced College and Foster Farms President. She noted that the goal of the meeting was to let Foster Farms Administration know that Merced College is willing to work together to assist in developing training classes for their employees.
 5. **Director's Comments:** Erick thanked the WDB Chair, Mrs. Leslie Abasta-Cummings for attending all of the previous meetings and for her support and leadership as well.

The unemployment rate for March is at 11.2% this has been an increase since the beginning of the year. Taking into consideration that our unemployment rate is always high in February and lowest in September, Erick noted that it could be affected, in part, due to the layoff of approximately 250 people throughout the county. The employees who were laid off received services from Worknet to provide job assistance and available training if interested.

The Merced Youth Jobs program is doing well. Last week Erick gave a presentation at the City Council Board meeting. City Members were pleased with the outcome of the program. The City awarded DWI additional funds to extend program through 2026.

Erick will be in conversation with the State regarding SB 534- Equitable Access to Job Opportunity Pilot Program. It's a funding stream targeted at rural communities. Merced County would be the recipient of that. It will be additional training dollars and other funds to do career development for individuals in rural parts of the state. More information will be shared at the next meeting.

6. **Grants Update:** Staff reported on grant submissions and awards as of May 2, 2023, for Program Year 2022-2023. Total for 4th quarter is \$2,315,000. And grand total including all quarters \$5,893,391. Grants reported does not include Formula or exiting contracts that did not require a request.
7. **Fiscal and Monitoring Updates:** Staff provided the following update: a) There were no monitoring's completed during this period; b) FY 23/24 proposed budget was submitted to the county with a flat revenue allocation. The State usually releases this information in May. The total budget amount submitted is \$15,459,534.00 There will be adjustments made for final budget submissions for new grants, state allocations, and carryover.
8. **Board Membership and Recruitment:** Staff shared with members the Board continues to hold vacancies and recruit for Board members. The Board does not have a member limit, and has varied between 21 and 24 members. The Executive Committee is currently comprised of the Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, County Supervisor, and three at-large members. It does not currently include a Chair for the Youth Committee.

Recent discussions about Board Membership have noted an interest in adding members who can represent the health and logistics sectors, to include leadership representation from UC Merced. Staff encourages the Executive Committee to determine its optimal membership size and affirm or consider its current Executive Committee composition. Executive Board members discussed bringing representation from UC Merced, and more from the business sector, local education, the healthcare sector and logistics as well.

Members were asked to give it some thought and provide feedback at the next WDB meeting in June.

9. **Adjournment:**
Adjourned at 5:10 p.m.