



Supporting the Development and Retention of a World Class Workforce

Jeffrey S. Swartz, Executive Director

Robert Weil, Chair

**OPERATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING
MINUTES, NOVEMBER 13, 2020**

WDB Office, 1111 Marlkrass Road, Cherry Hill (Zoom Conferencing)

ATTENDANCE

Member	24-Apr-20	8-May-20	12-Jun-20	16-Jul-20	13-Aug-20	18-Sep-20	22-Oct-20	13-Nov-20
								X
DeBaere, Gregg T., CHAIR	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Cirii, Frank	X		X	X	X	X	X	
Connors, Kristi	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Deitz, Jeff	X	X		X	X			
Jones-Benjamin, Michaela								
Maguire, Laurie						X		
McFarland, Salama	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Mendez, Kelly								X
Regensburger, Robert	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Sinclair, Nidia	X	X		X	X	X	X	X
Weil, Bob	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Swartz, Jeffrey S.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Williams, Leslie J	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Varallo, Kathleen	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

WELCOME

Gregg DeBaere, Chair, called the meeting to order at 9:05am. Jeffrey S. Swartz, Executive Director, WDB, reviewed attendees to the meeting. Gregg welcomed Kelly Mendez, Board of Social Services.

ONE – STOP & WDB CERTIFICATION

Gregg asked Leslie for updates to the Partner Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and Infrastructure Funding Agreement (IFA) and One-Stop Certification Documents. Leslie Williams, Comptroller, WDB, confirmed there has been no activity or feedback regarding the current documents. She did receive Gregg’s email with the template for the upcoming WDB Certification. Gregg said the template has been submitted for approval at the next SETC meeting. He said it will likely be approved so it may be used as the official template. Leslie said she is using it to pull documents together for the Certification and will start forwarding the required documents once the template is officially approved. Gregg commented regarding the evaluation of a system process or best practice. He suggested that the Workflow reports may be the best process to evaluate unless enough data history on the QLess scheduling system is collected. Leslie said as of now, it will be best to use the Workflow report as a best practice to evaluate. Gregg suggested that the One-Stop video orientation of services could also be used since it has been well received throughout the state. The Committee discussed the Spanish version of the orientation of One-Stop services. Kristi Connors, Manager, Employment Services, DOL, reported the video was completed by her staff. It is being reviewed by Nidia Sinclair, Director Resource Center, for content and language interpretation. Kristi said the video will be

available on the county website via a link. The listing of contacts will be translated to Spanish as well. She intends to make sure the point person listed for each service is one who can speak Spanish. She complimented her staff for the work on interpretation.

Gregg asked if Leslie might foresee any challenges to the certification process. Leslie said she will be reviewing the board make up to make sure the ratios match what is required by the SETC guidance.

ONE-STOP AND YOUTH ONE-STOP (YOS) UPDATES

Nidia Sinclair, Director Resource Center, reported staff and operations are continuing to follow all safety mandates as it relates to customer flow in the facility. Most services can be provided remotely outside of Learning Link testing and document processing.

Nidia reported the One-Stop is experiencing an increase in customers seeking assistance with Unemployment (UI) claims. She has noticed that it is the older population that is requesting support. She said her staff are still being instructed not to refer customers in person to UI staff, but they are providing support to claims assistance. Gregg asked Nidia to comment on some of the challenges these customers are having with their claims. Nidia said most of the concerns arise out of customer's not entering information correctly into the online system. In the case of incorrect forms entry, the system will automatically refer the customer for a correction or reset of the form which must be done manually. Nidia said she refers the customer to three valid phone numbers to call but the challenge is getting through to a person on those phone lines. She said other challenges arise out of re-certification of unemployment claims when a customer claim is exhausted. Re-certification requires work and customers do not realize it is not automatic.

Nidia reported all staff and management have completed the training for the QLess scheduling system. Administration and user information was reviewed in the trainings. The system has been implemented and is still being tested. She is not sure how the system works for those working remotely. Scott Stetzer, Technical Support Manager, is continuing to monitor the system and there are two assigned administrators. Gregg asked if the system has been easy to use and has there been adequate software support from the company. Nidia said it all seems fine right now but once it is being used on a day to day basis any issues that arise can be addressed.

