



MEETING OF THE
TEXAS WORKFORCE COMMISSION

DATE

MAY 5, 2026

1 Tuesday, May 5, 2026

2 CHAIRMAN ESPARZA: Good morning, everybody.
3 This, uh, meeting is called to order. Uh, Les, has anyone signed
4 up for public comment?

5 CHAIRMAN ESPARZA: No public comment. Uh,
6 I'll turn the meeting over to Commissioner Connett to preside
7 over Agenda Items 3 through 8.

8 COMMISSIONER CONNETT: And the motion passes
9 with the exceptions noted. That concludes our work on Agenda
10 Items 3 through 8. Chairman Esparza, I hand the meeting back
11 over to you.

12 CHAIRMAN ESPARZA: Thank you, Commissioner.
13 Uh, we'll go ahead and pause for a brief moment.

14 CHAIRMAN ESPARZA: And we're back. Uh, we'll
15 go ahead and move to Agenda Item 9, uh, approval of local
16 Workforce Board, uh, Workforce Development Board nominees.

17 KARA LEVY: Good morning, Chairman,
18 commissioners, and Mr. Pier. For the record, Kara Levy,
19 Workforce Development Division. Today for your consideration we
20 have Workforce Board nominations for the following boards:
21 Workforce Solutions Deep East Texas, and that's actually it. Uh,
22 staff present these nominations for your consideration and I'm
23 happy to answer any questions you have.

24 CHAIRMAN ESPARZA: Very good. Thank you. Uh,
25 commissioners, any comments or questions?

1 COMMISSIONER TREVIÑO: Uh, nothing here.

2 COMMISSIONER CONNETT: No, none here. Thank
3 you.

4 CHAIRMAN ESPARZA: Is there a motion?

5 COMMISSIONER TREVIÑO: Uh, Chairman, I move
6 that we approve the local Workforce Development Board member
7 nominees presented today for Workforce Solutions Deep East
8 Texas.

9 COMMISSIONER CONNETT: And I second that
10 motion.

11 CHAIRMAN ESPARZA: I also vote yes. The
12 motion passes. Kara, thank you for that. Appreciate that. Uh,
13 Michael, anything? He says no. Uh, Steve, anything on, uh,
14 executive director's report?

15 MR. PIER: I sure do. Uh, OK. Two things.
16 First off, as I sit here three months in, I want to let you all
17 know one of the commissioners told me just the other day that
18 after only three months I am their second favorite ED that
19 they've served with. So I've got that going for me, yeah, yeah.
20 Uh, so, uh, commissioners, as you are aware staff has been
21 briefing, uh, you all, uh, on the development of the, uh, 2027
22 to 2031 strategic plan which is required to be completed by June
23 1st. Uh, I think staff starting briefing back in March, uh, prior
24 to the issuance of the, the guidance, uh, that, uh, and the
25 instructions, uh. Those are out now, uh, and as we approach the

1 planning cycle, we've identified an opportunity to align our
2 strategic goals, uh, with the coming Sunset report, and I think
3 it would be advantageous for us if, if we paused just a little
4 bit, uh, to make sure that we are really aligned as we, as we
5 look in, into that strategic report, uh, uh, and, and, and align
6 it with Sunset. Uh, the, uh, this will help to ensure that we're
7 operating as efficiently and effectively as, as possible and
8 unify our approach and all of our public comments over, over the
9 coming 15 months. Uh, but there's an impact there because we're
10 fast approaching that June 1st deadline, uh, so first off, I'd,
11 uh, request a bit of patience and understanding, uh, from you
12 all as we, uh, hurtle towards that deadline and try to complete
13 this, uh, uh, this strategic plan. I think this will, uh, will
14 cause, uh, a need for a May 18th and a May 25th board meeting, uh,
15 or I'm sorry, commission meeting, uh, so that we can bring the
16 strategic plan up, uh, get feedback, and then have a final vote,
17 uh, from, from you all, uh, and that would also give us the time
18 that we need to prepare in light of, of the, the Sunset process.
19 Uh, so that's, that's where we are. If you all can accommodate
20 us, we would certainly appreciate that. I know we don't, we did
21 not have something scheduled for the 25th. That is the Tuesday
22 after Memorial Day, uh, but, uh, if, if at all possible, we'd
23 like to do that.

1 CHAIRMAN ESPARZA: Same time, same place for
2 that Tuesday I think would be, if, if we could, we'll arrange to
3 schedules to, uh, make sure that we can do that.

4 MR. PIER: OK.

5 CHAIRMAN ESPARZA: At least plan for it if
6 needed, I guess.

7 MR. PIER: Right, OK, perfect. Uh, yeah, so
8 I guess, uh, that, that concludes, uh, my remarks.

9 CHAIRMAN ESPARZA: OK. Any, any comments or
10 questions on that?

11 COMMISSIONER TREVIÑO: We need one for the
12 15th as well?

13 MR. PIER: Uh, the, I have the 18th. I'm
14 sorry it's the week of May 18th, sorry, so it would be the 19th so
15 it's the 19th and the 26th ideally but, you know, of course we
16 don't have to be on the Tuesday, uh—

17 CHAIRMAN ESPARZA: Yeah.

18 MR. PIER: You know, if you all are booked
19 otherwise, we can be flexible on our end especially on the week
20 of the 25th.

