



Supporting the Development and Retention of a World Class Workforce

Jeffrey S. Swartz, Executive Director

Robert Weil, Chair

**OPERATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING
MINUTES, DECEMBER 11, 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	11-Dec-20
DeBaere, Gregg T., CHAIR	Atlantic Coast Communications	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Cirii, Frank	Camden County One Stop	X		X	X	X	X		
Connors, Kristi	NJ Department of Labor, Business Services	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Deltz, Jeff	NJDVR	X	X		X	X			
Jones-Benjamin, Michaela	Camden County Board of Social Services								
Maguire, Laurie	Camden County One-Stop					X			
McFarland, Salama	Camden County Board of Social Services	X	X	X	X	X	X		X
Mendez, Kelly	Camden County Board of Social Services							X	
Regensburger, Robert	Lockheed Martin	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Sinclair, Nidia	Director, Camden County Resource Center	X	X		X	X	X	X	X
Weil, Bob	WDB Chair	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Swartz, Jeffrey S.	WDB Executive Director	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Williams, Leslie J	WDB Comptroller	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Varallo, Kathleen	WDB Administrative Assistant	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

WELCOME

Gregg DeBaere, Chair, called the meeting to order at 9:15am. The Committee discussed some personal issues related to remote work and COVID-19 responses efforts.

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 feedback regarding the current documents. She said the SETC made it known that it will only require the date of submission and confirmation of receipt in its check list of documents for the upcoming certification. She also said the State did get feedback from the Combined Plan but there is nothing the local areas must do because of that feedback. Jeffrey S. Swartz, Executive Director, WDB, said the state received a conditional approval of its combined plan, as the SETC membership ratio of board members is not compliant with what is dictated in the WIOA law. Jeff said the SETC sent some preliminary guidance regarding the current regional and local plans and the WDB Certification deadline has been established at February 15th, 2021.

Leslie reported she is beginning to gather the necessary documents for the WDB Certification. She is in the process of updating the board member spreadsheet with some changes in membership since the last certification. She and Gregg discussed his role as a liaison to the evaluation of a One-Stop process or best practice. Gregg had suggested at the last meeting that the Customer Check-in and Workflow Reports be the subject of evaluation. The Committee discussed the processes of the workflow report. Kristi Connors, Manager, Employment Services,

DOL, said the reports are stored in a sharable file that she would forward to Leslie and Gregg for further review. All agreed that the data gathered and information contained in the report was useful and helped the committee make informed decisions. Jeff said the documents can be sent as they are completed as in years past and Camden County will probably be one of the first to complete the certification process well before the deadline. Gregg and Leslie confirmed that the format is the same as prior requirements with the one addition of the evaluation of a best practice. Leslie said the biggest challenge is getting the partner signatures for the MOU. She plans to collect the partner signatures and submit the MOU in time for the January Board of Commissioner's (formally Freeholder's) Meeting for approval and signature by the Local Elected Official.

Gregg said he will read up on the Liaison role and get together with Kristi on evaluating the One-Stop Check-in and data keeping process. Gregg and Kristi discussed some coordination. Gregg said he will look to note where there were significant seasonal changes and will look through prior meeting minutes to match concerns that were discussed during those surges in customer flow. He said it will be good to note the where, why and how this tracking tool became useful to the committee. Kristi also noted that reaching customers traveling from Camden City, due to the move to the Cherry Hill location, was an overall concern and the reports were able to quell those concerns. Gregg said he wants to make sure that UI concerns are addressed in the evaluation, notably, even before the pandemic surge in customer claims that call centers were shutting down and causing a backlog. Kathleen Varallo, Administrative Assistant, WDB, also added that the WDB Literacy Needs Assessment noted concerns in the southern part of the county and tracking the zip codes allowed us to see that the One-Stop was serving more customers from that local area as a result of the move. Gregg asked and Leslie confirmed that the evaluation will review a One-Stop activity or process not a WDB process.

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

Nidia Sinclair, Director Resource Center, reported staff and operations are going well. She said there have been no direct incidents of COVID exposure. It's been more reports of family exposure outside of work. The Committee discussed some personal stories about family or staff having been indirectly affected by the virus.

