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| **MEMBERS PRESENT:** | **MEMBERS ABSENT:** |
| Mr. Thomas Freeland\* | Mr. John Uprichard |
| Ms. Valerie Richardson\* |  |
| Mr. Charles Brave, Jr.  |  |
| Mr. William Floyd |  |
| Mr. Pat Michaels |  |
| Dr. Windsor Sherrill |  |
| Mr. Warren Snead |  |

**Welcome and Opening Remarks Mr. Thomas Freeland, SWDB Chair**

Mr. Thomas Freeland, State Workforce Development Board Chair, called the meeting to order at 11:00 a.m. A quorum was present.

**Approval of Meeting Minutes for November 14, 2023\* Mr. Freeland**

Mr. Warren Snead motioned to approve the November 14, 2023, meeting minutes. Ms. Valerie Richardson seconded the motion. The Committee unanimously approved the meeting minutes.

**PY’23 Interim Funding Recommendations\* 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.

*Discussion:* Ms. Staggers explained that the sponsorship fee increased from previous years due to the venue location and inflation rates, which increased the cost of food and beverage services.

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

*Discussion:* Gartner Consulting was required to go through state procurement for Phase II. As the selected vendor, they will help identify potential vendors capable of developing the Shared Case Management System. Phase III will go through procurement for the vendor to develop the system. Florida has an integrated case management model similar to the system SC is upgrading to.

Mr. Charles Brave, Jr. motioned to accept the PY’23 interim funding recommendations. Dr. Windsor Sherrill seconded the motion, and the committee unanimously approved the funding recommendation, advancing it to the State Workforce Development Board for final approval.

**2024 WIOA State Plan Ms. Staggers**

The Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act (WIOA) requires each state to submit a strategic plan for the workforce system across partners every four years. Ms. Staggers provided an overview of the 2024-2027 WIOA Combined State Plan, outlining the plan’s vision, goals, and strategies.

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

The State Plan Four identified four objectives and strategies aligned with the themes: 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 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 through relevant training and skills acquisition and match jobseekers to open employer positions.
* Objective 3:Improve education and workforce infrastructure network to decrease barriers to work in order to increase attraction “recruitment” and retention necessary to maintain economic development competitiveness critical to the growth of high-wage, growth, demand, and mobility/retention jobs.
* 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.

During the State Workforce Development Board meeting on March 28, 2024, comments received during the Public Comment Period, closing on March 8, 2024, will be shared, and SWDB members will vote to approve the 2024-2027 WIOA Combined State Plan. Upon approval, the plan will be submitted to the United States Departments of Labor and Education by April 5, 2024. Implementation of the DOL-approved State Plan will begin in July 2024.

**Committee Activity Reports Committee Chairs**

*Board Development Committee – Mr. Pat Michaels*

During the 3rd quarter Board Development Committee meeting, the Committee reviewed the priorities and promising practices developed from the SWDB Survey conducted during the program year 2021. The SWDB survey will be expanded to hear from Local Workforce Development Board members, adding targeted questions about their interest in joint-training opportunities and areas of focus. The Committee will vote on the final SWDB Survey questions during the Q4 meeting.

Ms. Pamela Jones shared the results from the High-Performance Board Incentive Survey, which was sent to local administrators to gather in put on how they define a “high-performance workforce board” and to determine criteria they believed were relevant for local board assessment. Using the responses and Committee discussion, the High-Performance Incentive Application will be crafted for committee members to review before the Q4 meeting. The Committee voted unanimously to create a High-Performance Board Incentive for PY’2024-2025.

*Committee on Workforce Innovation – Dr. Windsor Sherrill*

Mr. Adam Paige updated the Innovation Committee on the virtual reality priority, sharing the identified opportunity to expand the utilization of virtual reality for training and career exploration through the EmpowerU Initiative in partnership with the Department of Juvenile Justice and the Upstate Workforce Board.

Mr. Charles Myers presented the Rural Initiative Plan to make DEW and SC Works services available to every job seeker and employer. Utilizing a regional approach, the Rural Initiatives team, focusing on Tier 3 and 4 counties, will foster collaboration with rural stakeholders by implementing regional collaboration meetings, SC@Work: Connections, small business outreach, and promotion of virtual services. A second Career Coach is also in procurement.

*SC Works Management Committee – Mr. Warren Snead*

Mr. Adam Paige presented on the SC Professional Skills Credential, sharing that the number of credentials earned continues to increase. The WIN Career Readiness Initiative was launched in October 2023 to increase employer interest in recognizing the credential as a value-added asset for job applicants. DEW has been in conversation with readySC to discuss incorporating the SC Professional Skills credential into the pre-hire process. Mr. Paige also previewed the South Carolina Career Readiness Program page on scworks.org.

Mr. Adam Wagoner, Director of Business and Federal Programs, presented the Business Service Model, restructuring business service delivery to a more regionalized approach to maximize impact and efficiency. Each of the four workforce regions will have a Senior Business Service Consultant who will be the direct point-of-contact for DEW Business Services, streamlining operations to serve our customers, employers, and job seekers.

Every two years, WIOA requires the State Workforce Development Board to review and update the SC Works Certification Standards used in assessing the one-stop centers and one-stop delivery system in three standard categories, Management, Job Seeker Services, and Business Services, once every three years. Staff are reviewing the SC Works Certification Standards and will present recommended revisions to the Board in the 4th Quarter.

**Other Business/Adjourn Mr. Freeland**

Mr. Freeland reminded members and guests that the public comment period for the 2024-2027 WIOA Combined State Plan closes at 11:59 p.m. Friday, March 8, 2024.

He also reminded members that the next full board meeting is scheduled for March 28, 2024, at 11:00 a.m. and will be held in the C. Lem Harper Building. Immediately following the meeting, members tour the Midlands SC Works Center. Members were asked to email swdb@dew.sc.gov to register for the tour.

Director William Floyd updated the Committee on the SC@Works Connections series.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:06 p.m.