Nidia reported Learning Link is fully operational and students are being assisted via Zoom Conferencing. Nidia and her staff are working on an application to become a High-set (GED) test site. The application group has been joined by Dr. Lauren Hill, Director, Adult Basic Skills, Camden County College. She is providing input to the application process because it will be a great benefit to the ABS program and the county to offer a local testing site. Being an approved testing site will give the One-Stop the ability to serve many ready students who were not able to take the test during the pandemic. Nidia said Patty Beach, Instructor, Learning link, is doing research for the application process as well. The group will be meeting again on November 16th or 19th for another careful review of the application questions and requirements. Gregg asked if the college does the testing and where the nearest test site is located. Nidia said the college does not provide testing and the nearest test site is in Somerdale or Stratford, NJ. That testing site is difficult to access from public transportation and parking is also limited. Gregg asked if there will be a charge for the testing service. Nidia said further details will be provided once the

application is approved.

Nidia reported the One-Stop is continuing to promote the Directory of Virtual Services at the county food distribution and immunization sites. Staff received 30 online inquiries in this last month. She said once all counseling staff receives a laptop, the Resource Center intends to offer Career Club via Zoom Conferencing so the customers who can access this option will not have to come into the facility for this service. Nidia reported there are currently 7 requests for training voucher (RTV) in the process of completion. Nidia said she participated in an interview offered by TIP. The interview was focused on services and offered suggestions to customers eligible under TANF or other programs as to how case management could be able to support them in career planning.

- YOUTH ONE-STOP (YOS) UPDATES:

Nidia reported the Youth One-Stop has been slow but there has been more interest in the last month or so. Nidia said she assigned Jyi Peterson, Youth Counselor, to create an online Financial Literacy Workshop. She is using this remote working time to develop more youth workshop offerings to meet the goals of the YOS. Gregg asked if there has been any movement around work experience. Nidia said she is speaking with counselors about creating some virtual inhouse work experience opportunities. There will be more information to follow as it is further developed.

Nidia reported that career counselors are focusing on credentialing. Gregg asked if they are reviewing the credentialing process with customers. Nidia said counselors are being much more careful about pressing the customers to understand the difference in obtaining a credential versus a certificate of completion and the impact it has on their career opportunities.

Gregg asked for confirmation that Leslie was able to submit the Summer Youth Employment Program final report by the due date of October 23rd. Leslie confirmed it was completed and submitted prior the due date and acknowledgment of its receipt was confirmed as well.

- BOARD OF SOCIAL SERVICES UPDATE

It is the mission of the Camden County Board of Social Services to provide timely, efficient, cost-effective delivery of social, medical, and economic programs in a compassionate and financially responsible manner. The Camden County Board of Social Services is accessible to disabled persons. (Follow the link for more information. <http://www.camdencounty.com/service/social-services/>)

Kelly Mendez reported for Salama McFarland, Case Management Administrator, Board of Social Services (BSS). She reported the Board continues to work to accommodate the executed orders from the Governor's office. Workers are screened daily upon entering the offices. They complete a health survey before reporting to work and are directed to report to HR if they are experiencing any COVID symptoms or exposure. Break rooms offer more limited access and cleaning measures are in place for waiting areas, offices, and elevators. She confirmed Gregg's estimate of 938 new online applications during the last month. There are no new updates at this time. Gregg asked if the Board received any applications from individuals released from

incarceration by the Governor's Executive Order. Kelly said there were increased requests for services seen as a result of the order. She said there were lines outside the building and some customers were dropped off by bus. Due to limited building capacity, tables were set up with information and flyers outside the office. Gregg asked if a list of individuals was released by DFD prior to release. Kelly said she was not aware of a list.

