



**NEW ORLEANS  
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD**

NOWDB Full Board  
JOB1 Business and Career Solutions Center  
1307 Oretha Castle Haley – New Orleans, LA  
August 5, 2025 | 11:00AM  
Meeting Summary

**Attendance**

**Members Present**

Gregory Curtis  
Chris Bardell  
Dottie Belletto  
Charlene Bonck  
Desiree Stelly Bordenave  
Thelma French  
Danielle Garrett  
Angelle Hava  
Floyd James  
Claire Jecklin  
Rachel Mackey  
Andrew O'Brien, Sr.  
Jerry Repka  
Chante' Rice-Graham  
Jeffrey Schwartz  
Allen Square  
Allyson Wilson

**Members Absent**

Melissa Hopson  
Mikal Anderson  
Jeffrey Martin  
Peter Pappas  
Stacey Shepperson  
Rodney Wallis  
Arlanda Williams

**Staff and Guest**

Tyra Johnson Brown  
Tammie Washington  
Neia Limar  
Sabrina Johnson  
Karmen McKinley  
Lori Boissiere  
Torrie Jakes  
Leonard Zanders  
Icesiss Guy  
Brittini Powell  
Lillian Nero

Board Members who attended the meeting virtually: Melissa Hopson and Mikal Anderson

**I. Chairman Welcome**

11:15am Chairman Curtis welcomed everyone to the meeting. He thanked board members for their attendance. He began the meeting by addressing the Action Items noted on the meeting agenda.

**II. Ratify the Executive Committee's Approval of the NOWDB Full Board Draft Meeting Minutes from May 13, 2025**

Motion by: Andrew O'Brien

Second by: Jerry Repka

No Opposition

The motion was approved by unanimous decision.

**Ratify the Executive Committee’s Approval of the NOWDB Full Board Draft Meeting Minutes from June 12, 2025**

Motion by: Claire Jecklin

Second by: Andrew O’Brien

No Opposition

The motion was approved by unanimous decision.

**Ratify the Executive Committee’s Approval of the Updated NOWDB Financial Policies**

Motion by: Chris Bardell

Second by: Jerry Repka

No Opposition

The motion was approved by unanimous decision.

**Ratify the Executive Committee’s Approval of Equus Workforce Solutions as the One-Stop Operator and WIOA Service Provider**

Motion by: Allen Square

Second by: Claire Jecklin

The Chair conducted a roll call of each member. All members voted yes.

No Opposition

The motion was approved by unanimous decision.

**III. Roll Call**

Board Manager Neia Limar completed roll call and confirmed that a quorum had been met.

**IV. Staff Updates/Program Oversight Report**

Office of Housing Policy, Community & Workforce Development Director, Tyra Johnson Brown, thanked board members for their commitment. She advised that the PY2025 program allocation from the Louisiana Workforce Commission (LWC) had been received on July 1<sup>st</sup> and a final revision on July 18<sup>th</sup> which included an additional decrease in Dislocated Worker funding. The total allocation for the City of New Orleans is \$3,680,989 which reflects a decrease from PY24 of \$208,886. She added that a contract with Equus cannot be entered into at this time as the State is awaiting their contract from the Department of Labor (DOL). A letter of intent was provided to Equus in the interim to continue with their services. The Office of Workforce Development (OWD) is currently working with Equus on their operational budget and programmatic goals. Director Brown reported that monitoring from the LWC is now closed and there were no findings and 1 area of concern surrounding lack of communication and connectivity to employers for related inclusive and accessibility to provide services to customers with disabilities. The recommendation is that the NOWDB create a subcommittee to provide information and assist with operations and other issues related to the provision of services to individuals with disabilities including issues related to compliance with WIOA and Americans with Disability Act (ADA). Additionally, it is recommended

that the NOWDB ensures appropriate training is provided to staff to support services and accommodations available to help individuals with disabilities seeking employment opportunities. OWD will work with Equus to ensure that JOB1 staff engage in training, focusing on servicing individuals with disabilities. This training will address compliance with WIOA Section 188 and the Americans with Disability Act, with particular attention to providing both programmatic and physical access within the One Stop system.

