



Supporting the Development and Retention of a World Class Workforce

Jeffrey S. Swartz, Executive Director

Robert Weil, Chair

**OPERATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING
MINUTES, FEBRUARY 12, 2021**

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

ATTENDANCE

MEMBERS		16-Jul-20	13-Aug-20	18-Sep-20	22-Oct-20	13-Nov-20	11-Dec-20	15-Jan-21	12-Feb-21
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	X
Connors, Kristi	NJ Department of Labor, Business Services	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Deitz, Jeff	NJDVRs	X	X					X	X
McFarland, Salama	Camden County Board of Social Services	X	X	X	X		X	X	X
Regensburger, Robert	Lockheed Martin	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Sinclair, Nidia	Camden County Resource Center	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Weil, Bob	WDB Chair	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Swartz, Jeffrey S.	WDB	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Williams, Leslie J	WDB	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Varallo, Kathleen	WDB	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

WELCOME

Gregg DeBaere, Chair, called the meeting to order at 9:15am. Gregg welcomed attendees and asked that each partner follow the bullet points on the agenda in an effort to keep on track with reporting. The Committee reviewed the minutes of the meeting Friday, January 15, 2021. Gregg noted he reviews the minutes carefully and makes corrections each month with Kathleen Varallo, Administrative Assistant, WDB. He asked if there were any further corrections or additions to the minutes. Hearing none, Gregg asked for a motion to approve the minutes. Bob Weil made the first motion and Kristi Connors made the second motion. By unanimous vote to the affirmative the motion was carried and minutes January 15, 2021 were approved.

ONE – STOP & WDB CERTIFICATION

Gregg asked Leslie Williams, Comptroller, WDB, to report on any updates from the State Employment and Training Commission (SETC) regarding the WDB and One-Stop Certification multiple processes. Leslie reported the One-Stop Certification process was/is an exercise completed by submission of all required documents. She said there is no actual certificate or final approval process. The SETC acknowledged receipt of all documents and that is the end of the process. All that is required is to follow the assigned process and schedule for completion. Gregg asked and Leslie confirmed that the process is complete and the One-Stop is officially certified. She said once the WDB certifies it by way of signature of the WDB Chair, Bob Weil, it is considered certified.

Leslie reported the WDB received a signed copy of the Infrastructure Funding Agreement (IFA) and Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) from Hugh Bailey, Assistant Commissioner, LWD, the designated signatory for all the State Agency Partners. The MOU was dated back in June

and it was an open item on the State audit. Leslie made the audit representative aware it had not yet been received and called the LWD offices. It was received shortly thereafter from the office of Yolanda Allen, Director, N.J. Office of Career Services. Leslie said it can be considered complete. Gregg was happy to celebrate the official completion of the process and its removal as an action item from the Operations Agenda.

Leslie reported the WDB Certification process has been completed and signed by Louis Cappelli, Jr., Commissioner Director. The documents did not have to go through full Board of Commissioner Approval. All documents were submitted and awaiting certification by the SETC. Jeffrey S. Swartz, Executive Director, noted the WDB Certification documents were submitted ahead of schedule, Camden County being one of the first. The process is approved by the SETC and Certification will be approved by the full SETC Board in March or April, 2021.

Leslie reported the local and regional plan updates will be the next action item on the Operations Agenda. Gregg asked and Leslie confirmed there has been no official guidance released yet. She said there will be guidance and a technical assistance meeting as well.

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

Frank Cirii, Local Area Operations Director, reported One-Stop facility is open and safely operating under CDC and local health guidelines. The County Health Department is continuing to visit the facility on a bi-weekly basis to make sure the One-Stop is adhering to all current regulations. Gregg asked if the health department ever calibrates temperature thermometers. Frank said they provided us with the temperature guns but he has not heard that they must be recalibrated. They simply make sure all protocols are in place and being followed. Modifications are made from time to time such as rest room capacity mentioned at the last meeting. Two individuals are allowed in rest rooms at any one given time and employees are aware of this regulation. Minimal staff is in the building at one time, so it has not been a problem. Seating in the lunch room area has also been modified. He noted one incidence of a UI customer roaming the building. They were safely escorted out but he also noted management is continuing to be stopped outside the building by customers who are desperate for help with unemployment claims. An email was sent to staff reminding them about entrance and exit safety measures such as making sure security door are completely closed behind staff entering the facility. Gregg asked and Frank confirmed that security is handling parking lot and entrance safety measures well and with diplomacy.

