



**Governor’s State Workforce Development Board
March 28, 2024, State Workforce Development Board Meeting Minutes**

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mr. Thomas Freeland
Mr. William Floyd
Ms. Valerie Richardson
Mr. Charles Brave, Jr.
Mr. Gregory C. Clark
Ms. Susan Cohen
Col. Craig Currey
Ms. Darline Graham
Mr. Chris Hall
Mr. Jay Holloway
Mr. Mike King

Mr. Pat Michaels
Ms. Elaine Morgan
Ms. Swati Patel
Mr. Tyler Servant
Mr. Michael W. Sexton
Dr. Windsor Sherrill
Mr. Warren Snead
Mr. Gregory L. Tinnell
Mr. John Uprichard
Sen. Ross Turner

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Mr. Cliff Bourke, Jr.
Dr. Tim Hardee
Ms. Felicia Johnson
Rep. Randy Ligon

Welcome and Opening Remarks **Mr. Thomas Freeland, SWDB Chair**
Chairman Thomas Freeland called the meeting to order at 11:00 a.m. A quorum was present.

Chairman Freeland encouraged SWDB members and guests to review the 3rd Quarter Progress Report in the meeting packet.

Approval of Minutes from December 12, 2023* **Mr. Freeland**
Mr. Charles Brave, Jr. motioned to approve the December 12, 2023, meeting minutes. Col. Craig Currey seconded the motion. The SWDB unanimously voted to approve the meeting minutes.

PY’23 Interim Funding Recommendation* **Ms. Nina Staggers**
Ms. Nina Staggers, Assistant Executive Director of Workforce Development, presented an interim funding recommendation of \$84,500 for PY’23.

- *2024 Workforce Development Symposium Sponsorship Fee - \$15,000:* The funding will be used for the 2024 Workforce Development Symposium sponsorship fee. The Symposium will be held on September 12, 2024, at the Columbia Metropolitan Convention Center.
- *Phase II Implementation of the Shared Case Management System Project - \$69,200:* In November of 2023, Gartner Consulting completed the feasibility study to evaluate options for an integrated case management system across WIOA Core Program partners, resulting in a phased plan to modernize the State’s case management and labor exchange systems. Phase II of the Shared Case Management System Project involves developing the scope of work for vendor/product solicitation. The funding requested will support the preparation of the scope of work and functional requirements, including interoperability across programs and partners, for the case management and



**Governor’s State Workforce Development Board
March 28, 2024, State Workforce Development Board Meeting Minutes**

labor exchange solicitation and support for market engagement. Phase II will be completed by the end of the program year.

Mr. Gregory Tinnell motioned to approve the PY’23 interim funding recommendations. Mr. John Uprichard seconded the motion, and the committee unanimously approved the funding recommendation.

2024 WIOA Combined State Plan*Ms. Staggers

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) requires each state to submit a strategic plan for the workforce system every four years. Ms. Staggers provided an overview of the SC 2024 WIOA Combined State Plan, outlining the plan’s vision, goals, and strategies.

South Carolina submits a Combined State Plan divided into two content areas: Strategic Planning Elements and Operational Planning Elements. The plan covers 11 programs, including six WIOA Core Programs plus TANF, SNAP E&T, JVSG, TAA, and the Senior Community Service Employment Program.

The WIOA State Plan adopted the vision and mission outlined in the draft of the Unified State Plan. The plan identified four objectives and strategies aligned with the themes of alignment and coordination, access to skills and credentials of value, removing barriers or obstacles to employment, and leveraging historic infrastructure investments:

- Objective 1: Develop and create an effective customer-driven workforce system through the alignment of programs and policies, the use of leading-edge technology, and high-quality staff.
- Objective 2: Prepare jobseekers for high-wage, high-growth, high-demand, high-mobility/retention (4H) occupations (now referred to as priority occupations) through relevant training and skills acquisition and match jobseekers to open employer positions.
- Objective 3: Improve the education and workforce infrastructure network to decrease barriers to work in order to improve recruitment and retention of workers, which is necessary to maintain economic development competitiveness.
- Objective 4: Create alignment between the workforce development system and the state agencies and organizations directing implementation of the IIJA, IRA, and CHIPS and Science Act funding.

Ms. Staggers reviewed the comments received from 11 organizations during the public comment period from February 13 through March 20, 2024. A copy of the public comments and responses is available in the SWDB Portal.

The WIOA Combined State Plan is due by April 5, 2024. Implementation will begin in July 2024.



