

**Governor’s State Workforce Development Board
May 7, 2024, Workforce Innovation Committee Meeting Minutes**

Members Present:

Dr. Windsor Sherrill*, Chair
Ms. Valerie S. Richardson*
Ms. Susan H. Cohen
Col. Craig Currey
Dr. Tim Hardee
Mr. Jay Holloway
Ms. Felicia Johnson
Ms. Elaine Morgan

Members Absent:

Mr. Tyler Servant
Sen. Ross Turner

Welcome and Opening RemarksDr. Windsor Sherrill, Committee Chair

Dr. Windsor Sherrill, Committee Chair, called the meeting to order at 11:00 a.m. A quorum was present. Dr. Sherrill introduced guest speaker Mr. Tom Allen, Chief Technology Officer of the Office of Regulatory Staff.

Approval of Minutes from February 7, 2024*Dr. Sherrill

Col. Craig Currey motioned to approve the February 7, 2024, meeting minutes. Ms. Valerie S. Richardson seconded the motion. The Committee unanimously approved the meeting minutes.

SC Digital Equity Plan.....Mr. Tom Allen

Mr. Tom Allen, Chief Technology Officer of the Office of Regulatory Staff, reviewed the South Carolina Digital Equity Plan, approved by the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) on April 2, 2024. In Program Year 2022, Ms. Sara Pincelli, from the South Carolina Department of Administration, shared insights gathered from discussions with residents and community organizations across the state. These insights included how limited access to high-speed internet impacts daily life and about successful programs used for the plan's development.

The South Carolina Digital Equity Plan's vision is to ensure that all residents of South Carolina can access affordable and reliable high-speed internet and the skills needed to use it effectively. The plan outlines five goals: broadband affordability, online accessibility, digital literacy, online privacy, and device availability. Under guidance by NTIA, the Digital Opportunity Department (DOD) prioritizes eight key populations that includes low income, aging individuals, rural residents, veterans, individuals with disabilities, language barriers, racial/ethnic minorities and those involved with the justice system.

Funding to implement the Digital Equity Plan includes \$550 million in Broadband Equity Act (BEAD) funding, for the broadband infrastructure program to provide broadband access in residential homes. If approved, an NTIA Capacity Grant, could provide up to \$12.8 million in federal funding to support local community groups and organizations in expanding their programs' work that incorporates the goals of the Digital Equity plan.

The Broadband Advisory Council, established in 2021, will transition into an advisory group made up of non-profits, corporations, and state agencies to help the DOD address the digital equity needs of priority populations and ensure transparency.

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PY’23 Priority Updates Ms. Pamela Jones
Ms. Pamela Jones provided an update on the Committee’s PY’23 priorities.

- *Shared Case Management System to Support Intake, Referral, and Co-enrollment:*
 - SWDB allocated \$250,000 in funding in PY’22 to conduct a feasibility study, working with partners to evaluate options for an integrated Shared Case Management System. Gartner Consulting completed the feasibility study in November 2023. The SWDB allocated \$69,200 for Phase II of the project Shared Case Management System. During Phase II, Gartner Consulting will develop the scope of work and the functional requirements for the vendor/product solicitation. Phase II is scheduled to be completed by the end of PY’23.

- *Investments for In-Demand Training:*
 - During PY’22 and PY’23 SWDB allocated a total of \$2 million in training funding to allow Local Workforce Development Areas to expand the utilization of SWDB-funded Incumbent Worker Training to include occupational skills training, on-the-job training, and customized training strategies to align with local area needs. In PY’23, a total of \$1,999,888 in grants were awarded to local workforce areas. These grants will close on September 30, 2024.

- *Career Exploration and Training through Virtual Reality:*
 - Identifying opportunities to expand the utilization of virtual reality for training and career explanation is an ongoing Committee priority. One opportunity identified in PY’23, was The EmpowerU: Futures Unlocked Model, in which youth at the Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) utilize virtual reality (VR) technology for career exploration. The Committee will continue receive updates on this model and focus on identifying additional opportunities to utilize VR for training and career exploration.

The Workforce Innovation Committee completed all PY’23 priorities. PY’24 priorities will be identified during the first quarter meeting.

Other Business/Adjourn Dr. Sherrill
Dr. Sherrill reminded members that the next SWDB meeting will be on June 25, 2024, at 11:00 a.m.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:42 a.m.