



**MEETING OF THE
TEXAS WORKFORCE COMMISSION**

DATE

FEBRUARY 13, 2024

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Tuesday, February 13, 2024

CHAIRMAN DANIEL: Good morning, all. This meeting is called to order. Mr. Trobman, anyone signed up for public comment?

CHAIRMAN DANIEL: Thank you very much. Good morning, Ms. Miller.

MS. MILLER: Good morning, sir.

CHAIRMAN DANIEL: Thank you. We'll take a short recess.

CHAIRMAN DANIEL: All right, here we go. This is Agenda Item 9, fiscal year 24 final contact hour rate for the apprenticeship training program.

KERRY BALLAST: Good morning, Chairman Daniel, Commissioner Treviño, Commissioner Esparza, and Mr. Serna. For the record, Kerry Ballast, Workforce Development Division, and very loyal participant in the workforce fitness challenge.

CHAIRMAN DANIEL: We'll talk about that after we're through with this piece of business. I have some questions about that but we'll save that because this is more important.

KERRY BALLAST: At the June 30th commission meeting staff were asked to bring forward options for funding of the final contact hour rate for the Chapter 133 apprenticeship training program. Today staff present three options as laid out

1 in your notebook materials for your consideration. This
2 concludes my remarks. I'm happy to answer any of your questions.

3 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: Comments or questions?

4 COMMISSIONER TREVIÑO: I would like to
5 reiterate my comments from last week to emphasize the importance
6 of apprenticeships and my support for the third option presented
7 by staff in the discussion paper. We can increase our direct
8 investment in the training of Texans by using the state
9 apprenticeship expansion grant funds before the grant closes in
10 June of 2024 in addition to the WIOA state funds or statewide
11 funds. It will reduce the amount of unspent existing funds that
12 would return to DOL and results in the exceeded performance
13 measures attached to this DOL grant.

14 COMMISSIONER ESPARZA: No questions. I'd
15 also like to thank Kerry and staff for the extended information
16 that we discussed prior to that [inaudible] commission hearing.
17 No questions here.

18 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: Could there have been a
19 fourth option? Could the entire 2.2 million dollars had been
20 paid for out of the expansion funds?

21 KERRY BALLAST: Yes, sir.

22 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: And how much—there's about
23 two and a half million dollars in those expansion funds?

24 KERRY BALLAST: Yes.

25

1 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: And those are expiring, is
2 that correct?

3 KERRY BALLAST: Yes, sir. These are part of
4 a grant that ends at the end of June of this year.

5 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: OK, and so we've got GR
6 funds in there, 3.7-ish million dollars. We've got WIOA funds in
7 there, about a million dollars of WIOA funds, and then we could
8 take 2.2 million dollars of the expiring expansion funds and get
9 to the four-dollar?

10 KERRY BALLAST: We can, yes, sir.

11 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: Target. Well, gentlemen,
12 it would be my preference to go with this kind of newly designed
13 fourth decision point where we would just take it out of the
14 expansion money. That way we don't run the risk of lapsing some
15 of that money, and we get to our goal here which is I think to
16 get to four dollars an hour. That would be my preference, to do
17 it that way unless—certainly we should have some discussion.

18 COMMISSIONER TREVIÑO: No discussion from
19 me. I agree with that. My goal is to make sure that we get the
20 contact hour up to four dollars to help with the contact hour.

21 COMMISSIONER ESPARZA: I'm supportive as
22 well.

23 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: I move we approve 2.2
24 million dollars of state apprenticeship expansion 2020 federal
25 grant dollars to fund an increase of the contact hour rate for

1 entities awarded fiscal year apprenticeship training program
2 contracts to four dollars an hour.

3 COMMISSIONER TREVIÑO: I second the motion.

4 COMMISSIONER ESPARZA: I concur.

5 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: With no objection, the
6 motion passes.

7 KERRY BALLAST: Thank you.

8 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: Thank you. There is one
9 tie on the back row. It could be a legislative report but he
10 just has a vest on and no jacket.

11 MR. SERNA: That means there's no report.

12 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: That means there's no
13 legislative report?

14 MR. SERNA: Yeah.

15 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: All right, how about an
16 executive director's report?

17 MR. SERNA: No, sir, neither.

18 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: All right. I have—well,
19 let's see here. I think we're supposed to have an executive
20 session today.

21 MR. SERNA: Yes, sir.

22 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: We'll come back after that
23 and talk a little bit. The time is now 10:41. The Texas
24 Workforce Commission is going into executive session in Room 242
25 pursuant to Texas Government Code Section 551.071(1) concerning

1 pending litigation that's titled Jennifer R. Mitchell versus the
2 Texas Workforce Commission and Thrive Academy.

3 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: The executive session has
4 now concluded and the time is 10:48. Is there a motion?

5 COMMISSIONER TREVIÑO: Chairman, I move we
6 approve the filing of an appeal with the First Court of Appeals
7 Houston in the following litigation: Jennifer R. Mitchell versus
8 Texas Workforce Commission and Thrive Academy.

9 COMMISSIONER ESPARZA: I second.

10 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: It's been moved and
11 seconded, and the vote is unanimous. All right, is there any
12 other order of business to come before the commission?

13 COMMISSIONER ESPARZA: None here.

14 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: I've got one little piece
15 of news so Ren—stand up, Ren. Ren is upset because I never
16 invite her up to the dais to ask her any questions or anything.
17 That's not why she's leaving to go to the Texas Real Estate
18 Commission. She's found a good opportunity there. Definitely
19 very—it's always bittersweet. The longer I talk, the longer you
20 get to stand there. When I was about 10 years—I'm kidding. We
21 are definitely sad to see her go but I'm excited for her new
22 opportunity there, and love to see people and their career arc,
23 particularly the really talented people that I've gotten to work
24 with here at TWC, and so best of luck. Come back and see us.
25 Please get your Get Fit Texas up to date before you go. It does

1 not convey—Tommy told me, and best wishes to you on this new
2 adventure. We're looking forward to seeing your successes over
3 there.

4 COMMISSIONER ESPARZA: Is she still doing
5 [inaudible]?

6 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: Commissioner Esparza
7 brings up a good point. Let me tell you how dedicated Ren is. If
8 you ever get a chance to work with her, do it. So her technical
9 last day is tomorrow, and I think just Valentine's Day, and so I
10 said, well, since you're technically working tomorrow and you
11 have to at some point turn in your computer and your keys and
12 your ID, I said can you—would you shoot one more video for us
13 because we—and she said yeah so that will come out on the first
14 of March so we've got some process, so yeah, shooting one last
15 video. Who wouldn't want that kind of fame on their résumé? Any
16 other business to come before the commission?

17 COMMISSIONER TREVIÑO: No, good luck, Ren.

18 COMMISSIONER ESPARZA: Good luck.

19 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: All right. I recorded 27
20 steps to the other room and back today. Mr. Trobman, can we see
21 that that somehow gets credited toward something that we're
22 doing? With that, I think we should adjourn. Is there a motion
23 to adjourn?

24 COMMISSIONER TREVIÑO: Chairman, I move to
25 adjourn.

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COMMISSIONER ESPARZA: I second.

CHAIRMAN DANIEL: It's been moved and
seconded to adjourn, and we're adjourned.