**Governor’s State Workforce Development Board
March 28, 2024, State Workforce Development Board Meeting Minutes**

Mr. Charles Brave, Jr. motioned to approve the SC 2024 WIOA State Plan. Ms. Valerie Richardson seconded the motion, and the SWDB unanimously approved the SC 2024 WIOA State Plan.

Director’s Report Mr. William Floyd

Mr. William Floyd, Executive Director, SC Department of Employment and Workforce, presented the state’s employment situation, including employment rates and current agency projects. His presentation covered the following points:

- As of February 2024, 2,396,234 individuals were employed in South Carolina. The unemployment rate for February was 3.1%, which is significantly lower than surrounding states and the national unemployment rate.
- South Carolina’s Labor Force Participation Rate is 57.1%, a decrease of 0.1% from January 2024.

Mr. Floyd provided an update on DEW’s ongoing rural initiative to ensure DEW and SC Works services are accessible to job seekers in Tier III and IV counties and underserved areas. The SC@Work Rural Connections Initiative is in Phase II of this initiative focusing on outreach with the introduction of the Rural Outreach Team, led by Rural Initiatives Manager Charles Myers. The state’s four workforce regions have dedicated Rural Outreach Coordinators and Specialists, ensuring that the SC Works Career Coach effectively serves high-priority unemployed populations. A second SC Works Career Coach is in procurement to increase its outreach capability.

Through Act 67, the Statewide Education and Workforce Development Act, 12 Regional Workforce Advisors (RWAs) transitioned from the S.C. Department of Commerce to DEW. RWAs are connection points between students, the education system, and employers, participating in job fairs, career exploration, and employer outreach.

Mr. Floyd noted DEW’s current and upcoming initiatives beginning in April with Second Chance Month, introducing the Second Chance Initiative and DEW’s collaboration with the South Carolina Department of Corrections to help returning citizens learn specific trades or skills prevalent in high-need occupations. Other upcoming initiatives are Graduation Month, Workforce Development Month, Disability and Manufacturing Month in October, and Veterans Month.

Legislative Update.....Ms. Ellen Andrews-Morgan

Ms. Ellen Andrews-Morgan, Director of Governmental Affairs, provided a legislative update highlighting relevant workforce, education, and economic development activity.

Ms. Andrews-Morgan noted that the General Assembly created two workforce-related committees: the Special Joint Committee to Study Childcare to address childcare availability and affordability, Chaired by SWDB member, Senator Ross Turner and Representative Shannon Erickson, and the House Committee on Artificial Intelligence, Cybersecurity and Cyber Crimes. The FY 2024-2025 budget includes tuition grants, SC WINS (Workforce Industry Needs



**Governor’s State Workforce Development Board
March 28, 2024, State Workforce Development Board Meeting Minutes**

Scholarships), port expansion, and a systemic review of the state’s 33 public institutions of higher education.

Other proposed legislation includes:

- *Read to Succeed Act No. 114 (S. 418)* – Amendments to reinforce “the Science of Reading” emphasizing retaining lower-performing students in elementary grade levels.
- *SC Nexus for Advanced Resilient Energy* – This bill creates the SC Nexus office within the Department of Commerce to facilitate and implement the SC Nexus Plan for Global Leadership in Advanced Resilient Energy.
- *Computer Science Education Initiative Act (H. 4702)* – This bill creates a statewide Computer Science Education plan to expand and enhance computer science education in public high schools.
- *South Carolina STEM Opportunity Act (H. 4703)* - Establish the South Carolina Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) Coalition, Chaired by Director William Floyd.
- *Technical College Credits for Veterans (H. 5105)* - Directs the State Board for Technical and Comprehensive Education to adopt a policy that recognizes and awards credentials and college credit for courses and experiences completed in the military.
- *Unemployment Insurance Indexing (H. 4710)* – Sets maximum duration of unemployment insurance benefits between 12 and 20 weeks.
- *Apprenticeship Credit (S. 557)* – Increases the amount of Apprenticeship Income Tax Credit to \$1,000 or the cost of the apprenticeship.

Other Business/Adjourn.....**Mr. Freeland**

Chairman Freeland advised members and guests that Dr. Windsor Sherrill will present ‘Training the Workforce of Tomorrow and Investing in the PEOPLE of South Carolina’ at the 2024 Tire Conference on April 23, 2024. He also reminded members that the next SWDB meeting is scheduled for June 25, 2024, at 11:00 a.m.

SWDB members were invited to join the Midlands SC Works Center Tour following the adjournment of the meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 12:38 p.m.