Frank reported he has been listening to and monitoring all updates by State Commissioners regarding Unemployment (UI) concerns, computer problems, lost claims and payment delays. Customer frustration is there and increasing again due to these problems. Extensions and the federal supplementation of benefits have made the situation more difficult

Frank reported the QLess scheduling system is continuing to launch and he is reminding staff to practice using the system even though they are not seeing many customers. This practice will help make staff ready when re-opening to public access. Staff is being encouraged to attend trainings offered by State and Federal technical assistance. He said there is an upcoming CASAS training on February 18th and there is a TANF training coming up as well. Management is making sure staff is staying active and engaged.

Frank reported that Nidia Sinclair, Director, Resource Center, is still working with a team to review files post audit to make sure that every customer file is reviewed and updated with any possible missing information or documentation. The process has been a very good exercise that will help improve data entry and the overall system process. It is creating better coordination between the counselors, MIS and the follow-up team. Gregg asked if the file review, having been found to be a useful process, will be completed on an annual or bi-annual basis. Frank said it will be built into systems management as a continuous improvement process to do a comprehensive file review at the end stage of customer engagement as well as a follow-up process especially in the area of credentialing. Gregg suggested assigning some frequency to file review because it is being found to be a useful process that will improve performance outcomes.

Kristi Connors, Manager Employment Services, DOL, asked if the exercise of peer review is still being completed because she was thinking of implementing that process in her division. She also asked if staff received the process well. Nidia said review is based on audit findings and its shared with all staff as an inclusive or collective exercise that benefits everyone concerned. The Committee discussed and agreed that it was a good approach to let staff know how their input effects the entire process. Gregg said it is a very valuable exercise and will serve as a great cross training tool. Nidia gave special credit to Inocencia Gutierrez, Manager, Counseling Unit, for taking the lead once the review process was identified. Nidia further explained the practice. The review team was set up with counselors looking at each file, identifying missing information such as attendance records or entry codes. The file is then passed on to the follow-up team who notates a chart as to what is missing and calls MIS or whatever office that can provide the missing information. Once the file is completely updated, it is marked with a blue notation mark on the outside of the folder.

Frank reported the Learning Link is continuing the process of application to become a HighSET testing site. A team including Patty Beach, Learning Link, Dr. Lauren Hill, Director Adult Basic Skills, Camden County College, and Nidia have completed the required documents and Frank said he signed the application. The final review and submission was completed yesterday, February 11th.

Frank reported on virtual services. He said counselors are seeing an increase in requests for services. Nidia is also establishing a process for following up with SNAP customers. She also reported an alternating staff schedule has been established to address customer contact and follow-up to customer requests. Frank said DocuSign, an electronic signature platform, is being implemented into operations. The minimal licensing purchase was for a group of 500. Scott Stetzer, Technical Support Manager, is helping to implement the system. Frank hopes to utilize this purchase to help streamline the process to execute training vouchers, fiscal and vendor purchasing. Virtual services are being promoted at local food distribution and immunization sites around the County.

Frank reported he met with Carol McCormick and Kaina Hanna, Employment Services, Camden County College. They heard about Incumbent Worker Training through other colleges and asked to speak with him about the process. Frank reviewed the policy which was approved by the WDB to provide funding to support employers who wished to up-skill their current

workforce. Frank told them the WDB and One-Stop would welcome consideration of any program they found worthy of collaboration between the college and a local employer. He encouraged them to look for model programs that are being successfully completed in other parts of the state. Frank said he would not be comfortable starting off with an unproven program being as it has been an unused funding source to the local area. He is expecting to meet with them again and bring any ideas to the WDB for consideration and support. Frank said he is in favor of supporting an Incumbent Worker Training (IWT) Grant especially during this year of recovery. He noted 20% of Adult and Dislocated Worker funds can be spent toward IWT.

- YOUTH ONE-STOP (YOS) UPDATES:

Frank reported on Youth One-Stop (YOS) engagement and virtual services. He said Youth Counselors and coordinating with the WDB to produce a success story video that will be used to promote services of the YOS. Jy Peterson, Counselor, YOS, has been collecting a series of youth video entries and sending them to Alex Levitt, Administrative Assistant, WDB. The WDB has purchased editing software and will use these components to create that outreach video for youth.