Gregg asked if there were any updates to state waivers to requiring participation by clients in work activities. Kelly said she was not aware of any updates. Jeff said it was discussed with other WDB Directors on the regular call with Hugh Bailey, Assistant Commissioner, DOL. Hugh said it would be at least another 30 days before an end to waivers would be considered. Jeff said it may be extended through the year end or into the spring. He reiterated the concerns across the state that many One-Stop referrals come from the Board of Social Services particularly in Workfirst NJ funding. Nidia said one of the Workfirst providers has already reduced their staff due to the lack of referrals. The Committee discussed referrals and identification concerns regarding the release of incarcerated individuals. Kathleen Varallo, Administrative Assistant, WDB, asked if Individuals are being helped with eligibility documentation. Nidia said these individuals may qualify for Board services, with their release paperwork but identification and documentation does become an issue for employment or training opportunities. One-Stop Management has been in discussions with the county about solutions to this barrier. A County issued ID has been discussed and there is a private group that was formed to assist in release processes.

- **DVRS UPDATES & PROJECT SEARCH – JEFFERSON/KENNEDY HOSPITAL**

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services provides counseling, training, education, transportation, job placement, assistive technology, and other support services to people with disabilities. (Follow the link for more information) <https://www.ncdhhs.gov/divisions/dvrs>

Gregg asked if there were any updates to report. Kristi said she spoke with Jeff Deitz, Manager, DVRS. They are continuing to work in the same alternating schedule as Employment Services. All are preparing for a surge of COVID exposure cases. She was not aware of any other updates at this time.

- **EMPLOYMENT SERVICES, LWD**

Employment Services provides Camden County with Career and Employer services including Temporary Disability Benefits, Family Leave Insurance, Maternity Leave, Unemployment Insurance, Social Security Disability and Workers Compensation. Services for employers included job candidate screening and recruitment. (Follow the link for more information) <https://www.nj.gov/labor/aboutlwd/>

Kristi Connors, Manager, Employment Services, DOL, reported sending a recommendation to the State for a bilingual interviewer. She is hoping to onboard new hires in the coming weeks. Gregg asked if the new hire she mentioned at the last meeting was able to be upgraded to bi-lingual status. Kristi said she is very happy with the new hire. She is well versed in customer service and employment processes having worked for the Wawa Corporation. She was able to upgrade her to bi-lingual status however there is no differential in the pay scale for the title.

Kristi has been given approval to hire a total of three new counselors/interviewers and is hoping they will all be bi-lingual.

Kristi reported she is working with staff to create online workshops for jersey Job Club participants and intends to have them translated into Spanish as well. Interviewers will be able to send a link to customers for say a resume writing workshop and customers will follow-up after they have completed the workshop.

Kristi reported on discussions with GSETA committees about using WIOA funding to purchase equipment for customer use and support. The Operations Committee discussed concerns about tracking loaned equipment, audit issues, and loss surrounding equipment use. It was agreed that this type of service might be applied at some time in the future with inexpensive tablets that might be given out with no expectation of return.

Kristi and her staff will be continuing to work on the Spanish version of the Orientation of Services as mentioned earlier in the meeting. She will be working with Nidia on content translation and gathering a list of contacts in each of the partner agencies that can speak Spanish. In this way, Spanish speaking customers will be able to have a direct contact instead of waiting for a contact to return their call for service. Once the updates are completed, she will contact the county about the best way to display a link or banner on the website that directs these customers to the translated version.

Kristi reported 1,455 customers checked in for services since July 1st. These were mostly all telephone calls. Employments Services conducted its first virtual recruitment for Salvation Army Bell Ringers. Staff referred 20 customers to the recruitment. She tested a form spreadsheet with the business service central office to track referrals to the recruitment. She said an additional check-in is used to track participation in the recruitment and noted that 6 people attended the call. Kristi also noted that she contacted the state about a red banner announcement on the home page of the Career Connections Website. The banner states that all One-Stops are closed until further notice. She said it has been a process getting to the right person who can change the banner to say the One-Stops are open for virtual services. Kathleen noted that Career Connections is no longer the preferred website of the state but all links posted on the NJ.Gov website takes the customers back to that site. Kristi was able to get a message to a State Administrator, who is supposed to oversee state messaging. This person was not aware the banner was a problem and said she would investigate the concern.