Nidia reported there has been an increase in customers seeking assistance with Unemployment (UI) claims. Gregg asked if there have been more customers in the parking lot asking for help. Nidia said most of the increase has been calls, and these are mostly customers who have had issues in the past or have not followed the instructions when filing claiming weekly benefits. These customers want staff to help but they cannot. The customer must get in touch with the call center to have their claim reset. Nidia said the state is forwarding a new report with the names of customers in the local area that are either in the process of application or who have applied. She is thinking of using the list to send an email blast to let those customers know they can access certain services virtually. She wants to coordinate with employment service and the information management office to discuss what can be done with that information. Kristi said she had a template created that lists services and a link to the video orientation. She suggested that this contact be made on a staggered basis as discussed in prior meetings, maybe 100 at a time and then measure the response rate before sending to the next 100 on the list. She will coordinate with Nidia.

Nidia reported staff is continuing to prepare for a soft roll out of the QLess scheduling system in January. Staff received an email fact or cheat sheet with standard instructions. One-Stop partner agencies are in the process of being trained on the new system as well. Staff also has a video training module available to them for review of the training. The Committee discussed more of the operational concerns with regard to the scheduling. Nidia said customers will still make contact with the One-Stop and the staff will schedule the appointments. Customers will not have open access to the application; they will make initial contact through the virtual directory of services. Once they have viewed the orientation and filled out the necessary onboarding documents, staff will use the QLess system to schedule them for further virtual or an in-person appointment. Nidia said system and operational questions will be worked out with technical support staff. The Committee also discussed possible scheduling scenarios between partner agencies especially regarding UI. All agreed that concerns will be worked out during the transition. Gregg said that questions regarding level of service to customers seeking help with UI should be addressed.

Nidia reported Learning Link is still operating and serving customers There was one person CASAS tested for service since the last meeting. The team dedicated to the application for becoming a High-set (GED) test site is continuing the process. There has been a slight break to that initiative due to staff vacation schedules.

- YOUTH ONE-STOP (YOS) UPDATES:

Nidia reported the Youth One-Stop engagement is slow and there has been no movement the youth work experience due to low enrollment of youth going into training. She decided to use the Financial Literacy Workshop created by Dr. Lauren Hill, former Youth Manager. Youth Counselors will be able to instruct youth based on this presentation which worked well to engage youth in financial concepts. This will eliminate the need for an outside vendor to teach the program. Gregg asked if Jyi Peterson, Youth Counselor, completed the online workshop. Nidia said they are using what Dr. Hill created and working on a virtual workshop. Counselors are currently working with youth customers via Zoom Conferencing and are including Dr. Hill's format when instructing them about Financial Literacy.

Nidia reported that counselors are becoming much more thorough with customers about credentialing in their career assessments and career plan development. They are also reviewing customer's choice when it comes to the training provider. If the training of choice does not provide a credential, it will not be supported by funding. Customers will be guided toward the types of training that does provide a credential. She said current customers looking for training want to plan for careers in medical and CDL and these are credentialing courses so the conversations are not difficult. Counselors are being much more careful in reviewing the customer's choice of training.

- 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/>)

Salama McFarland, Case Management Administrator, Board of Social Services (BSS). She reported the Board saw an increase in customer applying for services in the month of November. Staff set up a table of information at the front door to prevent as many people as possible walking into the building unnecessarily. The flyer distributed contains email addresses and telephone numbers for such services as food assistance cards or renewals or questions regarding their claims. She said they are trying to manage without customers coming into the building to prevent COVID exposure. Staff always tries to grant access to any customers with immediate needs, such as homelessness. The front desk table is managed by alternating staff. Plexiglas and safety barriers are set up inside the waiting areas.

