
SHREVEPORT LOCAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

401 TEXAS, SHREVEPORT, LA 71101 - P.O. BOX 31109, SHREVEPORT, LA 71130



KATRINA WORSHAM
CHAIRPERSON

Phone (318) 673-5900

TOM ARCENEUX
MAYOR

The Shreveport Local Workforce Development Board held its scheduled meeting on June 10, 2025 at 11:45 a.m. The meeting was held at the Milam Street Kitchen Incubator & Community Kitchen (MS Kick), 1210 Milam Street, Shreveport, Louisiana 71101.

I. Call to Order

The Local Workforce Development Board #71 quarterly meeting was called to order by Ms. Katrina Worsham, Board Chairperson.

II. Invocation

Mr. William Upchurch, Board Member gave the invocation.

III. Roll Call & Introduction of Guest

Ms. Kathy Brown called the roll and noted every member, guest and staff present. The attendance was as follows:

Present

Julie Bass	Goodwill Industries of North Louisiana
Dennis Essom	Shreveport Job Corps
Shakeidra Evans	Dept of Children and Family Services
Aljay Foreman	Willis Knighton Health System
Qualan Jefferson	LifeShare Blood Center
Michael Joiner	Shreveport Pipe Trades
Jacques Lasseigne	Louisiana Workforce Commission
Marla Mitchell	Shreveport Convention Center
Rachael Peters	Peter's Dry Dock
Keonia Thomas-Walker	Calumet Packaging
William Upchurch	IBEW Local 194
Gloria Washington	Port of Caddo-Bossier
Reginald Wells	United Parcel Service (UPS)
Katrina Worsham	State Farm Insurance
Stefanie Y'Barbo	Cadence Bank

Absent

Sandy Cimino
Langhuong Earb
Teresa Hefner
Jay Johnson
Matt LaFisca
Lonnie McCray
Justin Tison
Casey Travis
Angela White

Community Bank of Louisiana
Café Boba Tea
Louisiana Rehabilitation Services
GDIT
Shreveport Area Electrical JATC
Southern University at Shreveport
Bossier Parish Community College
Ochsner LSU Health Shreveport
North Louisiana Economic Partnership

Guest

Corrine Ambler
A J Tucker

Shreveport Job Corps
Shreveport Pipes Trade

Staff in Attendance

Kathy Brown
Bridgette Clark
Blake Cox
Pamela Freeman
Verni Howard
Sheila Petterway
L Nicole Shelby

City of Shreveport
City of Shreveport
One Stop Operator/Eckerd Connect
City of Shreveport
City of Shreveport
City of Shreveport
City of Shreveport

Quorum: Yes

Ms. Worsham welcomed and thanked the members for attending the quarterly meeting. She then asked if there were any communications.

IV. Communications

Ms. Worsham called on the 3 new board members asked them to stand and introduce themselves.

Ms. Shakeidra Evans described that she works for the Department of Children and Family Services as a Workforce Development Consultant. She stated that she was happy to be on the board and looking forward to working with the team.

Mr. William Upchurch with the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 194, stated that he has been in office since July of last year and he was a product of the JATC apprenticeship school. He's looking forward to seeing what he can bring to the table.

Mr. Dennis Essom the Center Director for the Shreveport Job Corps Center mentioned that he has been with Job Corps for seven years but has been at the Shreveport center for six months. He gave a brief discussion on the closing of Shreveport Job Corps due to funding

cuts. He then explained that after consideration and a lot of support the center will remain operational through 2026.

As of now he has his staff and about 240 students back.

Ms. Worsham thanked him for the update with the Job Corps program and stated that we support them 100%.

V. Old Business

None

VI. New Business

Ms. Katrina Worsham briefly discussed that the minutes from the last meeting were emailed to everyone for their review and asked for a motion to approve.

- Approval of Past Minutes – March 11, 2025

Mr. Aljay Foreman made a motion to approve the past minutes from March 11, 2025, as written. The motion was seconded by Mr. Reginald Wells. All members were in favor and the motion was carried unanimously.

- Approval of Regional/Local Plan 2024 – 2027

Ms. Keonia Thomas-Walker made a motion to approve the Regional/Local Plan 2024 – 2027 as written. The motion was seconded by Ms. Rachael Peters. All members were in favor and the motion was carried unanimously.

- Approval of Revised By-Laws

Mr. Jacques Lasseigne made a motion to approve the Revised By-Laws as written. The motion was seconded by Ms. Keonia Thomas-Walker. All members were in favor and the motion was carried unanimously.

VII. Reports

WIOA Report presented by Ms. Bridgette Clark, Staff

- Had 2 monitoring visits one with the Louisiana Workforce Commission on February 10th and 11th, the other was with the US Department of Labor from March 31st through April 11th.