Kristi also reported the State sent a new process for checking customers in to the facility that is a questionnaire or survey. Customers will be required to fill out the form before entering the building for any appointments. The forms were distributed to security or safety guards along with email training on how to proceed based on customer answers. Kristi will share the form with the committee. Gregg asked if geographical travel limitations are noted on the form. Kristi said its more about symptomatic responses and contact exposure. Nidia said the county has a form that includes questions about travel. The Committee discussed the differences in the questionnaire of the county versus state. Kristi shared the screen, and the committee reviewed the questionnaire. All agreed to share and coordinate forms and safety procedures. Kristi said all partner agencies work well together in Camden County so it should not be a problem. Some other counties around the state are more segregated in their building entrances and procedures.

She has not heard of any push back from customers or employees regarding screening and safety protocols. Kristi asked the central office to share the form with other state divisions so they can be used consistently throughout the One-Stop.

Gregg asked Kristi for updates to the state's website. Kristi said there are no new updates to the website. The State is forming an AOSOS workgroup. They have been looking into moving away from that operating system for a long time.

Kristi encouraged the committee to share the directory of virtual services on all social media sites and with WDB Committees...

https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=70&v=wWPlc1EJFO8&feature=emb_logo&fbclid=IwAR39blVYNW5JLWAO3gnWxShvg9SFHYEa5OgvkTItg6HEYemculFcxEuQmI

- **REGIONAL ACTIVITIES**

Jeff reported on some statistics he received from his WDB Director calls. He continues to participate in these calls. They were hosted by Hugh Bailey on a weekly basis, now they are monthly. He said it has been reported that unemployment numbers are down by 15% which means more people and getting back to work. He also reported that since March 2020, the State has paid over 18 Billion dollars in unemployment claims. In the last week, the State paid out over 21 Million dollars in claims. The State has been borrowing and is relying on the Feds to fund the Unemployment Trust Fund.

Jeff reported the WDB Directors are also discussing new ways of branding the One-Stops and American Job Centers. Many customers are not aware of the services available and marketing funding is not an approved expense. Jeff said yesterday's call brought up the idea that Education and Awareness Training can be funded under WIOA. Jeff asked the committee for input as to how the WDB could use allowable funds to re-brand and promote the virtual services of the One-Stop. Kristi suggested the committee look at the Bergen County website. <https://bergenjobcenter.com/>. She said they did a good job of using the video her staff created. Their website is amazing and includes links to services and workshops and it gets people where they need to go depending on their needs. She thought perhaps this type of website could be considered educational. Jeff agreed and said Bergen County took the interpretation that the website educates the user and creates awareness. He said the conversation needs to continue because the One-Stop is not associating with unemployment now it is now more of an employment and training facility. Kristi also said that staff at Bergen County are willing to help other local areas create the same type of website. Jeff said the local website would have to stay consistent with Camden County branding and logos. He suggested that a meeting be set up with the county to discuss options for re-branding and promotion now that the election is over. Leslie informed the committee she sent an email to Bergen County asking for more information about who built their website and who is hosting it.

Jeff reported the Atlantic City Electric (ACE) Training Initiative is continuing. The Line Training will resume in early 2021. There are two current cohorts, one from 2019, and another finishing up this year. The local WDB will not be recruiting a new cohort until those that are waiting for the line training finish that course. Gregg asked if Gloucester County is currently offering the

training. Jeff said they offer the WISE and GIE program. Camden County and Atlantic County are the two counties offering the line training. Kathleen said all counties included in the grant are in the process of completing the training they started this year. All classes were stalled by the pandemic.

Jeff reported on the Camden Works Initiative. He continues to attend bi-weekly call updates. To date, there are approximately 419 jobseekers currently in their data base and of that number 298 are Camden City Residents. Camden City residents employed in jobs totaled 151 through these efforts. Camden Works has been working with the Hilton Garden Hotel opening in the city. They have currently hired 19 staff, 12 of whom are Camden City Residents. They are also working with a new laundry facility, located across from the port in Camden, opening in January. There will be about 34 job positions opening, many of which will be filled by Camden City Residents. They are also in discussions with the Battleship NJ to hire some individuals as well.