Salama said she set up a call team to contact any customer that is outside of a work activity. Staff uses reports and client lists to call customers promote information about the programs that are available and encourage them to participate. Clients that are interested and do not have barriers to work activity will be referred to the One-Stop for further orientation. She worked it out with Nidia to receive these referrals and her staff will follow up with these clients. She asked Nidia to then follow-up with the Board staff to let them know how clients responded and how many actually did begin an activity. The other reason for the calls will be to assess how many clients have phone or computer access or barriers to activities and/or remote services. The Board can provide support services such as childcare or transportation to those interested with these types of barriers to participation. There has been an increase in mental health issues so clients can be helped with these types of services upon request. Some staff will continue to process applications and some staff will be assigned to the call team study initiative. Salama said her goal is to start this initiative in the coming week. There are some logistics to work out such as making sure staff have board issued cell phones. The information gathered as a result of the phone study will be reported to the state at the end of each month. Each county will be joining this effort and they may set up their own system of follow-up. The data will be compiled by the state and best practices or new policies may come as a result of these efforts

Salama reported some statistics about clients enrolled in supportive services programs such as transportation vouchers childcare and CWEP opportunities and remote learning at Camden County College. She said the Board has been providing these types of supportive services all during the pandemic and they hope to be able to engage more customers with the call campaign.

Gregg asked what percentage of pre-pandemic capacity the Board is running at now. She said about 20%, there is not a big percentage of the population engaged in supportive services. Most people are trying to get back in the workforce so they are asking for childcare.

Gregg asked if the Board was serving those individuals recently released from incarceration. Salama said all those customers requesting services were mostly served upon release during the first week of November. There has not been much activity since then. He asked if there was any feedback from the issuance of the county ID to help with eligibility documentation. Salama said she did not hear of any complaints. Gregg also asked if there was a follow-up mechanism in place for this population. Salama said there was some tracking information provided by the Department of Corrections as to who was being sent for services and there were some reports

given back to the state. Gregg asked for a reporting of new online applications. Salama said she will send him a report when it is received.

- **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 Jeff S. if there were any updates to report. Jeff said he has not spoken with Jeff Deitz, Manager, DVRS. Kristi said Jeff D. has been working at the One-Stop but she received an email, after Thanksgiving, from the Commissioner of Labor, directing all staff to work remotely as much as possible through January. She is not aware of any new updates to DVRS at this time. She said Jeff D. is submitting reports of service to her.

- **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 all staff were required to participate in cyber security training, an online 2 ½ hour course. She is also waiting to hear about approval of a new hire recommended to the state. This person is bi-lingual and is a strong candidate. She noted state is allowing two new hires. One was on-boarded in September and the other is awaiting approval.

Kristi reported Employment Services continues to track customer check-in for services. To date, 1767 customers have checked in for services since July 1, 2020. The system is able to track what services customers are requesting and staff referred approximately 240 customers for training. Kristi created an email template that is sent to those customers with a link to a video orientation and instructions on how to fill out eligibility documentation and then contact a training counselor. Originally, these referrals were sent directly to the Resource Center but it was realized that some customers really did not have interest in training so the link helps narrow down those who truly wish to follow through.

Kristi reported that staff is participating in the transition to the QLess scheduling system. There are some issues with the server. She suggested conducting a workflow meeting to coordinate how the system will be used or shared between partner agencies.

Kristi said all staff is working remotely and she created some instructional sheets about remote accesses such as phoning through MS teams. All staff have been assigned laptops and are using MS Teams to make customer calls. She also made progress with changing the red banner on the Career Connections website. The banner messaging will change from COVID closing announcements to information about how to access virtual services through links to the One-stops and unemployment informational links will be clearly stated. Gregg complimented Kristi's diligence and positive approach to getting proper messaging corrected at the state level.

Kristi reported she has been assigned to serve on a marketing and communication workgroup. The group shared that in the Greater Raritan local area, there is a regular Friday orientation being conducted via Zoom Conferencing. She shared the information with Nidia so that customers can be directed to that training orientation and an entirely new one won't have to be created for this local area. The onboarding check list and information is the same for all local areas in New Jersey. She said Chris Peak, Greater Raritan, is willing share their on-boarding process and orientations are conducted every Friday at 10:00am. She also noted that Kelly West, Executive Director, WDB Burlington County, shared information about how they are successfully using "DocuSign" an electronic signature application. Kristi said she will continue to share new information and processes so that the local area does not have to reinvent some of these successful applications. Kristi suggested some sort of shared information summit that could be conducted by WDB Directors. She is bumping into best practices as she goes along and it might be helpful to gather this information into a coordinated effort. The Committee discussed initiatives being shared by regional organizations such as GSETA. Jeff said it may be difficult to collect all the information being shared and put it into one place but he encouraged everyone on this operations committee to bring back all ideas from virtual meetings they attend. On all calls he has attended, participants are willing to share best practices. He complimented Kristi for her participation in regional workgroups and contributions to the local area. Kristi said she has benefited from working with other areas on the video and online intake forms modifications. She asked about an online intake form and how acceptable it would be to use in the local area.

