

**Workforce Development Board (WDB)  
Merced County DWI  
McLane/Pacific, Inc.  
3876 E Childs Avenue  
Merced, CA 95341  
December 8, 2021, 2:00 p.m.**



www.worknetmerced.com

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**Members Present:**

Jorge De Nava	Jack Mobley	Greg Vincelet
Leslie Abasta-Cummings	Mark Hendrickson	Chudy Nnebe
Tim O'Neill	Joshua Lepper	Jeff Segars
Steve Hobbs	Amie Marchini	Chris Vitelli

**Members Absent:**

Michael Altomare	Terry Nichols	Steve Tietjen	Tim Robertson
Daron McDaniel	Satvir Arias	Vinton Thengvall	

**Others Present:**

Erick Serrato, Reyna Espinoza, Mario Pena, Yang Her, Martha Torres, Holly Newlon, Robert Hubbard, Dave Ness, Joel Remedios Perez, Robert L, Patricia Hinson

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- 1. Call to Order/ Roll Call: The Chair,** Mrs. Leslie Abasta-Cummings, called the meeting to order at 2:04 pm. She thanked McLane for hosting the meeting and introduced Ms. Laragh Hardin.

Ms. Laragh Hardin from McLane Pacific welcomed the members to McLane Pacific's distribution center. She stated that she is the H.R. Manager at McLane, and shared that they have been working with Worknet for the past seven years. One program recently in partnership with Worknet is the truck drivers' program. Worknet is assisting with getting the potential candidates for the training at McLane. In addition, Worknet is helping with the recruitment of forklift drivers. She shared that she was most excited and impressed about the Truck Fest Hiring Event that Worknet had organized. She was most impressed with how well it was organized, and she got more job leads than ever. McLane got 47 job leads, and out of the 47, there were 22 interviews, and out of the 22 interviews, McLane hired 12 individuals. She is very excited and thankful for the services that Worknet provides to McLane.

- 2. Public Opportunity to Speak:** Customer Testimonial: Mr. Robert L. shared with members his experience with Worknet. Prior to coming to Worknet, he had been doing a variety of entry-level jobs, including some forklift driving, working as an order selector, as well as working seasonal employment. As he worked in these areas, he got a taste of performing the duties of Maintenance Technician. He decided to come to Worknet to assist him with training at Modesto Technical School. Because of his hard work, perseverance, and support of his family, he is now a Certified Industrial Maintenance Technician. He now has a very good job with good pay. He is very grateful to Worknet for all their help.

3. **Approval of Minutes:** *Mobley/Nnebe* approved the meeting minutes as published.
4. **Chair Comments:** The Chair shared with members that it is great to be back to work. This is her first in-person meeting in many months. She stated that she is now the proud mother of a three-month-old baby. She added that it is so great to be here at McLane and that it is her first-time visiting McLane. She thanked them for hosting the WDB meeting.
5. **Special Presentation:** Jorge de Nava, with CVOC presented an award to Erick for putting on the Truck and Logistics Feast on September 29<sup>th</sup>. He thanked Erick and his Team for making this event be a success. Erick was presented with a Truck made by the students of the welding training. Erick thanked Jorge and the students for the gift.

Erick stated that this was a team effort and thanked all of the DWI staff for their participation in the Truck Fest event.

6. **Director's Comments:** Erick thanked everybody for being present at the meeting. He shared with members that after the WDB meeting, there would be a tour of McLane for all the members who would like to participate. He thanked McLane for hosting the WDB meeting.

In terms of the WDB meeting agenda for today, there will be voting of officers. Erick will introduce three new potential members to the WDB board. More discussion on the nonprofit. Talk about some of the WDB policies and discuss Incumbent Worker Training. He asked members to provide their feedback on the Incumbent Worker Training discussion.

7. **Board Officer Elections:** Bylaws of the Merced County Workforce Development Board identify three Office positions: Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, and Second Vice-Chairperson. The term of all officers is for two years. Members may be re-appointed, and elections are to occur at the last meeting of the Program Year, typically in June.

The previous election was held in 2019. Current Officer Positions are:  
Chairperson: Leslie Abasta Cummings, Livingston Community Health  
Vice-Chairperson: Vincent Thengvall, Kellog Supply  
Second Vice-Chairperson: Vacant

Officers will be elected using an open nomination process known as Floor Nominations. In this process, nominations are presented for each Officer position and voted on. Any member of the Board may make a nomination of any eligible member. Nominated members may accept or decline the nomination. The elections will begin with Chairperson, then Vice-Chairperson, followed by Second Vice-Chairperson.

### **Floor Nominations**

Jack Mobley requested a floor motion to approve the re-election of Leslie Abasta-Cummings as the WDB Chair. Second by Mark Hendrickson and carried by unanimous roll call vote.

Tim O'Neill requested a floor motion to approve the re-election of Vinton Thengvall as the WDB Vice-Chairperson. Second by Leslie Abasta-Cummings and carried by unanimous roll call vote.

Chris Vitelli requested a floor motion to approve the nomination of Tim O'Neill as the WDB Second Vice-Chairperson. Second by Amie Marchini and carried by unanimous roll call vote.

- 8. New Member Elections:** The applications of three new candidates for the Board were presented for consideration to become Workforce Development Board Members and later ratified by the BOS for appointment.