- LWC conducted a programmatic and fiscal monitoring review of the Local Workforce Development Board #71, focusing on compliance with Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act requirements for the Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth programs. The monitoring review revealed areas of both strength and concern, but several findings were noted requiring corrective action.
- Board is advised to prioritize the governance and compliance updates to ensure alignment with federal and state expectations and maintain funding integrity.
- Visit was scheduled with LWC to come work with the team one on one to resolve the findings that were identified in the monitoring report.
- Board Certification is due.
- WIOA requires that the board be certified every 2 years by the governor. Certification ensures that the board properly constitutes and capable of carrying out its duties under WIOA and shows that the board is in compliance with WIOA Section 107.
- Updated the members on the key components of the board composition and the nomination process and term limits.
- Informed the board that the Summer Youth Employment and Training program is gearing up and the youth and supervisors attended orientation on June 2nd at the Independence Skybox. The youth started working at various job sites throughout the city on June 3rd making \$10.00 an hour for 30 hours per week.
- There was a 3rd quarter performance outcome report included in the board members folders that showed out of the 15 performance measures that must be met, 11 was exceeded and 3 did not meet their goals, but they are working to bring those scores up.

Ms. Clark asked if there were any questions and there were none.

Business Service Report presented by Mr. Jacques Lasseigne, Board Member

- Finally received the approval of the application for the 2025 Summer Healthcare Camp so we will begin the Marketing/Recruiting Process. The date was set for mid-July.
- The Education & Training Committee Meeting will meet by a zoom call on June 17th and the Recruitment & Training Committee Meeting will meet by a zoom call on June 18th.
- The Huntington High School Job Fair for Special Education students was held on April 28th. Goodwill Industries did an outstanding job in the whole process where they had about 47 students to attend and about 8 employers. They also put on a Job Readiness Workshop before the Job Fair was held.
- Been working with Ochsner LSU Health and The Urban League of Louisiana for "The Big Health Event" set for Saturday, August 2nd, at the Shreveport Convention Center where there will be free health screenings, nutrition information as well as a Career Corner with about 5 employers.

- Natchitoches Mayor, Ronnie Williams, Jr., has contracted with CSRS, a Baton Rouge firm to execute a Targeted Industries Analysis hoping that the relations will aid in attracting new industry to the area for more business. This is a 6-month process with one meeting per month. The first meeting will be in person at the Natchitoches City Council Chambers on June 12th and the following five meetings will possibly be on a virtual platform.

Mr. Lasseigne asked if there were any questions and there were none.

Business Service Report presented by Ms. L. Nicole Shelby, Staff

- Since our last meeting, the Workforce Development Team has participated in over 30 community events which includes Rapid Response Fair for laid off GDIT employees where we offered them re-employment services. Resource and Career Fairs with Goodwill Industries and Veteran Services and we attended a Job Corps employment presentation.
- Participated in partnership meetings with Louisiana Workforce Commission.
- Introduction to GIS & Field Mapping course was started with LSUS and there are six students in the program with one being a WIOA participant.
- Collaborated with Caddo Parish Schools and participated in a Special Needs Job Fair at Huntington High School.
- We were part of the Regional Career fair with local colleges.
- Currently we have 2 On the Job Training contracts in process and continuing to work with the Shreveport Chamber of Commerce in addition to our local businesses to encourage them to utilize this reimbursement training program that train and hire individuals or job seekers to learn specific skills so that they can make livable wages to provide for their families.

Financial Report was by Ms. Sheila Petterway, Staff

Ms. Sheila Petterway gave a summary of the Financial Report detailing the funding, expenditures, obligations, and balances available as of January 31, 2025.

- The Youth was budgeted \$1,001,194.00, expended \$459,659.00, obligated \$182,555.00 and has a balance of \$358,980.00. Adult was budgeted \$765,287.00 expended \$205,548.00, obligated \$91,398.00 and has a balance of \$468,341.00. Dislocated Worker was budgeted \$896,833.00, expended \$128,773.00, obligated \$53,282.00 and has a balance of \$714,778.00.

Ms. Petterway asked if there were any questions and there were none.

One Stop Operator Report presented by Mr. Blake Cox, Staff

- The OSO staff reported attending multiple community events and job fairs, engaging with employers, nonprofits, and students.
- At this time he has been trying to educate himself on the WIOA program because there is a lot to learn. He's learning the ins and outs of what they do at the Caddo American Job Center.
- Teamed up with a representative from ANECA Federal Credit Union that's holding Financial Literacy classes at the Caddo American Job Center.
- Implemented a new referral process to keep us abreast of what's going on with all the referrals that come through the office.
- Currently revising and making progress with a new Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that he wants to have out in 2026 as well revising a new Resource Guide that he would like to have ready to bring to the next meeting to share with the board.
- He's appreciative of the opportunity to contribute to the team.

Ms. Worsham thanked everyone for their reports and asked Mrs. Verni Howard to come up to introduce herself to the board.

