

San Diego Workforce Partnership  
Consortium Policy Board  
Minutes of the March 8, 2021 Meeting

**Members Present**

Monica Montgomery Steppe, Councilmember, City of San Diego, District 4 (Chair)  
Joel Anderson, San Diego County Supervisor, District 2 (Vice Chair)  
Sean Elo-Rivera, Councilmember, City of San Diego, District 9  
Nora Vargas, San Diego County Supervisor, District 1  
Jacob Richards, Board Member, United Way of San Diego County

**Legal Counsel Present**

David Powell, Deputy City Attorney, City of San Diego  
David Smith, Chief Deputy County Counsel, County of San Diego

**Staff Present**

Peter Callstrom, President & CEO  
Andy Hall, Chief Impact Officer  
Shaina Gross, Vice President of Client Services  
Parina Parikh, Vice President of Sector Initiatives

**Location**

Via Zoom

Per [Executive Order N-25-20](#), the requirement to which members of the public shall have the right to observe & offer public comment at the public meeting, consistent with the Brown Act, has been suspended.

All reports, memoranda and letters contained in the agenda or distributed at the meeting shall by this reference become part of the original minutes.

The meeting was called to order by at 1:00pm, with a quorum present.

**Non-Agenda Public Comment**

None

**Action Items**

**Item 1 2021 Policy Board Chair & Vice Chair Selection**

Motion: Board approves the nominations of Councilmember Monica Montgomery Steppe for Chair, and Supervisor Joel Anderson for Vice Chair.

*Moved (J. Richards), Seconded (N. Vargas), Carried unanimously*

**Item 2 Minutes of the December 11, 2021 Meeting**

Motion: Board approves the meeting minutes.

*Moved (J. Richards), Seconded (M. Montgomery Steppe), Carried unanimously*

### **Information Item**

*Item 3*

#### **Workforce Development Board (WDB) Chair**

WDB Chair, and Chief Operating Officer at Kaiser Permanente, Sammy Totah introduced himself and discussed the Workforce Development Board's commitment to serve the community. Peter thanked Sammy for his leadership in referring new members to WDB, providing trainings for SDWP staff, and stewarding a strategic direction for the board. M. Montgomery Steppe thanked Sammy for his service and Peter for his comments.

### **Action Items**

*Items 4-6*

#### **Membership Nominations**

Peter described backgrounds and experience of 3 WDB nominees: Matt Doyle of Vista Unified School District, Danene Brown of San Diego & Imperial Counties Community Colleges, and Taylor Eubanks of Tesla. M. Montgomery Steppe added that the nominees were impressive. Andy highlighted the work SDWP has done with Tesla in placing upwards of 50 individuals in roofing and solar installation positions with family-sustaining wages and equity potential within the company. He added that SDWP is very pleased to have the opportunity to bring Taylor onto the WDB, along with the other nominees, to continue that work. M. Montgomery suggested the board have a briefing on the work SDWP has been doing with Tesla, as it will be very helpful moving forward into economic recovery.

Motion: Board approves the nominations.

*Moved (J. Anderson), Seconded (N. Vargas), Carried unanimously*

*Item 7*

#### **WIOA Youth RFP**

Andy reviewed the WIOA Youth RFP process and contract recommendations. The contracts in this RFP cycle serve opportunity youth, 16–24-year-olds that are not working and not in school. SDWP receives federal funding from the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) to reconnect the opportunity youth population to school and work. Additionally, SDWP conducts research on this issue to determine which groups are disconnected and how best to provide services to those individuals. The research reflected several population-specific groups (Immigrant/Refugee/ELL Youth, Youth Experiencing Homelessness, Justice-Involved Youth, and Black Opportunity Youth) as experiencing disconnection at much higher rates than other populations in San Diego. The RFP's working group structured the RFP with several contracts to target those populations specifically, along with a broader

contract award to serve opportunity youth at SDWP Career Centers. Andy reviewed the RFP winners and explained that the evaluation committee of community members and youth recommend the Black Opportunity Youth RFP be edited and re-released as no bidders met the minimum score threshold. Andy reviewed the scoring process and outcome metrics for the contracts. He discussed the appeals process for bidders and noted SDWP has not received any appeals.

N. Vargas highlighted a challenge in the RFP process as smaller organizations are disadvantaged at meeting the threshold to bid despite being directly connected to the community through grassroots efforts. She asked how SDWP can create a path for local organizations to be a part of the RFP process. Andy replied that SDWP will continue to further encourage large recipients to potentially subcontract elements of their contracts out to smaller organizations for areas such as outreach or job placement. Some selections for the WIOA Youth RFP have subcontracted smaller, local organizations for aspects of the contract. He also discussed SDWP's interest in hosting town halls and technical assistance sessions for that want to prepare to compete for federal contracts. N. Vargas would like the board to potentially institutionalize these ideas to ensure SDWP is allocating resources to support local organizations. M. Montgomery Steppe thanked N. Vargas for bringing the issue forward and noted that it has been a concern of hers as well.