Chris Winek is a Commercial Relationship Manager for F&M Bank  
David W. Ness is the CEO of MERCOCREDIT Credit Union  
Michelle Skoor is the Chief Workforce Officer for Bitwise Industries

Motion by Mark Hendrickson, second by Jack Mobley to approve the applications of Chris Winek (F&M Bank); David W. Ness (Merced County Credit Union); and Michelle Skoor (Bitwise Industries) to be members of the Merced County Workforce Development Board. And forward applications to the BOS for appointment.

- 9. WIOA Policies:** Staff is requesting review and approval of the following two WIOA Policies: Self-Sufficiency Standard and Monitoring and Compliance.

Motion by Joshua Lepper, second by Jeff Segars to review and approval of two WIOA Policies: Self-Sufficiency Standard and Monitoring and Compliance Review policies; carried by unanimous roll call vote.

- 10. Incumbent Worker Training:** Incumbent Worker Training (IWT) is a category of work-based training and upskilling designed to ensure Merced County workers can acquire and develop the skills necessary to avert layoff or increase the skill levels of employees so the worker can be promoted within the company, thereby creating backfill opportunities for employers.

Following are the elements of Incumbent Worker Training include:

- Workforce Development Board can utilize up to 20% of its Adult and DW funding for Incumbent Worker Training.
- Incumbent Worker Training does not need to be provided through the ITA (Individual Training Account) of the ETPL (State-approved list of trainers).
- Employers pay a portion of the training based on the size of the business.

Staff is developing a local Incumbent Worker Training Policy and operational plan. Staff is asking for the board's input on the opportunity to utilize Incumbent Worker funds.

Board members will consider the following questions:

- Does the Board see the value in Incumbent Worker Training?
- Would the Board like to see Incumbent Training Funds directed toward a specific industry or business size? Is it aware of a specific need or opportunity?

- Would the Board prefer to fund discreet opportunities identified by staff and the Board as part of a specific workforce strategy (ex: upskilling of food production machines) or market the opportunity openly?

Feedback:

Chudy noted that the State has funds available for training through the ETP funds.

Erick added that the State has its funds through the ETP. There are different restrictions for the pay for businesses. The Pro for the business is that it pays much more for the training. The Con for the business is that they need to have a documented wage increase, and there are more restrictions in the way it is laid out. It is a contract with the state. On the other hand, IWT is using our own money with much more flexibility, in a way that it can be much more proactive.

The Board could decide if they want to use funds to support the IWT or rely on the ETP funds. On the other hand, it could decide that it wants to make its own investment.

Chudy mentioned that they could both be done.

Erick stated that yes, they could both be done, but getting money from the State is a little bit more complicated. But, yes, we can do both.

Jorge De Nava stated that he had done both, but ETP has a lot more challenges as far as payment for the school that is doing the training. ETP will not pay for the training until the person has been on the job for 90 days. It is a challenge for some of the schools doing the training. He stated that other counties are already doing the IWT to include Madera and Stanislaus. He would like to have it available for Merced County as well. He added that he would like the Board to look at the agricultural community and reach out to the Farm Bureau.

Chris stated that looking at it from the education perspective, he has used the IWT and suggested we should invest and upscale and have IWT available in the county as well. He feels that if we do not implement IWT as soon as possible, we will have a bigger problem further down the road.

Erick shared that the other flexibility it provides is that you do not have to work off the ETPL. It can be any trainer that you identify that you procure.

Leslie shared that she has reviewed it coming from the state in regards to incumbent healthcare workers. It would be challenging trying to train them and upscale at the same time. She supports IWT and would like to see it available in Merced County as well.

A Board member asked if there is a performance measure requirement for IWT.

Erick stated that yes, there is a performance measure requirement and it falls under the WIOA performance. It is all monitored and tracked.

The next step will be for staff to develop the Incumbent Worker Policy. In addition, work on a draft list of businesses that will be eligible for IWT funds and bring it back to the Board.

- 11. Restore Merced:** Mr. Matt St. Pierre, Executive Director of Restore Merced, shared with members about the introduction of Restore Merced, a non-profit workforce agency, and the development of its 'Business Pledge.' Restore Merced is currently developing a document that articulates commitments from community members signaling their role as a positive force in the Community. Members were given the 'Business Pledge' included in their meeting packet.
- 12. Localized Wage Data:** Members were ask to review it at a later time. It's included in their meeting packet. Staff will report and discuss at the next WDB meeting.
- 13. Priority Sectors:** Continued discussion of Workforce Development Board Priority Sectors and their role in informing workforce investments. Staff is preparing two new sectors: childcare and IT. More information will be presented at the next WDB Meeting.
- 14. Performance Outcomes:** Equus achieved their overall performance for Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth Programs. This is a good start for them.
- 15. AJCC Certification:** Staff shared with members that the Merced County Workforce Development Board completed the AJCC Certification and submitted it to the State on November 1, 2021. The assessment found no items out of compliance but did list items for continuous improvement. The full AJCC certification for the Merced and Los Banos AJCCs is available for review.
- 16. Program Review TTH:** Staff gave answers to questions as it relates to the Together Toward Health (TTH) Grant, \$26,000 (December 1, 2020 – November 30, 2021). Members were given copies of the questions and answers included in their meeting packet.
- 17. Future Agenda & Meetings:** Next WDB meeting is scheduled on March 23, 2022. Location TBD.
- 18. Adjournment:**  
The Chair, Mrs. Leslie-Abasta-Cummings, adjourned the meeting at 3:25 p.m.