MINUTES

TENCO Workforce Development Board

Zoom/Hybrid Meeting

February 25, 2026, 1:30 p.m.

Chair Amanda Clark called the Zoom/Hybrid meeting of the TENCO Workforce Development Board to order on Wednesday, February 25, 2026, at 1:32 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Amanda Clark
Anthony Hartley (Dylan Williams)
Ben Collier
Brent Sturgill
Jason Slone
Jennifer Carpenter
Larry Ferguson (Robin Harris)
Lori Ulrich
Michael Thoroughman
Tara McNight
Tonia Prewit

GUESTS PRESENT:

Crystal Riddle
Kevin Cornette
Renee McCane
Shae Bisotti
Opal Fannin
Bryan O'Neill
Cindy Hurt
Brandi Smith
Jacob Sartin

STAFF PRESENT:

Andrea Holbrook
Brittany Layne
Haley Allen
Justin Suttles
Katheryn French
Stephen Culp
Caine Hughes
Steven Peed
Callie Jarrell
Natasha Cloum

Board Membership and Staff Changes

Chair Clark reminded Board members that cameras must be on during votes. She also requested that all in-person attendees sign in using the sign-in sheets at their locations and that Zoom attendees sign in via the chat.

Chair Clark announced the following changes since the last meeting:

- Callie Jarrell has joined TENCO as the new Workforce Communications Specialist.
- Beth Sponaugle is no longer a Board member due to a change in employment. Chair Clark shared that staff are working to identify a replacement as soon as one is confirmed.

GENERAL ITEMS:

Approval of Minutes

The December 17, 2025, meeting minutes were reviewed.

A motion was made by Jason Slone and seconded by Michael Thoroughman to approve the Minutes of December 17, 2025, TENCO WDB Meeting. The motion carried.

Quarterly Budget Review

Stephen Culp, Fiscal Officer, presented the FY26 financial report through December 2025.

Mr. Culp reviewed the following:

- Total budget available of $7,713,002
- Total expenses of $1,820,705
- Remaining balance of $5,892,297
- Total obligations of $5,036,810
- Non-obligated funding remaining of $2,676,192

He further reviewed expenses by major grant categories, noting the largest portion of activity is within Youth grant funding, followed by Adult and Dislocated Worker. He also reviewed administration budget performance and the administration percentage of total expenses.

Youth Work Experience grant performance and the Putting Young Kentuckians to Work (Kentuckianna Works) contract budget status were also reviewed, including receipts to date, pending collections, expenses, remaining contract availability, and cash on hand.

A motion was made by Tonja Prewitt and seconded by Jennifer Carpenter to approve the TENCO WDB financial report as presented. The motion carried.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Youth Committee – FY26–27 Youth Employment Program Proposals

Justin Suttles and Kevin Cornette reviewed the Youth Employment Program proposals and the need to align submitted proposal totals with the board's available funding target.

The submitted proposals totaled approximately $790,764, exceeding available funding. Staff and the Youth Committee worked with Fiscal Officer Stephen Culp to determine a recommended contract target of $541,624 and developed multiple reduction options to serve the greatest number of youth while maintaining program viability.

The recommended option included:

- Reducing incentives from $400 to $125 per student
- Reducing work experience hours from 240 to 200 hours
- Holding harmless personnel/operating costs where possible
- Reducing Robertson County's proposed student count to align overall distribution
- Serving the greatest number of youth across the region under the funding target (approximately 175 students)

Discussion included wage rate variations, including Gateway's proposed $9.50/hour, with staff explaining wage selections must not exceed starting wages at worksites to avoid wage conflicts with current employees.

Chair Clark thanked staff for the analysis and planning and requested approval of the recommendation with a caveat: if any contractor chooses not to proceed under revised terms, staff are authorized to renegotiate with remaining contractors provided total contracts do not exceed $541,624 (approximate cap based on available funds).

A motion was made by Ben Collier and seconded by Michael Thoroughman to approve the Youth Employment Program contract. The motion carried.