S. Elo-Rivera noted that in the category of Black opportunity youth, it was surprising that a Black-lead organization did not meet the minimum criteria to conduct outreach to the Black community. He asked how the process will be modified in the RFP's re-release. Andy responded that the evaluation panel determined that some organizations were very close to qualifying, but asked SDWP staff to work with those organizations to re-structure their responses to meet the scoring criteria. Shaina Gross noted that the summary provided to the board of key components missing did not apply to all applicants, but was rather a summary of all the bidders. Some organizations may have had strengths in outreach, but weaknesses in mentorship, for example, so all comments may not apply to all the applicants. She added the evaluators felt that all the applicants were not focused on the Black opportunity youth that SDWP has identified through research as facing the most barriers and needing the most support. For example, some organizations were looking to serve Black immigrant or refugee youth, and while there is need in this area, the RFP had a specific category for immigrant, refugee, and ELL youth. Shaina added that the next RFP will be providing additional data points to be more specific about outcomes and the population the contract is looking to serve.

S. Elo-Rivera thanked Shaina for her comments and added to N. Vargas' earlier comments, highlighting the importance of SDWP providing guidance and support to organizations on the front-end of the bidding process. He noted that some of the RFP winners for the contracts in question were large institutions, and in his non-profit experience a bit of lead-time can make all the difference in a smaller organization's competitiveness in the RFP process. He also requested proactive outreach providing detailed feedback on where the non-selected bidders lost points, and encouragement to the previous bidders to apply again. Additionally, S. Elo-Rivera inquired about an update on where the opportunity youth program fits

within the Workforce Partnership more generally and deeper dive on how the RFP contracts fit into SDWP's larger opportunity youth goals. Andy replied in the affirmative, stating that SDWP will schedule a briefing with his office on this topic and bring an update to the board in a future meeting.

M. Montgomery Steppe thanked the board for their comments and questions, also stating that she is looking forward to the creative strategies and outcomes of the RFP winners.

Motion: Board approves the contracts.

*Moved (J. Anderson), Seconded (N. Vargas), Carried unanimously*

### **Information Items**

*Item 8*

#### **CEO & Staff Report**

Andy provided an overview of SDWP, including the five pillars guiding the organization's goals and outcomes (Job Quality, 2Gen Solutions, Outcomes-Focused Funding, Inclusive Business Growth, and Population-Specific Interventions). He explained that the centerpiece of SDWP's service delivery system is the Career Center network, spread across six locations throughout San Diego County. In 2020 SDWP serviced over 30,000 individuals through the Career Center network. Andy also overviewed SDWP's targeted programming and projects, as well as priority sector initiatives for training investments in specific high-growth and high-wage industries. Andy specifically highlighted the High Roads Construction Careers program aimed at establishing a diverse pre-apprenticeship pipeline for jobs in the construction industry. M. Montgomery Steppe is interested in the makeup of HRCC, SDWP's outreach for the program, and placement data, and would love to see that information at a future meeting. N. Vargas added that she would like to expand apprenticeship programs to other institutions and will be working to do so at the BOS level. She also highlighted the consideration of racial-equity in the process getting the community into green jobs and apprenticeship programs. Andy responded that SDWP will connect with her office to collaborate on those issues. M. Montgomery Steppe agreed with N. Vargas' comments and noted that the location of the training as the Educational Cultural Complex is the flagship campus of San Diego Continuing Education and historically known in the Black community. She hopes that this factor will interest more people in the program, adding that the numbers are lacking in Black participation in the building and construction trades and this program is an effort to improve that. She added that these efforts can be connected to the San Diego Energy Equity Campus in District 4.

Peter discussed SDWP's evolution towards a diversified portfolio of revenue sources. In 2012 federal funds accounted for 97% of SDWP's funding, in 2021 federal funds account for 59%, which is unique in the Workforce Development Board space. The organization has worked very hard at diversification and bringing in private sector and philanthropic funds in recent years to provide diverse services to the community. Peter also discussed a grant SDWP recently received from the

California Department of Social Services and the Labor and Workforce Development Agency for outreach to California communities disproportionately impacted by COVID-19. SDWP was the only Workforce Development Board in the state to be awarded these funds. With the grant, SDWP will be educating workers and employers in high-risk industries, such as the food and agriculture sectors, on how to minimize the spread of COVID-19 in the workplace. Peter also highlighted the California Workforce Development Board's classification of SDWP as a high-performing board. Peter also drew attention to the organization's advocacy work to support Relaunching America's Workforce Act (RAWA) in order to secure proper funding for workforce development across the country.

*Item 9*

**Board Meeting Calendar**

The Policy Board agreed to meet on the 4<sup>th</sup> Friday at 3pm bimonthly.

**Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 2:03 pm

**Next Meeting:** Friday, April 23, 2021 at 3:00pm