Mrs. Howard informed the board that she is the new Director for the Department of Community Development. What she likes most about being in this role is that She has always been a non-government employee, but this position makes it her first.

She has worked in the private sector in all her years and the beauty of that is that she is an experienced banker. She spent 18 ½ years as a corporate banker and the last 9 ½ years as the Executive Director at Providence House.

Mrs. Howard mentioned that Mayor Tom Arceneaux asked her to come do for the city what she had done for the Providence House.

At Providence House they did Housing, Workforce Development and Education.

She stated that the reason Workforce Development becomes so important is because it is the core and heartbeat. To be successful we must get this part right first. The city has a homeless population, and everyone pretend they don't see it. If we do not do a good job of helping people to move beyond this is what our community is going to look like.

Mrs. Howard mentioned that after a meeting she attended Tom Magner stopped her and stated that he wants to partner with Community Development to help our children get some work-based training.

She is learning that we have worked in silos for so long that everybody is working on the same thing, but no one knows what the other person is doing. Her role is to connect some of the silos so they can stop working in small cell groups helping two to four people in individual groups, so she would like to take a lid off of Workforce Development because it is the core of what we do. We must get people working and allow them to know what we have to offer.

Mrs. Howard explained that what amazes her is that when Ms. Sheila gave her financial report and asked do you have any questions, no questions were raised about the financial.

The numbers concern her as a director because we have a very short period of time to spend a whole lot of money, so the question should be why the funds remain unspent and we are not getting it out the door.

She has stated that it is her job now to make sure she empowers Ms. Bridgette and this board and connect them with partnerships so we are really asking for more money to get our youth, adults and dislocated workers straight.

She loves our metrics and that we measure ourselves and she intends for our department to be the department of excellence and she wants all the other Workforce Development programs to model themselves after our program.

Mrs. Howard stated that she wants the board members to understand the importance of why they are sitting where they sit.

She wants to engage with them, she wants to know what's happening with everyone involved on the board and how we can connect the community to their work, so we are not sitting with money.

Mrs. Howard mentioned that she is looking for ways for us to get better as a city, department and as a Workforce Development team.

She asked the board to challenge her and her team to do more so we can be more for this community.

She's honored to be in this role, and she has an open-door policy, no appointment needed to meet with her. She is committed to the work until the work is done.

Mrs. Howard invited the board member to the new office at 415 Texas Street for their first Open House on June 26th and 27th were they invited their non-profits, because they are the ones that needs to get the information that we have. She would also like to do an Open House just for the board member as well.

It is not our Department of Community Development it is the community's Department of Community Development because we work at the wheel and pleasure of the community.

She asked if there any questions that they had for her.

She was asked how she got into banking and Mrs. Howard answered, "Purpose". It started with her practicing her interviewing skills and she was asked to take a Critical Thinking and a Personality Survey. She flew to Atlanta to be interviewed and landed one of the positions.

She was questioned what the program year is and she explained that when you see program year 2023 you have until June 30, 2025 a 2 year time period to spend the funds and when you see Fiscal year that is a 1 year time period. If it says fiscal year 2024 you have until fiscal year 2025 to spend that money.

What can the dollars be used for??

Mrs. Howard stated that the dollars can be used for programming and salaries, but that's what we don't want to do which is use all the dollars for salaries because that would mean we didn't do programming, that we didn't put things in place for our children.

She asked if there were any more questions and there were none, she stated that she will be expecting more questions at the next board meeting.

Ms. Worsham asked if there were any other questions or concerns on anything discussed and there were no other questions.

VIII. Reminders

Reminders were presented by Ms. Katrina Worsham, Chairman

- Personal Financial Disclosures were due May 15, 2025
- Ethics Training is due by December 31, 2025
- Next Meeting date will be held Tuesday, September 9, 2025

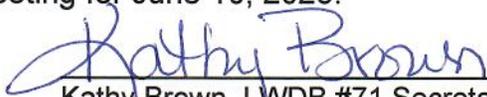
Ms. Worsham informed the board members that the Financial Disclosure were due on May 15, 2025, she said that emails were sent out by Ms. Brown with the status of their Financial Disclosures and if they had not done them to please complete them as soon as possible. The Ethics Training is due by December 31, 2025.

She stated that the next meeting has been scheduled for September 9, 2025, but if there are any changes, they will receive an email with the updated information.

IX. Adjournment

- With there being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 12:43 pm.

I, Kathy Brown, Management Assistant for the City of Shreveport, Bureau of Workforce Development, and the Secretary for Shreveport's Local Workforce Development Board LWDB #71, do hereby certify that the above and foregoing are the minutes of the Local Workforce Development Board meeting for June 10, 2025.


Kathy Brown, LWDB #71 Secretary


Ms. Katrina Worsham, Chairperson