Frank reported there is a Financial Literacy presentation ready and available for when the One-Stop resumes orientation and in-person services to youth. Youth work experience is on hold as well due to lack of referrals. Gregg asked and Frank confirmed there is currently no youth on tract for participation in work experience. Frank said efforts toward credentialing have been reported as previously covered above. Gregg said he appreciated Frank and Nidia's efforts to make credentialing a top priority. Hearing no further questions, he moved on the next item on the Operations Agenda.

- 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) reported the Board is continuing efforts toward opening its new customer service center at the Surrogate offices on the new targeted launch date, March 1st. She said all the cubicles have been set in place. They are awaiting security camera installation. Salama toured the facility yesterday, February 11th. Administrative tours are being scheduled on an alternating basis to give input to proposed operations and safety protocols. Staff will be scheduled for a tour at a later date prior to opening. Board technical assistance has installed the QLess scheduling system and is currently sorting out which staff will be trained on administrative use and which will be trained on user information with hopes of being proficient on the system by March 1st. The office is set up so that customers will be directed to a front desk positioned before entering metal detection and safety screening. Customers will be directed to schedule an appointment, or be referred to a telephone interview booth in the facility, this based on their requests for service. Separate safety screening positions have been set up for employees versus customers. Gregg asked and Salama

confirmed that security staff will be doing all the screening and ensuring safety protocols in the office by way of digital interview entry form. The Committee discussed policy as it relates to remote work and quarantine measures due to incidents of COVID. All agreed the agency legal teams will have to weigh in and confirm HR policies as it relates to employees and incidents of COVID leave and paid quarantine exceptions. This will become more apparent as agencies re-open to public access and economic recovery. Gregg asked if smoker risk was used as a reason for requesting to work remotely. Salama said she has not heard of any such requests in her division. Gregg asked about ventilation infrastructure. Salama reviewed other safety measures, concerns and customer flow features in the facility. She did not have knowledge of how ventilation systems would be certified. Kristi asked if there was still talk about moving to a larger facility in Stratford. Salama said there have been no recent discussions about the move.

Salama reported there were 1657 new applications filed for service in January and so far, as of February, there have been 614. Jeff asked if there was an update on the volunteer call campaign. He noted he has been praising the campaign, as a best practice, on calls with other WDB Directors and the Department of Labor and Workforce Development.

Salama noted the Volunteer Work Activity Campaign began in December with phone calls to clients. She designated about 18 staff members to make calls using a phone script with the goal of providing information and awareness to services as well as additional options for facing challenges such as mental health during the pandemic. Child Care, as well as awareness to training and career planning opportunities, are also offered. Jeff said while waivers have continued, Salama and her staff took on a great initiative to make these calls and generate some referrals to the One-Stop for training and career planning services. Salama said she met with Employment Services and DVRS to get contacts and a scope of current virtual services. She shared the information with her staff so they have up-to-date information about which providers are offering what services. Staff are successfully referring some customers interested in pursuing employment and training activities. Staff reviews customer needs, interest and barriers to find out which is the best provider to refer them to. She reported calls to 159 SNAP customers, 908 TANF customers 1,168 GA customers. The latest number of interested customers referred for work activities was 10 SNAP, 65 TANF, and 47 GA. The total numbers currently participating in voluntary work activities is 2 SNAP, 85 TANF, and 81 GA. The Committee agreed outcomes were great. Kristi asked if calls were made by phone. Salama said yes and she had staff make repeat calls to customers unanswered in the first round of calling. Some second round calls were made to customers who were not interested. The follow-up calls were made in an effort to provide a different case manager to approach the offerings. Kristi asked and Salama confirmed that new customers are being contacted as well. The Committee agreed that newer customers who are not aware of opportunities may be the best ones to contact first and work back to the customers who are more familiar with the waivers. Salama said activities of such as addressing mental health barriers and CWEP opportunities seemed to attract the highest interest. She said some other barriers include access to technology, physical or mental disabilities, COVID concerns and childcare. Jeff asked if vaccine resistance was a concern. Salama said this question is not brought up on the calls. She said there are other forums being set up for vaccine awareness. Jeff said some discussions have been initiated about finding ways to attract WorkFirst NJ customers to an orientation at the One-Stops with an incentive to get the COVID vaccine. Salama said there was training conducted yesterday, February 11th to learn more about the County's vaccine procedures however it's still not clear if the supply is in place

