

**Governor's State Workforce Development Board
July 7, 2020 2020 Executive Committee Meeting Minutes**

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mr. Don Tomlin
Mr. Pat Michaels
Mr. Jay Holloway
Mr. Thomas Freeland
Mr. Charles Brave, Jr.
Mr. Dan Ellzey
Mr. Nick Foong

DEW STAFF PRESENT:

Ms. Towanna Hicks
Ms. Nina Staggers
Ms. Michelle Paczynski

GUESTS:

Mr. Perry Shuping
Mr. Greg Clark
Mr. John Durst

EXCUSED:

Mr. Warren Snead
Ms. Val Richardson
Dr. Mike Mikota
Representative Mike Forrester

WELCOME AND OPENING REMARKS

Mr. Don Tomlin, Board Chair, called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m. A quorum was present. A motion to approve the agenda was made by Mr. Charles Brave, Jr., seconded by Mr. Perry Shuping, and unanimously approved by the Committee.

Mr. Tomlin asked Director Ellzey to provide a brief update on the Unemployment Insurance situation. Mr. Ellzey reported the following:

- The number of claims per week has leveled off at about 18,000-19,000 per week, which is double what we received in 2009.
- The agency has implemented six of the Federal Unemployment Insurance programs, one of which is PUA or Pandemic Unemployment Assistance for self-employed or gig workers. We are beginning to see UI fraud attempts and are dealing with those as they arise.
- We are looking forward to the day that we transition from paying unemployment benefits to helping people find job.

DISCUSSION ON PIVOTING WORKFORCE SERVICES

Chairman Tomlin expressed the need to pivot decisively and focus on matching jobseekers with jobs. He wants to explore how the state can deploy new capabilities to be able to deliver services in a significantly modified environment. We need to do something rapidly and invest in soft skills, reskilling, and upskilling the workforce. He offered three ways in which the state can achieve these objectives:

- identify the occupations where there is demand and don't do any skill training in the areas where there is no demand;
- use online platforms and state of the art technology such as artificial intelligence to match jobseekers with jobs; and
- figure out technological equipment for virtual training and allow employees to interface with job matching software;

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Mr. Tomlin stated that we are exploring products such as Zip Recruiter for job matching technology and have been in touch with telecom companies about purchasing tablets with Internet access that can help address the issue of accessibility in remote, rural areas. He stated that a contract was recently negotiated by the Office of Regulatory Affairs at \$19.95 per month plus \$1.00 to block access to disallowed content. The thought is that if we acquire tablets, it will go directly to schools and be set up with allowed content and the job-matching platform. In addition to implementing a job-matching platform, he would also recommend the creation of a performance and accounting dashboard. To accomplish these priorities, staff needs to be augmented temporarily. He asked Ms. Michelle Paczynski to speak on the need for staffing and the proposed dollar amounts.

Ms. Michelle Paczynski referenced the document, Workforce Pivot Discussion, and explained that while the agency will be involved with all of the efforts, consultants will be procured to help with the research, advisement, and implementation of these projects. The document proposes projected costs for bringing in a Project Manager, Business Analysts, Data Analyst, Interface Development, Research and Statistical Analyst, and Financial Analyst. The scope of work still has to be developed but we are estimating that all positions will work for 3 months at a full 40 hours per week. The total estimated investment is \$384,000 to be used to move forward with securing these consultants.

Mr. Charles Brave, Jr. made the motion to accept the recommendation to allocate funding for the procurement of consultant services. He commented on the need to ensure that there are accountability measures in place for the individuals that receive tablets funded through the Board. Mr. Pat Michaels offered a few general comments: as it relates to training and upskilling in high demand occupations, he stated that he would like to see sector strategies leveraged to the extent that it still relevant; he stated that getting feedback from local areas on creative proposals is a good idea; he asked about the scope of the dashboard; and commented on the possible accountability implications of making tablets available to participants. Mr. Tomlin clarified the scope of the dashboard and stated that it is not the same as the allocation summary – funds allocated and expended by local WIOA programs. The dashboard will help the Board to identify innovative programs that work and those that do not. Mr. Nick Foong asked if it is the intention of the Committee to maintain the tools discussed post-pandemic recovery, to which Mr. Tomlin responded that the investments will lead to new ways of doing business beyond the pandemic.

Mr. Nick Foong seconded the motion. Allocation of funding for \$384,000 was unanimously approved.

OTHER BUSINESS/ADJOURN

Mr. Tomlin asked for the scheduling of an Executive Committee meeting in 1 week on Tuesday, July 14, 2020. The meeting adjourned at 3:45 p.m.