



# New Jersey State Employment and Training Commission

Dennis M. Bone, *Chairman*

Chris Christie, *Governor*

## State Employment and Training Commission Meeting Minutes

November 15, 2016

10 am – 11 am

NJ Law Center, New Brunswick

### I. Welcome & Introductions

Chairman Dennis Bone called the meeting to order at 10:10 am and welcomed members and guests to the NJ Law Center. Mr. Bone initiated roundtable introductions. Chairman Bone announced that, in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act of 1978, notice of this meeting was submitted to the Trenton Times and Star Ledger and was posted on the SETC website. Chairman Bone reviewed the agenda for the meeting. The Commission minutes from the September 20, 2016 meeting were introduced. Teri Duda made a motion to approve the minutes; the motion was seconded by Senator Ronald Rice. The minutes were unanimously approved by voice vote.

### II. Chairman's Report

The Commission has had two recent resignations of long-serving members, Jody Levinson and JoAnn Trezza. There are a number of Commission vacancies to be filled. Chairman Bone noted that the Commission should be preparing for legislative work to be in compliance with WIOA requirements and to recruit new members to fill these vacancies.

Chairman Bone introduced Dr. Aaron R. Fichtner as the Acting Commissioner for the NJ Department of Labor and Workforce Development (LWD). The Chairman indicated that Dr. Fichtner has contributed greatly to LWD in his previous role of Deputy Commissioner. Acting Commissioner Fichtner thanked the Commission for their warm welcome and support. Dr. Fichtner stated that there is a lot of work to be done and anticipates more great work in the months to come. Acting Commissioner Fichtner introduced new executive staff at the LWD. Gregory Townsend, Chief of Staff, served as a Senior Policy Advisor for Governor Christie and also is a member of the Policy Academy. Mr. Townsend is active with the National Governors Association and recent workforce alignment efforts through the Policy Academy. Dr. Patricia Moran is now the Assistant Commissioner of Workforce Development; all workforce programs are aligned under Assistant Commissioner Moran. Catherine Starghill has been selected as the LWD Deputy Commissioner and oversees the Unemployment, Talent Networks and Labor Standards and Safety Enforcement program areas of the Department.

Chairman Bone stated that the Combined State Plan was fully approved, with amendments, by the US Departments of Labor and Education. This final approval is a reflection of the hard work and dedication of all.

### III. Governance Committee

The final three (3) local Workforce Development Boards have successfully completed the certification requirements and are recommended for full certification.

WDB	Certification	Motion	Seconded	Abstained
Hudson/Jersey City	Full	Sally Nadler	Stephen Hornik	Julio Sabater
Passaic	Full	Ronald Rice	Andrea Karsian	
Middlesex	Full	Stephen Hornik	Sally Nadler	

### IV. Heldrich Evaluation Report/Action Plan Discussion

Acting Commissioner Aaron Fichtner provided a response to the Evaluation of One-Stop Career Centers in New Jersey Report conducted by the Heldrich Center. Dr. Fichtner stated that LWD takes the findings from the Heldrich report very seriously. The Acting Commissioner said LWD is taking action on the information from the report to strengthen One-Stop Career Center programs and services. LWD firmly believes that the One-Stop is the backbone of our workforce efforts and the goal is to have highly effective and efficient centers that provide high-quality services. The One-Stop Career Centers are overseen by the state's local Workforce Development Boards; the local board selects a One-Stop Operator that directs county and city governments to provide employment and training services. Strong partnerships also need to be built outside the One-Stop Career Centers, to broaden and strengthen the system and provide greater customer access. LWD has identified seven (7) key areas for action from the Heldrich evaluation report findings:

- 1. One-Stop Career Centers (OSCCs) are responsive to the diverse needs of the community.**  
The staff should reflect the community served. A discussion ensued regarding who would identify the needs of community. LWD will rely on the WDB to identify community needs and will continue to employ more bilingual State employees where needed. The graduation rate at Community Colleges was an expressed concern. The importance of linking career pathways and career planning with credit courses and New Jersey's industry-valued credentials was noted.
- 2. Enhancing and expanding the successful Jersey Jobs Clubs (JJC).** Jersey Job Clubs are an important service to expand and strengthen our system. LWD has updated the JJC workshops and is integrating them with Career Connections efforts. Training and development for the JJC leaders has begun; partnerships have been formed with libraries and community colleges as well. Steps to Success workshops have been designed for TANF, GA and SNAP participants. The JJC workshop also includes Employability Skills.
- 3. Streamline the Training Approval Process.** LWD and local WDBs are working to streamline the process by which jobseekers receive financial assistance for occupational training. The roles of state and local staff have been defined. LWD is developing and implementing training on tools and processes to ensure that access and eligibility determinations for training services are provided to jobseekers in a timely manner. Commission members noted the importance of proper customer needs assessments, linking training services to credential attainment, and the integration of many customer entry points and support services.
- 4. Improving Customer Service.** This area focuses on better data and better customer service. LWD and local WDBs have taken action to develop and train staff on core competencies, such as interpersonal skills; to use trained, competent staff as the first point of contact; and to use technology, through data mining and dynamic interaction tools, to ensure jobseekers receive appropriate services. Further, LWD is committed to strengthening communication regarding customers between the four titles (areas) of WIOA, Unemployment Insurance, WorkFirst and other programs. Chairman Bone asked how the OSCCs address cultural issues and whether

this was an area to be strengthened. Assistant Commissioner Moran indicated that a hands-on approach was being utilized, with individual teams for continuous improvement at the local level. Members noted that this approach increases employee engagement, which should be recognized with the sharing of success stories from the local areas.