21 CHAIRMAN ESPARZA: OK. We can, we'll, will,
22 we'll coordinate.

23 MR. PIER: OK.

24 CHAIRMAN ESPARZA: And see if we can make,
25 make them available.

1 MR. PIER: Great.

2 CHAIRMAN ESPARZA: And then you guys just
3 pull the trigger if you need it [inaudible].

4 MR. PIER: OK.

5 CHAIRMAN ESPARZA: Does it need to be a
6 commission hearing or is it a workgroup do you think? What's the
7 difference, Les?

8 MR. PIER: I'm looking at my counsel, uh.

9 CHAIRMAN ESPARZA: OK, OK, yeah.

10 COMMISSIONER TREVIÑO: I'm available most
11 dates.

12 CHAIRMAN ESPARZA: OK.

13 COMMISSIONER CONNETT: Yeah, we'll do it,
14 we'll do what we need to do to make it work [inaudible] so
15 thanks.

16 MR. PIER: Thank you, gentlemen. I
17 appreciate it.

18 CHAIRMAN ESPARZA: Yeah, Steve, I wanted
19 just to telegraph a couple of things, uh, for the, uh, strategic
20 plan. Uh, we've been talking about, I know there's been
21 opportunities, uh, been opportunities and, and a lot of urgency
22 and we said in our job, jobs councils talking about this stuff.
23 Uh, one, I'm, I'm, want to make sure that we're addressing
24 emerging technologies, uh, and, and I understand that in a lot
25 of ways resources will go to established path-of-least-

1 resistance paths when it comes to emerging technologies. I
2 understand that there isn't, uh, you know, we're kind of, we're
3 kind of bushwhacking here when it comes to putting resources
4 into, uh, you know, new coding, just the data, the data center
5 issues, nuclear, everything that's, you know, landing, uh, here
6 in, in the state that we could capitalize on or want to make
7 sure that we're at least having those discussions, uh, as well
8 as, uh, the flexibility, uh, in, in, in our strategic plan. Uh,
9 I feel like the, when it comes to, to, to federal, uh, the
10 temperature for the federal agencies that, uh, oversee the
11 states, you know, so DOL, is offering us, uh, waivers in a lot
12 of ways and I appreciate the agency being on top of capturing
13 those and applying for those and gaining them, and we, we had a
14 recent conversation about, about this as well so, uh, to
15 continue to do that but also where we can be flexible with our,
16 uh, with what we have as far as allowability for programs to be
17 established in different parts of the state, uh, where there's
18 performance measures. I know that we've been talking about this
19 quite a bit in our, our, uh, our extracurricular activities that
20 we've put across the state with our boards, and I know that's,
21 that's what they're, what they're asking for is, is, you know,
22 flexibility with the performance measures and I understand it.
23 It is, you know, we have LBB provides us measures. We've got
24 federal measures. I think it would be helpful, uh, if we could,
25 if you could direct staff to help us, uh, the commissioners kind

1 of identify the current measures, uh, current measures, new
2 measures, uh, key and non-key measures and those required by
3 state and of course federal on that side just so that we have a,
4 have a resource to see, you know, what's, uh, what's pat, what's
5 being pressed on us and what we're pressing on the boards too
6 so, uh, just a couple of those quick notes on the strategic plan
7 and thanks everybody for making sure that, that stays on the
8 rails.

9 MR. PIER: Yeah, uh, absolutely. Yeah, I
10 think, uh, uh, we can, we can absolutely do that. We've, uh,
11 also talked about trying to work in, uh, a, a bit more of the VR
12 integration into the, the draft for you all's consideration, uh,
13 in addition to the, uh, user experience and, and the
14 flexibility. That's great guidance. Thank you.

15 CHAIRMAN ESPARZA: OK. Thanks, Steve.
16 Appreciate it.

17 MR. PIER: You bet.

18 CHAIRMAN ESPARZA: Anything else? Uh, no
19 birthdays? Uh, commissioners, yeah, go ahead.

20 COMMISSIONER TREVIÑO: There is. Well, happy
21 Cinco de Mayo.

22 CHAIRMAN ESPARZA: There you go.

23 COMMISSIONER TREVIÑO: I'd like to
24 acknowledge Veronica Cantu from my team. Today is her birthday.
25

1 CHAIRMAN ESPARZA: There you go. I knew
2 there was a birthday coming.

3 COMMISSIONER TREVIÑO: So appreciate it and
4 happy birthday, Veronica.

5 CHAIRMAN ESPARZA: Good.

6 MR. PIER: It's also Melissa's birthday as
7 well.

8 CHAIRMAN ESPARZA: [Inaudible] There you go.
9 It's a party. We appreciate it. Thank you, commissioners. Uh, is
10 there a motion?

11 COMMISSIONER TREVIÑO: Uh, Chairman, I move
12 to adjourn.

13 COMMISSIONER CONNETT: Second.

14 CHAIRMAN ESPARZA: The motion is made and
15 seconded. I also vote yes to adjourn and we are adjourned. Thank
16 you all.

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