OTHER BUSINESS:

Secondary CTE Certification Programs

Steven Peed presented the annual review of industry-recognized certifications offered through CTE programs in local high schools. Mr. Peed reviewed the employer/stakeholder survey process and how recommendations align with regional workforce needs, labor trends, and in-demand occupations.

Mr. Peed reported 12 survey responses received:

- Manufacturing: 4
- Healthcare: 3
- Education: 3

- Construction: 2

He also shared two new credential requests submitted by businesses:

- Medical Billing/Coding
- RETA CARO/CIRO (Refrigeration Technician)

A motion was made by Brent Sturgill and seconded by Tonia Prewit to approve the Secondary CTE Certification Program recommendations. The motion carried.

Putting Young Kentuckians to Work

Katheryn French and Andrea Holbrook provided program updates and success stories.

Ms. French highlighted a success story involving a student who gained employment after receiving support with professionalism, social etiquette, resume building, applications, and interview preparation.

Ms. French also referenced a letter from Trent Underwood, Manager of Garrison Water District, describing the program's positive impact and the work ethic and growth demonstrated by participant Braxton Detillion.

Ms. Holbrook shared an employer partnership, for example developed through Business Services, including coordination with Thoroughbred Construction to create internship/work experience opportunities for students interested in construction pathways. She encouraged Board members and partners to share business connections to expand placements and strengthen youth-to-employment pipelines.

Director's Report

Justin Suttles presented the Director's Report, including:

- Youth Year-Round RFP updates and intent to release the RFP by March 2
- Kentucky Workforce Summit participation and plans to provide staff training based on summit sessions (including generational workforce trends)
- Strategic Goals progress and plans to conduct a work session to review and strengthen action steps
- Correction noted in the packet: PYKtW active caseload figure should be 78 (noted as an error)
- Updates on upcoming events and meetings, including SWATT-related sessions and regional workforce activities
- Fiscal update: Buffalo Trace audit completed with no findings reported

A motion was made by Jason Slone and seconded by Tonia Prewitt to accept the Director's Report. The motion carried.

Business Service Update

Steven Peed provided a Business Services update, noting significant activity despite weather impacts, including collaboration with MCTC on upcoming skilled trades-related events and ongoing engagement with chambers and fiscal courts.

Year-to-date highlights included:

- 16 hiring events with 105 attendees and 72 job offers
- 5 major career fairs with 115 businesses and 172 job seekers
- 1,116 total contacts with 460 unique businesses
- 596 intensive services provided

Upcoming activities included multiple career fairs across counties and an expungement clinic at Mason County Public Library on March 31 in partnership with Legal Aid of the Bluegrass.

Career Center Operations Update

Brittany Layne reviewed career center traffic and customer satisfaction data (July 1 – January 31), noting 4,496 customers served, with the largest service category related to unemployment assistance and follow-on employment services.

Ms. Layne also reviewed:

- Workshop participation and program coordination (including Drug Court workshops in Morehead)
- Customer satisfaction results (courtesy/professionalism, staff knowledge, return/recommend, wait times)
- Career EDGE usage growth, including resume builders and related tools

Partner Updates

Career Development Office (CDO)

Tonia Prewitt shared that the region is filling the JVSG position, with the new staff member starting Monday. She also noted continued collaboration to expand workshops and potential use of Coursera.

Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR)

Brent Sturgill shared that OVR is operating under a waitlist structure due to funding constraints, with services continuing as allowable and plans to resume additional activity as funding becomes available.

Adult Education

A partner update was shared, indicating no new federal-level findings planned and noting legislative monitoring related to alternative pathway programming (apology provided for inability to attend).

Other

Steven Peed provided an additional SWATT update, explaining the purpose of the initiative (reducing duplication and improving coordinated employer service delivery). Local SWATT meetings have been held in Ashland and Morehead, with a Maysville meeting scheduled. A regional SWATT meeting is planned at MCTC Rowan Campus at the end of March, with a Needs Assessment tool under development for shared use among partners.

Adjourn

A motion was made by Jennifer Carpenter and seconded by Jason Stone to adjourn. The motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:32p.m.