- 5. Using Technology to Improve Services to Jobseekers.** LWD has implemented the Career Connections website to ensure a common service model. LWD will continue to make improvements to the website and will implement a new job board to replace the On-Ramp tool. LWD is refocusing Employment Services staff to assist customers at the OSCC resource areas with job search efforts and technology. It was noted that LWD social media directs both jobseekers and business customers to the Career Connections site. The On-Ramp tool, and the new job board tool, may be accessed at the OSCC, but is online through Career Connections and allows anyone access from home, a library, or other locations.
- 6. Integrated Sector-Strategy Approaches in the One-Stop Career Centers.** The state's seven industry-focused Talent Networks are critical part of the state's workforce alignment effort. The Talent Networks are focused on engaging employers to identify and communicate information on the workforce needs of key industries. The Talent Networks are working with employers to develop 20 Targeted Industry Partnerships (TIPs) across the state. These employer-driven partnerships will create new pathways to employment and careers for a wide-variety of OSCC customers. LWD will invest \$5 million to support the most promising ideas development through the TIPs.
- 7. Ensure Proper Allocation of Staff and Coordinate the Integration of Services.** The majority of OSCC staff are employed by county and city governments, work under the direction of the local WDB and are funded by WIOA Title I and the WorkFirst NJ program. State employment services staff funded by WIOA Title III and the WorkFirst NJ program also play a key role at OSCCs. LWD will continue to work with the local WDBs, despite federal funding constraints, to ensure staff levels in OSCCs are adequate and appropriate. Commission members asked what formula would be used to determine staff allocations; the number of customers together with demographic data will determine allocations. This data also will be used to project future needs.

Chairman Bone indicated that the Commission and LWD will continue to use data-driven efforts to improve our workforce services. All comments are welcomed and should be sent to Acting Commissioner Fichtner and Assistant Commissioner Moran. The final LWD response will be posted on the SETC website, with the Heldrich evaluation report.

## **V. Public Comment & Adjournment**

Monmouth WDB Director and GSETA Chair Eileen Higgins provided feedback on the 2016 GSETA Conference. Approximately 400 members attended the 2-day conference. The conference was business-focused with conversations on employment. Ms. Higgins also asked the Commission members for suggestions on speakers and presenters for the 2017 GSETA Conference, to be held October 4–5. Chairman Bone reminded members that the SETC Commission 2017 meeting dates were in their packet and asked them to mark their calendars accordingly. The meeting was adjourned at 11:18 am. A State Ethics Training session for Commission members was held directly after the meeting.

### **Next SETC Meeting:**

Tuesday, February 7, 2017

10 am – 12 pm

Rutgers Labor Education Center, 50 Labor Center Way, New Brunswick

# STATE EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING COMMISSION MEETING ATTENDEES

November 15, 2016

## PRESENT MEMBERS and ALTERNATES

Berry, Dana	Karsian, Andrea
Bone, Dennis	Nadler, Sally
Brown, Kevin	Rice, Ronald
Butler, Kate (for Richman)	Sabater, Julio
Duda, Teri	Safrin, Michele (for Blake)
Fichtner, Aaron (for Wirths)	Sen, Tapas
Frye, Daniel (for Connolly)	Willoughby, Melanie
Garlatti, Betsy (for Hendricks)	Wise, Robert
Hornik, Stephen	

## ABSENT MEMBERS

Carey, Michael	Reisser, Clifford
Donnadio, John	Wade, Carolyn Carter
Ferrera, Anthony	Wowkanech, Charles
Gacos, Nicholas	
Harrington, Kimberley	
Nutter, Harvey	
Orsen, Melissa	

## OTHER ATTENDEES

Amos, Ben	Purcell, James
Franklin, John	Scalia, Donna
Fugazzie, John	Seville, Tyler
Hersh, Pam	Swartz, Jeffrey
Irving, Chris	Townsend, Greg
Kurziel, Kevin	Williams, Gregory
McLain, Kimberly	
Molinelli, Tammy	
Moran, Patricia	

## **SETC STAFF**

Altman, Gary  
Hutchison, Sheryl  
O'Brien Murphy, Maureen  
Sliwinski, Janet

**State Ethics Commission  
In-Person Training Attendees  
November 15, 2016**

<b>SETC Members:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Dennis M. Bone</li><li>2. Aaron Fichtner, Ph.D.</li><li>3. Senator Ronald Rice</li><li>4. Kevin Brown</li><li>5. Kate Butler</li><li>6. Teri Duda</li><li>7. Felix Mickens</li><li>8. Julio Sabater</li><li>9. Michele Safrin</li><li>10. Melanie Willoughby</li><li>11. Robert Wise</li></ol>	<b>SETC Staff:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Gary Altman</li><li>2. Sheryl Hutchison</li></ol>
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