Jeff will be participating in a virtual SETC Meeting on Tuesday, November 17th. He also said preliminary discussions have begun on planning the GSETA Employment and Training Conference in October 2021. They continue to offer virtual training for those that are interested.

- **CONSORTIUM & INDUSTRY PARTNERSHIP UPDATES**

Jeff reported there are now new updates to the Industry Partnerships and as mentioned at the last meeting the Eds and Meds group was disbanded.

Jeff reported he was approached by Meg Koppel, Chief Research Officer, Philadelphia Works, along with several other counties to partner on a training grant initiative for the manufacturing sector. The grant will provide training to candidates currently out of work and incumbent workers in manufacturing and logistics. The pilot program initiative is being sponsored by Prologis, which is one of the largest manufacturing companies in the country. The free online 20-hour pilot training program was created by a company called JFF and will be offered to 800 participants in Phila, and New Jersey. The goal is to eventually create 25,000 new jobs nationwide to work in manufacturing industry. Companies such as Amazon, UPS, FEDEX and others are onboard with this initiative. The pilot program runs through February 2021. Jeff said he has had some input to the curriculum and the way the participants are tracked and credited toward each local area. He also wants to make sure the training results in an industry valued credential.

- **BUSINESS SERVICES (BSR)**

Jeff reported the BSR team met virtually yesterday, Thursday, November 12th. He reported that Jeanne Page-Soncrant and Ricky O'Hara, Veterans Rep., continue sending their regular reports of employer engagement. They also continue to work on the Job Matching Initiative. He said Jeanne had the opportunity to demonstrate the job matching program and she shared her screen to help the committee understand the differences between the NJ NLX and the NJ.Gov COVID Job Board. Jeanne has also been working with some employers warn notices and companies closings such as US Vision. Ricky continues to work to match Veterans with jobs. Frank Cirii's office sent a listing of jobs offered to Veterans and those who have been previously incarcerated. Jeff also said Jeanne requested use of the WDB zoom account to host a virtual recruitment for Liberty Coke. That recruitment is scheduled for November 18th at 2pm.

QUARTERLY BOARD MEETING

Jeff reported the next WDB Quarterly Board of Trustees meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, December 16th @8:30am via Zoom Conferencing. The new master budget will be approved at that meeting and the annual report will be presented. Jeff said the WDB will be honoring Steve Ravitz, Ravitz Family Markets, Shoprites, who died in April 2020 from complications due to COVID. Kathleen reported that proclamation requests have been submitted and Freeholder Young is confirmed. The WDB is waiting for confirmation of attendance from Congressman Donald Norcross. He may be available to offer a taped message if he is unable to attend in person. Gregg asked how the annual report was progressing. Jeff said all elements of the report are being gathered. Leslie said the financial information has been submitted and we are waiting for the updated Wagner Peyser Report. Gregg asked if the red, green, yellow report will be included and will it show the whole year. Leslie confirmed it will be included and it will show PY 2019-2020. Gregg asked if the end of year report would reflect a failing in credentialing. Leslie said she was not sure how final report will turn out. The management information office is aware of the concern and Nidia and staff have been working on a self-audit of files. Gregg asked if penalties for failing measures have been relaxed due to the pandemic unlike other years when a corrective action plan would be required. Jeff said the report reflects last year's data. The transition from WIA to WIOA is complete and the relaxed measures will no longer apply so there may be a call for a corrective action plan. Jeff said it is a statewide concern. He is very concerned that credentialing is the one area that seems to be affecting performance. He was able to negotiate some reduction in performance goals for the coming program year. He said we will be doing all we can to make sure customers are more aware about the credentialing process.

NEXT MEETING

Hearing no further questions, Gregg asked that the corrected minutes be uploaded to the website. Gregg thanked the committee for attending and wished everyone a safe and healthy Thanksgiving Holiday. The Committee stayed on for a few minutes more to discuss some personal challenges to helping customers with unresolved unemployment claims.

The next Operations Committee meeting will be scheduled for Friday, December 11th, at 9:00am via Zoom Conferencing.

Submitted by:

Kathleen Varallo

Administrative Assistant