

**WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD
of San Luis Obispo County
BUSINESS COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES**

Date: Thursday, February 18, 2021
Time: 9:00 a.m.-10:30 a.m.
Location: Virtual Meeting- <https://slohealth.zoom.us/j/98579656908?pwd=RDViTytDMmZ6ZG9DaHFBYVVFdjBUZz09>

Present: Isiah Gomer, Michael Specchierla, Chuck Jehle, Judy Mahan
Absent: Verena Latona-Tahlman, Kirk Coviello, John Cascamo
Staff: Dawn Boulanger, Diana Marin
Guest: Allison Schiavo

1. Call to Order:

Chair Isiah Gomer: called the meeting to order at 9:01 A.M. **No quorum.**

2. Public Comment:

Chair Gomer: noted no public comment on public line.

3. Consent Items:

3.1 Approve the December 17, 2020 Minutes

Not approved as no quorum.

4. AJCC Report:

4.1 Receive Report on AJCC Business Services

Allison Schiavo (guest) presented the item which provided an update on the San Luis Obispo America's Job Center of CA (AJCC). Allison stated that the AJCC has had some staff turnover and Jim Yachenson is no longer with the AJCC. She stated that there is currently more employer demand for staff than there are jobseekers looking and willing to work. There is a high demand and success in placing jobseekers in the IT industry and as a result there is room for salary negotiation. Several industries are currently hiring, including manufacturing, food services, solar, design, medical and grocery jobs. AJCC is currently using CalJOBS to conduct outreach to jobseekers. Extensions in UI are a possible reason for job seekers hesitating to look for work. WEX program has placed candidates. AJCC is currently trying to reconnect with the chambers to better outreach businesses. Job center will focus on outreaching to businesses what are struggling to stay open and have been ineligible to other assistance. Isiah Gomer (chair) suggested adding an item to next agenda to further discuss AJCC outreach to businesses.

5. Information/Discussion:

5.1 Update Commercial Driver's License Prep Course

Isiah Gomer (chair) and Michael Specchierla (committee member) presented the item which provided an update on the status of the Commercial License Preparation Course. Isiah reported that conversations have been put on hold until student return to school. The need continues to exist, but the school district will not know how many drivers they will need until the districts resume in-person instruction, and drivers are needed once again. North County schools are more likely to resume sooner. Legal review is going on now to determine when they can re-open. Not much can be done until decisions are made. Diana Marin (staff) stated that the transportation industry was the only industry that experienced growth throughout the pandemic, a reminder that this conversation remains very relevant. Dawn Boulanger (staff) asked about upskilling for current drivers. Isiah noted that there are different classes C, B and A and that each can require different

endorsements depending on the occupation and that the higher classes (A and B) tend to pay higher. Most employers need experienced drivers to meet their workforce needs. He also requested more recent LMI data to be able to better analyze the local need.

5.2 Receive COVID-19 Small Business Grant Outcomes

Diana Marin (staff) presented the item which included a brief update on the COVID-19 Small Business Grant that closed December 31, 2020. Most applications were from local restaurants. There was a total of 40 applications received and about \$40K worth of grants awarded. Diana also stated that there were several applications that were submitted after the grant closed. She also mentioned that several businesses reported having been ineligible to state assistance grants as they were newer businesses and had been considered ineligible to those grants. Diana stated that there is still a need for further assistance especially for the newer businesses.

5.3 Review and Discuss COVID-19 Small Business Grant Survey Questions

Diana Marin (staff) presented the item which was part of the agenda. Diana asked the council to please provide feedback as she plans to conduct a phone survey with the businesses that were assisted through the COVID-19 Small Business Grant. The survey will ask questions about the businesses experience with the WDB, their health, and wrap up with questions about whether they are familiar with AJCC services in hopes of conducting a warm handoff/connection to the AJCC for follow-up services.

5.4 Discuss Council Recruitment of New Members

Isiah Gomer (chair) presented the item. He stated that more business representation is needed on the Council, and he is seeking assistance from the current membership to conduct outreach and recruitment of new members. He asked Diana Marin (staff) to send the council information that could be shared by council members to potential recruits to inform them about what the Business Council represents and is tasked with. Isiah indicated that the council could benefit from representation from the healthcare industry as well as from businesses in the South County. Dawn Boulanger (staff) indicated that the full Workforce Development Board currently has 3 open business seats and that the time commitment is less as those meetings occur quarterly. She also mentioned that the time commitment for the Business Council is a little more as this council meets every other month and would require a little more time commitment. Diana Marin (staff) mentioned that the energy, manufacturing, and defense/aerospace industries would also be industries of interest to target for membership. Isiah stated that he would reach out to Assembly member Cunningham to seek his assistance in our recruitment efforts.

6. Council Member Workforce Development Updates:

Chair Gomer: opened the floor to updates from the Committee membership Judy Mahan, Chuck Jehle, and Michael Specchierla shared updates.

7. Next Meeting:

Thursday, April 15, 2021 9:00am-10:30am
Virtual Zoom Meeting

8. Adjournment:

Chair Gomer: adjourned the meeting at 9:49 A.M.

Diana Marin, Clerk of the Business Council of the Workforce Development Board of San Luis Obispo, do hereby certify that the foregoing is a fair statement of the proceedings of the meeting held Thursday, February 18, 2021 by the Business Council of the Workforce Development Board of San Luis Obispo County.

Diana Marin, Business Council Clerk

Dated: February 23, 2021