

New Jersey State Employment and Training Commission
State Energy Sector Partnership (SESP) Council
PSE&G Edison Training Center

June 24, 2011
Meeting Minutes

I. Welcome & Introductions - Dennis M. Bone, Chairman, New Jersey State Employment and Training Commission

The meeting was called to order at 8:35 am. Chairman Bone welcomed everyone and thanked Sally Nadler for hosting the meeting. Roundtable introductions were conducted. The agenda was briefly outlined, and the minutes were introduced. A motion was made to approve the minutes from the February 22, 2011 meeting and the minutes were unanimously approved. Chairman Bone then introduced Michele Horst as the new SETC Executive Director.

II. SETC Update – Michele Horst, Executive Director, New Jersey State Employment and Training Commission

Michele Horst provided a PowerPoint presentation which outlined priorities for the SETC and SESP to serve the vast number of New Jersey residents who remain out of work. There are 407,000 unemployed who are collecting unemployment insurance benefits, and another 127,000 who have exhausted their benefits and are still unemployed. She reviewed the importance of planning, policy and performance and how we all must work together to raise the level of quality delivery within our workforce system. Ms. Horst reviewed the SETC “core values” and importance of collaboration, shared planning and shared decision making.

The next phase of her presentation spoke to sector alignment and introduced the Talent Networks initiative developed by the Department of Labor and Workforce Development (LWD). Ms. Horst reviewed the six sectors and indicated that “green” is not a separate sector but rather a layer that is part of almost every industry in the State. The SETC has discussed adding hospitality/retail industry to the sector efforts.

III. Program Update, Utilization Update and Modification Update – Maureen O’Brien-Murphy, Senior Policy and Program Analyst, New Jersey State Employment and Training Commission

Maureen O’Brien-Murphy provided the following information as the SESP program update. To date, three (3) cycles of applications have been released, reviewed and awarded. The total grant awards to date are approximately \$1.2 million and are projected to train 790 workers. The majority of the applications are coming from small businesses

that are looking to retain their employees, and in some cases, enable their businesses to survive. There has been very little job creation under the three cycles.

The final draft of the grant modification request was forwarded to USDOL in early June. Ms. O'Brien-Murphy indicated that USDOL had responded with questions and a conference call to address those concerns will be held later today. The modification will have a fellowship and on-the-job training component that may result in new hires. Ms. O'Brien-Murphy indicated that the focus now needs to be on marketing this grant opportunity to a wider audience. The SETC staff has engaged the LWD Communications Office to assist with this effort. Marketing tools, including a postcard that can be widely distributed, are in development.

Chairman Bone indicated with \$1.2 million allocated to date, out of the total \$6 million grant funds received, a significant amount of money remains to be spent. He stressed the importance of accelerating the spending, and further indicated that if the original grant scope was too narrow, the grant modification will serve to broaden it, and will provide the flexibility necessary to meet business needs. Chairman Bone also requested that council members help to market this grant, by posting the Notice of Grant Opportunities on their websites.

Members discussed the importance of marketing material and creating a website or webpage showcasing the SESP and the grant opportunities. Additional recommendations included training the LWD Business Service Representatives and providing grant overview training to the local WIB Directors.

A question was raised about capturing results from the grant-funded programs that have been completed. Ms. O'Brien-Murphy provided an example of the Insulators Union; this is the only program closeout received from Cycle I to date. The Insulators Union has, in the past, taken on new apprentices through LWD funded pre-apprenticeship programs and now is utilizing SESP funds to further upgrade the apprentices' skills. Chairman Bone indicated that the successes from Cycle I should be examined and incorporate this information into our marketing plan.

In closing this item of the agenda, Chairman Bone directed the SETC staff to have the marketing material complete and the webpage up prior to the next meeting.

IV. Green Data Download and Talent Development Networks – Aaron Fichtner, Assistant Commissioner, Labor Planning and Analysis (LPA)-NJ Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Tiffany Smith, Research Economist, LPA, and Jennifer Cleary, Project Director, Heldrich Center for Workforce Development

Aaron Fichtner, Tiffany Smith and Jennifer Cleary provided an overview of the research from their LMI Green Workforce Grant. Much detail was provided on the specifics of the project and its outcomes. The final report on findings from this grant will be ready in late August. In summary, there are very few new jobs being created within the green

industry. However, the research did indicate that many occupations are incorporating green layers. The occupations which showed an “increased demand” for green skills included carpenters, architectural drafters, and engineers.

