



## MINUTES

### TENCO Workforce Development Board

#### Zoom/Hybrid Meeting

October 15, 2025

1:30 p.m.

Chair Amanda Clark called the Zoom/Hybrid meeting of the TENCO Workforce Development Board to order on Wednesday, October 15, 2025, at 1:30 p.m.

#### MEMBERS PRESENT:

Amanda Clark  
Anthony Hartley  
Ben Collier  
Beth Sponaugle  
Brent Sturgill  
Bryan O'Neill

Dustin Grooms  
Jason Slone  
Kyle Carter  
Larry Ferguson  
Lori Ulrich

Mike Knudson, proxy for Mark Grundy  
Michael Thoroughman  
Russ Montgomery  
Tara McNight  
Tonia Prewitt

#### GUESTS PRESENT:

Anna Sullivan  
Chris Haddiz, Judge  
Cindy Hurt  
Crystal Riddle  
Cylenna Barker  
Destiny Connor  
Dustin Grooms  
Elizabeth Bentley

Katie Houghlin  
Judge George Sparks  
Jacob Sartin  
John Russ  
Josh Farrow  
Laura McCullough  
Leysa Feinstein  
Madison Purvis

Matthew Hyden  
Millicent Harding-Thomas  
Opal Fannin  
Rachael Applegate  
Renee McCane  
Robin Harris  
Sam Flynn  
Sonya Adams

#### STAFF PRESENT:

Andrea Holbrook  
Brittany Layne  
Haley Allen

Justin Suttles  
Natasha Cloum  
Katheryn French

Kennedy Wellman  
Steven Peed  
Stephen Culp

#### Board Membership and Staff Changes

Chair Clark announced the follow changes in Board Membership and Staff since the last meeting:

- Stephan Harris has taken another position that no longer meet requirements for board membership and has resigned.
- Kyle Carter, Beth Sponaugle, Russ Montgomery, and Jill Butler’s membership on the board has been renewed.

#### GENERAL ITEMS:

##### Approval of Minutes

May 21, 2025, meeting minutes were reviewed. **A motion was made by Jason Slone and second by Larry Ferguson to approve the Minutes of the May 21, 2025, TENCO WDB Meeting. The motion carried.**

##### Quarterly Budget Review

Stephen, Culp, Fiscal Officer, presented the TENCO WDB FY26 budget through August 2025. Mr. Culp reviewed the total budget of \$5,869,279; total expenses \$264,434 (5%) for a remaining balance of \$5,604,845; and total obligations of \$4,957,024 (84%). Non-obligated funding is available in the amount of \$912,254 (16%).

Mr. Culp’s report outlines the breakdown of each budget category in Administration, Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth, Trade, Other. The targeted obligation and expenditure rates for the two Youth Work Experience Grants were also reviewed. Youth Performance expense targets (out-of-school versus in-school and work experience) were discussed. Mr. Culp also reviewed funding the board received through the Putting Young Kentuckians to Work program. A report detailing the breakdown by grants, and contracts were provided in the packet.

**A motion was made by Brent Sturgill and second by Larry Ferguson to approve the TENCO WDB financial report as presented. The Board voted and the motion carried.**

Sam Flynn, Executive Director of the Kentucky Pre-K for All Program and Special Advisor to the Governor gave a presentation on the Kentucky Pre-K for All program.

#### **REPORTS:**

##### Executive Committee

Chair Clark reported that the Executive Committee met on July 29, 2025. The committee reviewed and voted to recommend the membership renewals of Kyle Carter, Beth Sponaugle, Russ Montgomery, and Jill Butler to Chief Local Elected Official, Judge Owen Mc’Neill.

The Executive Committee also approved the following Policy updates:

- i. Policy 20 Test Scores and GED  
Revised item #6 to allow previous post-secondary education to have been completed in the prior 3 years.

- ii. Policy 21 Supplemental and Outcome Documentation  
Updated Quality Control Coordinator to TENCO WDB Admin. Staff.  
Revised to make requirements for documentation to be align more with federal and state guidance.
- iii. Policy 28 Training Limitations  
Revised to allow participants to be enrolled regardless of the number of pre-requisite semesters.
- iv. Policy 34 Need to Train  
Revised to align criteria to train to match what is asked in Kee Suite.  
Revise #5 so the reasonable cost does not have to be voted on each year.  
Review #6 to match changes to policy #29 revisions that were made in May 2025
- v. Policy 49 Media Requests  
New policy to provide directions to staff should media ask for interviews or information. Policy directs them to refer to supervisor, and anything shared must be approved by Workforce Director and Supervisor.

The Executive Committee also reviewed information on six Career Readiness Programs and selected Career EDGE as our Career Readiness Program. Career EDGE focuses on job readiness, soft skills development, and professional development. It includes interactive job readiness curriculum, mock interview simulator, career assessments and goal setting modules.

## OTHER BUSINESS

### Directors Report

Justin Suttles provided the Directors Report.

