



**NEW ORLEANS
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD**

NOWDB Full Board
JOB1 Business and Career Solutions Center
1307 Oretha Castle Haley – New Orleans, LA
April 21, 2026 | 11:00AM
Meeting Summary

Attendance

Members Present

Gregory Curtis
Melissa Hopson
Mikal Anderson
Chris Bardell
Charlene Bonck
Desiree Stelly Bordenave
Thelma French
Danielle Garrett
Angelle Hava
Floyd James
Rachel Mackey
Carla Major
Peter Pappas
Jerry Repka
Chante Rice-Graham
Rodney Wallis
Arlanda Williams-Smith
Allyson Wilson

Members Absent

Dottie Belletto
Claire Jecklin
Jeffery Martin
Andrew O’Brien, Sr.
Jeffrey Schwartz
Stacey Shepperson
Allen Square

Staff and Guest

Tammie Washington
Neia Limar
Sabrina Johnson
Karmen McKinley
Torrie Jakes
Jason DeGruy
Icesiss Guy
Priscilla Cheatham

I. Chair Welcome

11:03am Chair Gregory Curtis called the meeting to order.

II. Chair Updates

Mr. Curtis presented the revised City of New Orleans Office of Workforce Development / New Orleans Workforce Development Board Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Grievance and Complaint Policy (Policy # OWD-NOWDB 02-2022) for approval. He highlighted three revisions to the policy. He noted that the named Equal Opportunity Officer had been updated to Torrie Jakes, the policy issuer has been changed from Louisiana Workforce Commission to

Louisiana Works, and the named Deputy Director had been updated to Tammie Washington. Chair Curtis confirmed that quorum had been met and addressed the Action Item on the agenda.

Approval of the revised Grievance and Complaint Policy (Policy # OWD-NOWDB 02-2022)

Motion by: Thelma French

Second by: Arlanda Williams-Smith

No Opposition

The motion was approved by unanimous decision.

III. Staff Updates

Deputy Director Tammie Washington provided an update on the Mayor's Summer Youth Employment Program funding. Mayor Moreno approved funding for 1,000 MSYEP participants which aligns with allocations from the previous year. This year's MSYEP will host 900 traditional applicants (ages 16- 24) and 100 intern applicants (college students with 30 credit hours). There are currently over 100 employer partners however, the need remains for more.

Mr. Jason DeGruy was introduced as the new Project Director for JOB1.

Ms. Washington continued her report with an update on Governor Landry's proposed executive order since the last NOWDB meeting. The Chief Executive Officer (CEOs) of Tangipahoa Parish, Robby Miller, held a gathering of all the chief elected officials to discuss the executive order with local area directors. The goal of the meeting was to understand and determine the feasibility of the State's proposed goals as well as to produce alternatives to offer the State. During this meeting, the desire to keep local board control was expressed. Keeping local control would promote local funding and increase the ability of rapid response time to the needs of local employers. Additional added benefits from having local area workforce boards include more tailored training investments and workforce services being provided in proximity to the community. One of the key components discussed that was deemed flexible is the State's request to have local areas invest 60% of funding toward training however, the group advised that they have asked the State to allow at least 36 months to complete that transition. Another request made by the State is to have standardized state policies. Ms. Washington noted that the Louisiana House of Representatives passed House Bill 680, which is going to the Senate this week.

Ms. Washington referenced the State's combined local plan that was emailed to the Board which contained the waivers the State is requesting from USDOL to modernize the workforce system to go to a single state board. The combined local plan has been issued for public comments. Public comments were due on April 25th.

Mr. Washington conveyed to the Board reasons why the State moved to make changes to the workforce system. She shared that the State deems local workforce systems are heavily staffed yet does not serve a sufficient number of participants. However, local areas serve a significant number of job seekers. She provided data that demonstrates JOB1 served close to 21% of the States workforce needs while operating with only 11% of the State's budget during Program Year 2024. A list of all the services offered by JOB1 was shared exhibiting the need for the number of staff currently on board. The State also indicated the need to prepare for an influx of 130,000 individuals

who will be impacted by the pending changes to Medicaid. JOB1 currently has 25 staff charged to WIOA and the Mayor's Office of Workforce Development has 4 staff members. To meet the demands of the Medicaid work requirements will require more staff, not less.

Ms. French noted that funding sources, such as ARPA grant and the Wisner fund, that were used in previous years to supplement the impact of an increased population are no longer available. No mention of a fiscal resource has been identified by the State that will absorb the State's proposed changes. A discourse was held around the topic.

Chair Curtis called for a review and approval of the minutes from the last full NOWDB meeting held on Tuesday, February 10th.

Approval of the NOWDB Full Board Meeting Minutes from February 10, 2026

Motion by: Rodney Wallis

Second by: Carla Major

No Opposition

The motion was approved by unanimous decision.