The Committee discussed privacy and compliance concerns regarding the use of the online form. All agreed this type of form would save time and transfer of documents but hoped the State would approve its use collectively for all local areas. The Committee also agreed that an expedited intake form could show relevance and better outcomes in the AOSOS system. Kristi said she will ask more questions about how the form could be integrated into the system and report back to the committee at the next meeting. Nidia said there was an original inquiry about using DocuSign but implementation of the QLess scheduling system took priority. She will follow-up and review the intake applications with Scott Stetzer, Technical Support Manager, One-Stop, and get back to the committee as well. The Committee was in favor of using DocuSign because of software support and ease of access. Salama also suggested another version of an online document signing application that is cheaper in cost and just as effective. She will pass on information to the committee for further review.

Kristi encouraged the WDB to share the Directory of Virtual Services with all committees...

https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=70&v=wWPlc1EJFO8&feature=emb_logo&fbclid=IwAR39bIVYNW5JLWAO3gnWxShvg9SFHYEa5OgkTItg6HEYemculFcxEuQmI

- **REGIONAL ACTIVITIES**

Jeff reported the Atlantic City Electric program will be starting again in March 2021 with the line training. He said we have been in touch with several candidates still very much interested in completing that course. This year, the WDB will not be recruiting another cohort until the two prior groups have completed that training. A new cohort for the WISE and GIE math program will move forward in the later part of 2021. The team continues to coordinate with the ACE team

and a virtual employer information session was held in September that generated interest in the program by other utility employers, especially for candidates completing the line training.

Jeff updated the committee with some statistics from the Camden Works Initiative that was started by the Coopers Ferry Foundation to place Camden City residents in employment. To date, he said there have been approximately 160 residents employed through this program. Jeff continues to participate in bi-weekly calls for that initiative.

Jeff reported he and Bob Weil attended a WDB Chair meeting conducted virtually by the State Employment and Training Commission (SETC). The Commissioner of Labor also attended the call. Many concerns about UI were brought up on the call. The Commissioner stated the division is doing the best it can to answer calls and address all claims. Bob Weil, Chair, WDB said he noticed that there were additional concerns expressed by WDB chairs regarding UI efficiency to answer at the call centers. He is still hearing about many requests for help getting through to the call centers. He felt the broader approach to add the state into the national pool of concern was not what most WDB Chair wanted to hear. They were hoping for a more aggressive approach to addressing the needs of New Jersey and knowledge of what is being done to improve the current system. Jeff said he contacted the Commissioner about a local company willing to re-write the UI program and update its efficiency. Other WDB Directors have brought this possibility to the attention of the Commissioner as well. He said the Commissioner did get back to him with some updates about working with the Feds on system improvements. He told Jeff to hold up on conversations with this local company. Jeff said he was not in any position to negotiate system improvements but hoped the information would help the Commissioner make an informed decision. Jeff said the local WDB Executive Committee was dedicated to assisting in any way they could to improve the system. Gregg asked if the Executive Directors were allowed input to the WDB Chair's meeting. Jeff said Directors were in attendance but gave way to mostly comments from the Chairs. The Committee discussed the value of the WDB Chair's meeting and how it may or may not have affected local outcomes in the past. All agreed the meetings are important and are meant to give the WDB Chairs a platform to express ideas and concerns as it relates to labor initiatives and program improvements.

Jeff also said preliminary discussions have begun on planning the GSETA Employment and Training Conference in October 2021. They continue to offer virtual training for supervisors and front line staff.