### *PY24 WIOA Performance*

Mr. Suttles reported that we received our final PY24 WIOA Performance report, a few metrics were higher than what was shared at the Annual Meeting. The final Performance for PY24:

- Adult Employment Rate 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter After Exit: 91.7%
- Adult Median Earnings 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter After Exit: \$11,649 (lower than reported at Annual Meeting)
- Youth Employment Rate 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter After Exit: 83.6%
- Youth Credential Rate Within 4 Quarters After: 72.3%
- Measurable Skills Gains: 50.9

### *SETA Conference*

Haley Allen, Bill Bevans, Steven Peed and Justin Suttles attended the SETA Fall Conference at the end of September in Biloxi, MS. The keynote was “What’s Working: Trends and Tips Shaping Today’s Workplace and our Future Workforce.” Breakout sessions included:

- Life-After Lockup: A Reentry Simulation Experience, Empowering Lives Post Incarceration: A Pathway to Workforce Development, Building Mississippi’s Workforce Through Apprenticeship, 4 C’s of Partnerships: Reintroducing Older Adults to Workforce, Advanced AI in Workforce Development, Career Center Best Practices, Empowering Tomorrow’s Workforce: Scaling

Opportunity Through Tennessee's Youth Employment Program, Launching Mobile Engagement Tools Across 43 Counties, Beyond AI Basics: AI Workforce Development Tools for Maximum Impact, Less Talk, More Walk – Creating a Culture of Trust and Accountability, Metro Atlanta eXchange for Workforce Solutions: A Best Practice in Strengthening Connections, Collaboration, and Capacity, Building Trust: Connecting Colleagues, Partners, and the People We Serve, Federal Workforce Trends: What You Need to Know, Strategic Thinking: The Fast Lane to the Top!, Rethinking Strategic Planning

#### *WIOA Authorization and Federal Government Shutdown*

While at SETA, national leaders shared they expect the shutdown to last approximately a month. The shutdown currently has not affected TENCO, as we carryover grants that we can use to operate. Grants to which DOL has obligated funds to the grantees will be able to continue operating with funds that have already been made available through grant actions by DOL.

For most Employment and Training Administration programs, staff will not be available to answer questions, provide technical assistance, or to resolve any technical issues with data or report submissions.

#### *Total Active Enrollments*

Mr. Suttles reported that we have a total active enrollment right now of 512.

- Adult: 158; Dislocated Worker: 2; Youth: 252 (47 ISY, 305 OSY)

#### *Putting Young Kentuckians to Work Program:*

- Total enrollments: 97
- Active caseload: 67
- Participants in Follow-up: 10
- Participants exited, follow-up complete: 18
- Active WEXs: 4
- Active Co-ops: 2
- WEXs completed: 4
- Performance: 10/200

Mr. Suttles reported that there are currently 4 open positions:

- Ashland Career Center Counselor, Morehead Career Center Counselor, Maysville Business Service Coordinator, and Workforce Development Manager

#### *Strategic Goals Update*

Mr. Suttles provided an update on the Board's Strategic Goals. He reported the following progress toward the completion of the goals:

- Goal 1: we continue to open opportunities for youth by developing Apprenticeship and Work Experience Opportunities with employers we have not worked with in the past and build relationships with schools.
- Goal 2: we continue to enhance economic development activities as we implement the SWATT Strategy to serve employers.
- Goal 3: we continue to increase service and resource awareness by continue enhancement of our website and social media resources including our access map. A work group will be formed this fall to design and implement a plan to reach underserved populations to provide targeting outreach.
- Goal 4: we continue to increase our capacity to explore other funding opportunities by partnering with the Planning and Development Department on ARC grants. We may submit a grant application to expand the use of the Transfr VR Headsets from just Career Exploration to being able to offer training that leads to credentials in our local high schools. We are also looking at other ways to partner with them on other grant opportunities.

#### Business Service Update

Mr. Steven Peed provided a Business Services Update for FY26 Q1. The Business Services team has held two hiring events for Special Metals in Ashland, one in July and one in September. A Transitional Employment Contract has been signed with Mark Potter Chevrolet in Ashland for an Auto Tech. The team is also in the planning stages of Business Conference to be held in Ashland focusing on AI, which will occur in early 2026. Coordinators have attended Fiscal Court and Chamber meetings throughout the TENCO Region to continue to develop those relationships. Pre-Release classes are also being held throughout the area to bridge the gap between incarceration and public life. Business Service Coordinators have also been very active at Morehead State by holding workshops and attending a Career Fair on campus. To date, we have had three major Career Fairs (Boyd, Bracken, and Lewis) with 77 total businesses and 142 job seekers, with a 40% success rate in obtaining job offers. There have also been nine stand-alone Hiring Events, with XX job seekers attending, with 30 job offers. For Q1, Business Services had 558 total contacts, with 262 unique businesses served, of which 274 received intensive services (49.1%).

#### Career Center Operations Update

Director of Career Center Operations, Brittany Layne provided the Career Center Operations Update reviewing the information that was shared in the agenda packet.

#### Parter Updates

Tonia Prewitt, Career Development Office Regional Program Manager shared that the agency recently hired two new staff for the Jobs for Veterans State Grant (JVSG) Program, both are being housed out of Kentucky Career Center – Morehead, one position serves the TENCO Counties and the other position serves the adjacent counties in EKCEP. Both positions are Consolidated Positions, which means they perform the duties of the Disabled Veterans Outreach Program Specialist (DVOP) and Local Veterans Employment

Representative (LVER). Other Vacant Positions including the Morehead Manager positions remain on hold.

Brent Sturgill, Office of Vocational Rehabilitation Regional Program Manager shared that they are still operating in order of selection with all categories closed at the moment. OVR continues to accept referrals, working applications and assigning categories and placed on a wait list, which is about 3500 people right now.

Dustin Grooms, MCTC Adult Education Director, shared that Adult Education programs are expecting another budget cut FY27, but they do not anticipate it to be as steep as the cut they received this year. In FY26, they received roughly a cup of 30% of program budget. Adult Ed will continue to increase focus on workforce and soft skill training, while also working with individuals on their GED. Mr. Grooms also shared that MCTC Adult Education is on track to exceed their GED goal for the year, and they are seeing an increase in individuals seeking assistance with post-secondary preparation.

Chair Clark announced that the next meeting of the TENCO Workforce Development Board will be December 17, 2025.

Other

**Motion made to adjourn by Jason Slone second by Tonia Prewitt. Motion passed and the meeting was adjourned at 2:46 p.m.**