Employer interviews were conducted as part of the research project. The feedback from these interviews agreed with the experiences of the SESP grant and their subsequent findings. One Council member did suggest “prerequisites” be established for training programs, indicating that without the proper background and knowledge, the chances of successful completion of the training and testing would be unlikely.

Dr. Fichtner and his co-presenters introduced the Talent Network concept and indicated that green will be layered into almost all industries in the Talent Networks. There was a dialogue between council members and the presenters seeking clarification on the role of the community colleges, the green efforts of the hospitality industry, as well as the agriculture industry and closed with a discussion on supply chain and incorporating LEAN manufacturing processes.

V. Energy Master Plan Update – Gary Finger, Ombudsman, New Jersey Board of Public Utilities

Gary Finger explained the draft release of the Energy Master Plan (EMP), and indicated that public hearings will be held throughout the state prior to the document being finalized. Mr. Finger identified the five (5) goals of the EMP:

- Drive down the cost of energy for all ratepayers
- Promote a diverse portfolio of clean in-state power generation
- Reward energy efficiency and energy conservation
- Capitalize on emerging industries, like transportation and compressed natural gas
- Maintain support for renewable energy programs – offshore/onshore wind farms, etc.

The action plan will focus on job growth in New Jersey, through continued focus on in-state proposals for energy generation, promotion of a new baseload, and keeping in mind the existing contribution that nuclear energy makes to our energy base. Improving the conduits to bring power in from out-of-state also will be part of the plan; this will also generate new jobs and grant opportunities. Also, there will be greater outreach to employers and to local governments to reduce energy cost/usage. Energy efficiency efforts will be a key element, since this is an area where immediate benefits can be realized.

VI. Next Steps and Feedback – Council Members

Jaime Ewalt, with the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), provided an update on sustainable business initiatives, which include a survey of employers to acquire their views on energy efficiency and sustainability. She also provided information on

meetings that DEP is having with the community colleges to discuss green education and adding green/sustainable principles into all curricula.

Tricia Caliguire from the Governor's Office indicated the importance of spending the SESP grant funds. She noted that ARRA funds are very much on the radar with the Governor's Office senior staff.

Judy Kass, the new REDI grant coordinator for Middlesex County, discussed the njgreenhouse.com website and how this site will connect employers with job seekers. Dennis Bone indicated that the SESP website should be linked to njgreenhouse.com.

VII. Closing – Dennis Bone, Chairman

Chairman Bone thanked the council members for their participation and input. He indicated that Ethics Training will be conducted for all SESP members at the next meeting in October. The meeting concluded at 10:35.

Member Attendees – June 24, 2011

Bone, Dennis, Verizon NJ

Caliguire, Tricia, Governor's Office

Ewalt, Jaime, NJ Department of Environmental Protection (for Commissioner Martin)

Finger, Gary, NJ Board of Public Utilities (for President Solomon)

Ielmini, Pete, NJ State Building & Construction Trades Council (for Mr. Mullen)

Fichtner, Aaron, NJ Department of Labor and Workforce Development (for Commissioner Wirths)

Kass, Judith, Middlesex County WIB REDI Grant (for Ms. Brady)

Grikas, Mary, Petra Solar (for Mr. Kuran)

Loderstedt, Robert, NJ Manufacturing Extension Program, Inc.

Nadler, Sally, PSE&G (for Mr. LaRossa)

Rieti, Dante, Cumberland County Office of Workforce Development

Santare, Robert, Champion Fasteners and Burlington WIB

Schiff, Jill, Building Contractors Association of NJ (for Mr. Kocsis)

Stridick, Paul, Department of Community Affairs (for Commissioner Grifa)

Zegalarski, Sandra, NJ Economic Development Authority (for Ms. Franzini)

Zilai, Debbie, New Jersey Resources (for Mr. Downes)

Guest/Staff Attendees – June 24, 2011

Cleary, Jennifer, Heldrich Center for Workforce Development

Herzog, Christine, Heldrich Center for Workforce Development

Horst, Michele, NJ State Employment and Training Commission

Hutchison, Sheryl, NJ State Employment and Training Commission

O'Brien-Murphy, Maureen, NJ State Employment and Training Commission

Smith, Tiffany, NJ Department of Labor and Workforce Development