

**SA: Ready to Work Advisory Board  
Meeting Minutes  
Workforce Center of Excellence Atrium  
203 Norton St, San Antonio, TX 78226  
April 3, 2024 2:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.**

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Priscilla Aguilar  
Stefanie Gaines  
Sonia Garza  
Ben Peavy  
Allie Perez  
Amanda Wright  
Councilmember Pelaez

**BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:**

Jennifer Cantu  
Jerry Graeber  
Councilmember Adriana Rocha Garcia

**STAFF PRESENT:**

Michael Ramsey, Workforce Development Office Executive Director  
Amy Contreras, Assistant to the Director  
Ana Salazar, Workforce Development Manager  
Cynthia Trevino, Senior Management Analyst  
Christina Ramirez, City Attorney's Office  
Ryan Loyd, Ready to Work Marketing Manager  
Mary Mills-Nguyen, Advisory Board Staff Liaison  
Lauron Fischer, Workforce Development Data Manager

**A. CALL TO ORDER**

Mr. Peavy called the meeting to order at 2:13 p.m. after quorum was established.

**B. PUBLIC COMMENT**

No public comments.

**C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Mr. Peavy asked the Board members to review the meeting minutes from January 16<sup>th</sup>. Ms. Gaines motioned to approve, and Ms. Perez seconded. The Board unanimously voted to approve the minutes.

**D. INDIVIDUAL ITEMS**

**1. SA Ready to Work Program Update**

Mr. Ramsey started by presenting RTW participant Jose Soto as a Point of Light, who is now employed as an Electrician Apprentice. He then invited Mr. Loyd to present a highlight reel of recently recorded participant testimonials.

Mr. Ramsey continued by sharing about the importance of the Ready to Work dashboard and the data it reports, as well as a recent snapshot of overall program metrics. He then invited Ms. Fischer to report on the more detailed participant pipeline from initial enrollment to job placement.

Mr. Ramsey then shared information about work-based learning initiatives that were recently approved by City Council and that will enhance scope of services provided by Ready to Work. He also provided an update on the Ready to Work Green Light Job Board and how it will assist with strengthening connections between participants and employers.

Mr. Peavy congratulated the partner agencies on over 600 job placements to date in the program, while stressing the importance of improving the pace of placements moving forward. He asked the partners to share ideas on what additional strategies they think could help.

Ms. Espino-Balencia from Workforce Solutions Alamo explained that many participants who were unemployed when they entered Ready to Work often have a much more difficult time finding jobs after the program and need more high-touch engagement with RTW coaches to be successful.

Mr. Peavy added that more conversations need to be had with local employers to eliminate unnecessary barriers to employment for participants. He suggested the Board and relevant stakeholders host a working session to discuss in greater depth how to boost job placements.

Ms. Salazar shared the work that greater:SATX has been doing to assist with job placement efforts currently. Ms. Camacho shared about an innovative initiative that Alamo Colleges has undertaken with Methodist Health System to fund an Alamo Colleges employee position to provide special support for their healthcare students in their job search.

## **2. SA Ready to Work FY 2025 Budget Briefing**

Mr. Ramsey presented updates to the Fiscal Year 2024 Year-End Projections and Fiscal Year 2025 Proposed Budget for Ready to Work, as well as a comparison in line items between both years. He then shared projections for intake and case management by program partner agency and explained the process for payment for services to partners by specific participant milestones.

Mr. Ramsey presented data on the projected economic impact of Year 1 of the Ready to Work program, and information about the Pay It Forward internship program as well as a survey on childcare that WDO recently undertook in collaboration with Opportunity Accelerator.

## **3. SA Ready to Work Target Occupation Update**

Ms. Matta-Barrera began by reiterating the importance of the forthcoming Incumbent-Worker Training and On-the-Job Training initiatives to future job placements for Ready to Work. She explained that SA WORX is not recommending any new occupations for addition or removal from the current target occupation list but wanted to share with the Board as an update.

Ms. Salazar explained recent changes in the way the occupational data is presented, with additional columns showing how many enrollees, training completers, and job placements have occurred for trainings in each SOC code, as well as average wages for current placements.

Ms. Salazar then presented each RTW target industry and provided recent trends in demand and program enrollments for each.

Mr. Peavy asked WDO staff to look closely at industries and occupations with very high program placement rates to see if there are certain training providers or employers with best practices to follow.

Ms. Perez asked whether apprentice wages are factored into area averages for construction and skilled trades occupations, as she noted the presented wages are very low compared to what she is familiar with. Mr. Scott shared some updates on pre-apprenticeship and registered apprenticeship enrollments to date.

#### **D. STAFF MEMBER COMMENTS**

Mr. Ramsey thanked the Board members for attending the February Equity in Action Summit and outlined the upcoming SA Ready to Work events for April through June, including important City Council milestones for the approval of the FY2025 Budget.

Mr. Ramsey concluded with an additional Point of Light, highlighting participant Steven Vega who is now employed with the SAISD as a Spanish teacher.

#### **F. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

No future agenda items.

#### **G. ADJOURN**

Meeting adjourned at 3:44 p.m.