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Rural Committee Meeting

Date Wednesday, August 27, 2025

Time 9:00 am MST

This will be a teleconference meeting, see Notes section below the enumerated Agenda items for further instructions.

Board Members Present

Randall Kinzie, Chair
Bobby Alcala

Dan Dunlap
Ruby Maldonado

Peggy O'Brien
Frank Spencer III

Staff Members Present

Abigail Ruiz
Alexis Rivera
Alondra McDuffie

Karina Castillo
Marisela Correa
Niquisha Washington

Odette Flores

MINUTES

1. CALL TO ORDER AND NOTE OF ATTENDANCE

Mr. Randall Kinzie, Rural Committee Chair, called the meeting to order at 9:03 am. MST. Quorum was cited.

2. ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

A: Report and update on Unemployment Insurance metrics in the rural areas
(*Sonia Garcia, Employment Services Manager, Grant Associates*)

Ms. Niquisha Washington, Program Director at Grant Associates, presented the Unemployment Insurance metrics in the rural areas and mentioned that the high interaction in these areas involves UI claimants and Work in Texas. Ms. Washington explained that the clients served are those who receive general assistance. She also presented the in-center traffic in Alpine and Presidio.

B: Discussion and update on Business Services Unit activities in the rural areas
(*Sonia Garcia, Employment Services Manager, Grant Associates*)

Ms. Washington presented the job openings by zip code and noted that the highest number of openings is in the 79835 area. She announced that the New Frontiers Job Con will be held on September 17 at Sul Ross State University.

C: Discussion and update on Rural Activities (*Alexis Rivera, Rural Development Project Manager*)

- CMA Rural Training Labs in partnership with Odessa College and BBRMC
- EMS Bill funding to support acquisition of a first response vehicle for Marfa EMS
- Tech Hub installation at Van Horn City-County Library
- Big Bend Telephone pre-apprenticeship registration

Mr. Alexis Rivera, Rural Development Project Manager, discussed the CMA Rural Training Labs in partnership with Odessa College and Big Bend Regional Medical Center. Sul Ross will be providing the space for the classes. Regarding the EMS Bill funding to support the acquisition of a first response vehicle for Marfa EMS, the funding is through the Rural Ambulance grant, enacted through Texas House Bill 3000, to support the acquisition of a first response vehicle for Marfa EMS. Funding will be effective September 1, 2025.

D: Discussion and update on rural childcare services (*Odette Flores-Rivera, Parent Services Director*)

- Establishment of new licensed home childcare providers in Presidio County
- Update on rural outreach.

Ms. Marisela Correa, Provider Services Director, announced that one of the registered homes in Presidio is already licensed. The provider can accommodate 12 infants through school age. Ms. Odette Flores-Rivera, Parent Services Director, announced that staff traveled to rural counties to contact some of the daycares in the area to let them know that enrollment is now open.

3. ADJOURN

A: Discussion on items of interest for next agenda

The meeting adjourned at 9:32 am. MST.