



**LWDB 20 - Geaux Jobs
November 18, 2025**

The Local Workforce Development Board met on November 18, 2025, at 11:00 am. at Duke's Seafood and Steakhouse located at 2591 S. Range Road, Denham Springs, LA

WELCOME

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Sadie Maninno-Bennett. She welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Mrs. Chappell called roll. Upon taking roll call, a quorum was reached.

Chairperson Sadie Maninno-Bennett resumed the meeting.

MEMBERS' PRESENT

Eric Baldwin, Sadie Mannino-Bennett, Annette Beuchler, Mike DiVicenti, Lisa Dugas, Darryl Ferrara, Karen Fontenot, Craig Kaiser, Carissa LeBeouf, Roderick Matthews, Ronnie Rosser, Penni Saul, William Sims, Sandy Summers, Michael Thornhill, Chad Williams, Lisa Williams

MEMBERS ABSENT

Jaye Collura, Terri Cook, Jason Dedon, Darryl McGaha, Ismary McLemore, Jayson Purdy

GUEST: Jessica Vallelungo (Assistant Secretary of OWD)

WIOA STAFF: Tina Roper, Shalonda Chappell, Bryan Moore (One Stop Operator)

PUBLIC INPUT: None

MINUTES OF August 19, 2025, BOARD MEETING

A motion was made by Mr. Ronnie Rosser and seconded by Mr. Roderick Matthews to approve August minutes as presented. Votes were as follows:

Yeah: Eric Baldwin, Sadie Mannino-Bennett, Annette Beuchler, Mike DiVicenti, Lisa Dugas, Darryl Ferrara, Karen Fontenot, Craig Kaiser, Carissa LeBeouf, Roderick Matthews, Ronnie Rosser, Penni Saul, William Sims, Sandy Summers, Michael Thornhill, Chad Williams, Lisa Williams

Absent: Jaye Collura, Terri Cook, Jason Dedon, Darryl McGaha, Ismary McLemore, Jayson Purdy

Nays: None

Abstained:

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Ms. Roper presented the Director's Report as follows:

Ms. Roper introduced the board's guest, Ms. Jessica Vallengo. Ms. Vallengo is the Assistant Secretary of OWD. Ms. Vallengo shared with the board that prior to her current position she spent 20 years in K-12 education and the last 8 years she worked with Louisiana Department of Education (LDOE) in Career and College Readiness.

Financial:

- o Allocations/Expenditures -Ms. Roper provided updates on the WIOA federal budget outlook and reviewed allocations for the operating budget funding of PY24 and FY25.
- o Ms. Roper reported that the operating budget, PY 24/FY25 funds will expire on June 30, 2025. PY25 and PY26 funding have not yet been utilized. She stated that the current funding is stable.
- o Ms. Roper noted that based on October drawdown, adult funds total \$864,124, and dislocated worker funds total \$921,016.32. Ms. Roper plans to release an additional \$500,000 for training-specific purposes in January. This will increase the total set-aside for participant costs to \$1 million.
- o Ms. Roper is concerned regarding the policy change of Unemployment Insurance (UI) from 26 weeks to 12 weeks given there was no corresponding adjustment in the OWD Policy defining "unlikely to return to previous profession" for dislocated workers.
- o Ms. Roper and her counterparts are continuing to encourage OWD to modify the definition of unlikely to return to former occupation to reflect the change in the UI benefits program. There is a need to adjust this to allow for eligibility as a dislocated worker earlier for those on UI due to the allowable weeks for benefits being changed from 26 weeks to 12 weeks.
- o Ms. Roper noted that Dislocated Worker funds may be transferred to adult funds which will allow for more participants to be served.

LAWASS Task Force Pilot:

- Ms. Roper informed the Board that the integrated pilot project is progressing forward with staff now being co-housed and a field test version of the automated online system known as TuaPath is expected by early December. Ms. Roper stated the intent of this field test is for DCFS, Wagner-Peyser, Veterans, and Geaux Jobs staff to role play as case managers and participants to provide feedback on the TuaPath system.

- The Board is currently funding 100% of the co-location cost. Ms. Roper states, the goal is for partners to fund their fair share of the money

LOCAL BUSINESS AND APPRENTICESHIP

Ms. Roper shared, the Geaux Jobs team met with Acme, a local business that is turning down \$6 million in work due to a lack of skilled and trained staff. Ms. Roper is connecting the apprenticeship staff of Louisiana Works, for a possible registered apprenticeship program. The staff will be working with them setting up On the Job training opportunities and engaging with the local Community and Technical colleges to address the specialized machinery required by Acme.

ONE-STOP OPERATOR REPORT

Report attached to minutes.

BOARD INPUT/DISCUSSION

- Mr. Michael Di Vicenti announced to the board that he has decided to retire and move. Therefore, he will be stepping down from the board.
- Ms. Roper and the Board thanked Mr. Di Vicenti for his service and wished him well on his retirement.
- Ms. Roper also thanked Ms. Vallelungo for coming and sharing with the board.
- Ms. Chappell set the tentative 3rd quarter board meeting for February 24, 2026

CHAIRPERSON'S COMMENTS

Chairperson Sadie thanked everyone and appreciated their attendance.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Mr. Roderick Matthews and seconded by Mr. Ronnie Rosser to adjourn the meeting. The meeting was adjourned.

APPROVED:



Sadie Maninno-Bennett

Board Chair