- **CONSORTIUM & INDUSTRY PARTNERSHIP UPDATES**

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 a national leader in transportation, distribution and logistics. They are planning to hire over 20 thousand candidates nationwide by the year 2025 in this industry. The modules or online 20-hour pilot training program was created by a company called JFF and will be offered free of charge to 800 participants in Phila, and New Jersey. Jeff said he and Kathleen participated in a call with Meg Koppel to discuss employer engagement policies in New Jersey. In order for the BSR team to promote the program, employers must post job opportunities on the NJNLX. In this way, candidates can be sourced and matched to the program. The WDB

passed the NLX information on the Meg; and she will share it with employers. The WDB will create a registration sheet so that referrals to the program can be tracked and credited to Camden County. Kristi asked if the training company filed for ETPL status. She said it would be an important asset the program that could result in additional services for the participants. The Committee discussed logistics of the program and agreed that as a pilot program, with only 20 hours of study, it would not qualify for a credential. Nidia cautioned that these types of programs do not positively impact the goal of credentialing. Jeff confirmed that the program is meant to be a pilot program and the WDB will promote it to employers who wish to up skill their workforce.

- **BUSINESS SERVICES (BSR)**

Jeff reported the BSR team met virtually yesterday, Thursday, December 10th. A few new private sector members attended the call including a representative from Truist Bank recommended by Matt Verney, Youth Council Chair. 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 has also been working with some employer's warning notices and company closings such as US Vision. Jeff said the OJT contracts were put on hold due to requirements expiring at the end of 2020, which is only a month away.

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 so he asked that committee members serving on the board respond to attendance as a quorum for voting is needed. He also reminded the committee that a presentation will be made at the meeting to honor Steve Ravitz, President Emeritus, Ravitz Family Markets-Shoprite (passed due to complications from COVID-19 in April 2020). He was a champion in the community and great supporter of WDB Initiatives including the Hire-One program. Freeholder Liaison Jonathan Young and Congressman Donald Norcross have confirmed their attendance and will present proclamations to the Ravitz family honoring Steve. Gregg asked if the annual report was completed. Jeff said outside of some formatting issues with the WIOA performance reports; a final draft is ready for review. Gregg asked, and Nidia confirmed, that credentialing is the only failing area of concern that will be noted in the annual report. She said the follow up team did a thorough review of the files and has set up a revised approach to customer's training choices as mentioned earlier in the meeting. Gregg asked, and Jeff confirmed, that credentialing is a statewide concern. Jeff said the local area counselors, as Nidia mentioned, are better defining how the customer understands the course completion and value of credentialing as the next step of completing the training process. Gregg said the training providers need to understand that they need to build these reminders into the curriculum and training. Nidia also said that counselors will be doing a better job of reviewing the training choices of the customer to make sure we are funding only those courses that would result in obtaining a credential versus a certificate of completion. Gregg asked, and the committee confirmed, that Theo Primas, Program Evaluator, WDB can be of assistance in helping to explain the importance of credentialing when he engages with potential training providers.

Jeff confirmed, and Gregg agreed, that as WDB Treasurer he will lead the motion to approve the Master Budget at the upcoming quarterly meeting. Leslie will send Gregg the motion and final budget, recommended for approval by the Systems Performance Committee, for his review. She said Janice Bryant and Barbara Pape, One-Stop Fiscal will be in attendance at the meeting to answer any questions posed by board members about the Master Budget. Jeff said the business portion of the meeting will be attended to at the earliest part of the meeting just after a roll call of attendees and quorum for voting is established. Jeff also said he will send the agenda and final draft of the annual report to Bob for review. Kathleen said she sent the agenda to the Congressman's office as requested and Bob and Jeff will be able to use their annual report Chairman and Director's message to present the report. Gregg asked, and Kathleen confirmed, that Congressman Norcross will be in attendance at the meeting. He will record a message if for some last minute reason he is unable to attend.

NEXT MEETING

Hearing no further questions, Gregg thanked the committee for their continued service and wished everyone a safe and healthy holiday. The Committee discussed and agreed that all committee meeting will continue to be held virtually at least through the first quarter of 2021.

The Operations Committee agreed to schedule the next meeting on the third Friday, January 15th, at 9:00am via Zoom Conferencing.

Submitted by:

Kathleen Varallo

Administrative Assistant