She continued her report with a recap of a meeting she and Deputy Director Tammie Washington attended on yesterday, August 4<sup>th</sup> with a representative from the Water Rising Institution (WRI) whose focus is on programs to introduce young ladies to a career path in water management. WRI would like to partner with the OWD to develop a program that would introduce young women ages 16 or 24 to a career path in water management for a grant they are currently applying for through the DOL for women in apprenticeship. OWD will be providing a letter of support for their grant application.

Director Brown concluded her report by announcing that the Mayor's Summer Youth Employment Program (MSYEP) ended on July 25<sup>th</sup>. She congratulated staff for the success of the program and turned the floor over to MSYEP Director, Karmen McKinley.

### **Mayor's Summer Youth Employment Program Report**

Director McKinley shared highlights from the summer employment program including successful paycheck distribution, providing 250 filled book bags to youth, and an end-of-program celebration event. She shared a copy of the annual report for board members to review. She thanked board member Chris Bardell for being a participating partner and accepting 70 youth participants. She also noted that this was a record-breaking year with the employment of 230 college interns in high demand industries like marketing, city government, hospitality and healthcare, which is the most requested industry. She thanked board Vice-chair Melissa Sparks of Ochsner Healthcare Systems where one of the interns gained full time employment. Five MSYEP participants gained full-time employment through this program. She added that 97% of participants reported that they attained essential workforce skills, 90% of attained valuable professional connections, and 85% of participants rated their summer experience as a positive workforce experience. MSYEP distributed over \$1.6 million in wages that directly supported the households of participants in the City of New Orleans. She also thanked Stem NOLA and board member Floyd James for employing 50 youth. She concluded her report by sharing two success stories from the MSYEP and acknowledged the partnership with Models for Success, JOB1 Director Leonard Zanders and staff, Director Brown and Deputy Director Washington.

### **Finance Committee Report**

Finance Chair, Floyd James, reported the PY25 budget of \$4.7 million, which includes \$3.68 million annual allocations and \$1,000,000 carry over from the previous year. OWD staff is currently in contract negotiations with the Service Provider and One-Stop Operator. A motion is needed to adopt the PY25/26 budget. A question & answer discussion was had for clarifications.

### **Approval of the PY25/26 WIOA Budget**

Motion by: Thelma French

Second by: Dottie Belletto

No Opposition

The motion was approved by unanimous decision.

### **Operator Report**

Mr. Leonard Zanders reported on the PY24 Operators Report and totals. Performance matrix shows that JOB1 did very well in categories across the board with the exception of placements. JOB1 had a series of job fairs in May and June that are being followed up on. The Committed to Change Work Readiness Class had 95 individuals complete the program. He reported on the success of JOB1's Business Solutions data highlighting employer contacts were actually being called which will be documented via case notes this year. He also noted that the New Orleans Department of Public Works contacted JOB1 needing support due to the City's hiring freeze and JOB1 was able to fill the work need for the next few months. Individual Training Accounts continue to have strong interest for training. A conversation regarding training scholarships was had. The RESTORE re-entry program currently has 125 enrolled participants and is doing well. He also reported on the Youth Program and announced the four events that will make up "Youth Week". He concluded his report by announcing plans for a program that will work with 10 young adult couples where the mother is expecting and provide prenatal, perinatal and workforce support.

Youth Committee Chair Claire Jecklin remarked on the partnership that New Orleans Career Center (NOCC) had with JOB1, where JOB1 provided supportive services for transportation through ARPA funding to assist NOCC youth who were hired by an employer but had challenges getting to work.

Board Manager Neia Limar remarked that Dr. Desiree Stelly Bordenave of Bordenave Wellness acquired three new employees who went through the fall and spring medical assistant training provided by the New Orleans Career Center.

Board Chairman Gregory Curtis reminded members to be on a subcommittee and that subcommittees are meeting regularly ahead of full board meetings.

### **V. Public Comments**

There were no comments from the public.

### **VI. Open Discussion**

#### **Motion to Adjourn**

Motion by: Andrew O'Brien

Second by: Allyson Wilson

No Opposition

The motion was approved by unanimous decision.

Meeting adjourned at 12:01pm.