IV. Committee Reports

Youth Committee

The Youth Committee report indicated that during their last meeting on March 5th, JOB1 was actively engaged in outreach for the HiSET program and training. The JOB1 staff continues to work with the youth to assist in earning their high school diploma, which is often a pre-requisite for the employment they are seeking. The next Young Adult Expo, which was previously scheduled for April 18th, has been rescheduled for late spring/early summer due to conflicting dates with other local festivals. The Mayor's Summer Youth Employment Program (MSYEP) received 230 applicants within the first 24 hours of opening. In-person registration began March 10th and is still ongoing. During in-person registration, MSYEP staff conduct interviews, complete document verification, process work permits for youth under the age of 18, and facilitate onboarding steps. At the time of the meeting, there were 65 confirmed employer partners. A host site application link will be shared online and via email to Board members. Committee Chair Claire Jecklin addressed Governor Landry's executive order during the March 5th meeting. She reported that the waiver had been applied for to move the executive order forward. She noted that an ad hoc committee of the NOWDB has been established to follow policy changes and will be seeking guidance from the National Association of Workforce Boards regarding next steps. The next Youth Committee meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, May 6th at 2PM.

Mr. Curtis requested clarity on how one can be added to the Eligible Training Provider list. Ms. Washington stated that State of Louisiana handles the application process. Training schools would have to have curriculums approved by the Board of Regents and then apply for each curriculum separately for submission to Louisiana Works.

Mr. Curtis requested an update on MSYEP. McKinley advised the Board that 700 youth applications have been completed to date. She indicated that 132 host employers are currently signed up however, more are needed and that employers could sign-up using the online link found on the CNO website.

Business Engagement Committee

Business Engagement Chair Dr. Arlanda Williams-Smith reported that the Business Engagement Committee met on March 11th and discussed the results of the employer survey. A summary of the data collected was provided to the Board. The summation determined that most employers are looking for candidates who possess or demonstrate the potential and the willingness to learn. The committee is scheduled to meet again on May 13th at 2pm.

Programs & Services Committee

Programs & Services Committee Chair Thelma French reported that the Programs & Services Committee met on March 25th where the group had a follow up discussion regarding the last State monitoring visit that resulted in an area of concern around “the ineffective community engagement with customers with disabilities”. She expressed the plan to host a luncheon in May during Community Action Month to encourage businesses and program partners who could participate in providing services to individuals and who are unfamiliar with the opportunities and resources of the workforce system for individuals with disabilities. The next meeting of the Programs & Services Committee is scheduled for May 27th.

Finance Committee

Finance Committee Chair Floyd James reported that the Finance Committee met on March 31st. He stated that the overall expenditure through February 28, 2026 for the Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth programs stands at 52%. Of the total grant funding, 2% of the carryover funds remain, and 58% of the current PY25 allocation. While current expenditures are lower than this time last year, they remain below the expected level for eight months into the program year. It was explained that the expenditure rate has increased since the last reporting and will continue to increase by the end of the program year. With administration guidance and recommendation to slow spending is the result of low expenditures. However, spending has since increased and will continue for the duration of the program year. Since the time of the last full NOWDB meeting, a lease agreement has been signed by the mayor and has been fully executed. He continued his report sharing updates on the Pathway 4 grant, which continues to enroll participants. The team remains optimistic about meeting the grant’s enrollment targets. Further updates on the grant’s progress will be provided by the Equus team. Louisiana Works (LW) and the Office of Workforce Development (OWD) met on March 11th & 12th to conduct an on-site visit and comprehensive review, which included administrative, programmatic and financial activities of Local Workforce Development Area 12 (LWDA 12), Orleans Parish, Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth, and Discretionary programs for Fiscal Year 2025. The process included a monitoring desk review. The primary purpose of the comprehensive review is to ensure compliance with Federal and State laws, regulations, memoranda of understanding, one stop operator, and other contractual agreements. All requested documents were provided during the visit. The state will continue to

review the documents and provide a preliminary report once the review is completed.

V. Operator Report

The Business Services Consultant Supervisor, Priscilla Cheatham, highlighted that Adult & Dislocated Worker program currently has 353 out of 550 WIOA enrollments. JOB1 has partnered with HANO and Urban Strategies under the JOB1 and Jobs Plus grant enabling direct connectivity with QLM, Quality Labor Management, who holds a partnership with Delgado and offers trainings such as OSHA certification, forklift training, etc. The first phase of this project is presently underway and JOB1 is currently in the first cohort of specified training. Through these partnerships, JOB1 can connect trained and skilled persons with sustainable jobs that pay a living wage that is higher than the median income while also helping employers meet their workforce demands with qualified candidates.

Youth Works Experiences surpassed the goal of 30 enrollments and now have 35 enrolled participants. Youth Job Placements are currently at 48 out of 60. Nearly 1,200 work permits have been issued so far this fiscal year.

Pathway Home IV/RESTORE has successfully reached the program enrollment goal of 150 participants. The team conducted a RESTORE information session at the Career & Resource Fair on February 4th where they engaged 10 of their enrolled RESTORE participants, hosted a career resource fair with over 150 participants in attendance which included 19 community resource partners, 13 employers, as well as the cohort engagement with QLM via Delgado. Although the goal has been met, work continues with enrolled participants.

Ms. Cheatham acknowledged that not all who visit JOB1 qualify for WIOA. ARPA funds have aided JOB1 in providing much needed supportive services. Documents such as State IDs, Real IDs, Driver Licenses, and Birth Certificates can be obtained through the help of JOB1. The center has completed 63 document assistance requests, processed 29 pending requests, 9 transportation/ride share requests, and 10 new document/transportation requests.

VI. Public Comments

There were no comments from the public.

VII. Open Discussion

There was no additional discussion.

Motion to Adjourn

Motion by: Carla Major

Second by: Rodney Wallis

No Opposition

The motion was approved by unanimous decision.

Meeting adjourned at 11:48am