to meet the demand or even make that kind of offer. The Committee discussed ideas for some sort of pilot program that might incentivize customers to participate in orientation services. All agreed that many younger or mid age range customers are resistant to the vaccine. It's the older, aged-out-of-working population that is more concerned about receiving the vaccine. Jeff noted that with the help of Leslie Williams, the WDB sent a letter to over 60 faith based organizations along with a copy of the Virtual Services Directory. Many ministries are conducting their own food and needs distributions. The letter encouraged these organizations to share the flyer with their membership.

Salama closed her report by expressing her appreciation for staff development during this pandemic. Case Managers have become better-rounded in their approach to onboarding customers. They used to hand off files but now they are gaining a better understanding about both sides of coding and compassionate care of customer needs and concerns. The process has become much more complete and efficient. Gregg asked and Salama confirmed the Board will continue the voluntary call campaign as new customers are onboarded for service.

- **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>

Jeff Deitz, Manager, DVRS, reported his division continues to service customers remotely. There continues to be a demand for services. Staff is working on a staggered schedule but despite current conditions they are serving many customers. Jeff D. reported obtaining two new counselors who are in the process of training and two more may be approved once public access re-opens. He's been told that re-opening may occur in September, 2021

Regarding Project Search, Jeff D. reported participants are attending virtual internships. He noted the virtual participation may not be the best experience for the cohort but they are completing the process. A new cohort is being selected and a virtual hiring event is being planned for the current cohort.

Jeff D. reported staff revisited and conducted a presentation for the Judicial System and Drug Court. There are new members on staff at the courts and they seemed very interested in having DVRS get involved again with offering services. Newly appointed Judge, Kathleen M. Delaney, requested and was very happy with the presentation. He also reported the DVRS Central Office is offering additional training for current staff and new hires recently onboarded to his division.

- **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 she recommended someone to be hired as an employment service trainee. This person declined, so Kristi sent out another invite to the second person who scored close, so hopefully her division will gain another staff person. Kristi also reported that the Supervisor One position was posted which was held by Tom Thorn who retired last year before the pandemic. Trish McGowen has been filling in the position so hopefully she will be rewarded for doing the job. Gregg asked and Kristi confirmed the position would be pending Civil Service testing. She is not sure when in-person testing will resume. The position can be filled and testing can be scheduled at a later date.

Kristi reported a total of 2935 customers checked-in since July and were provided employment services. Staff is continuing to track data of entry. The new state online form returned 920 requests for services. As mentioned at the last meeting, Kristi said the requests are routed to a central connection and then filtered out to each county by way of Microsoft Teams. Staff is following up and providing a variety of services. She said Camden County is getting the most amounts of requests. Kristi also reported the State launched a new website www.careerservices.nj.gov and the request form drops down as soon as the site is opened. The average amount of requests has increased from 40-80 per week and of the 80, 15-20 requests are for UI assistance even though the form specifically disclaims the form for those claims. Managers asked that the form be redesigned so the disclaimer appears at the very top of the form instead of at the bottom of the form. Gregg asked if Kristi or her staff got a chance to explore all the links on the new website to make sure they work. Kristi said the site is still being built out with input by managers such as Jersey Job Club, Industry Valued Credential Lists and more information about the local Counties and WDB. Gregg asked how input is being received. Jeff and Kristi both agreed the technical support team for the website is listening and applying improvements to the site on an ongoing basis so it's a work in progress. The Committee discussed the challenges of launching the new website. Kristi said resuming weekly Employment Services Manager Meetings has helped improve communications and best practices are being shared. Some of the intake forms and processes developed by her team are being implemented throughout the state.

Kristi reported 468 customers were referred for training opportunities. These customers are being referred to the website because some of them are not sure what they are asking for. The orientation video of services is helping to define services and then direct contacts are listed. She suggested that a follow-up email could be sent to ask how customers did with the website referral and see if they are still interested in career planning or training.

Kristi reported ES managers have been asked to do a weekly WDB/ES tabulation of services. The form tabulates job search, training, DVRS referral, UI and other, incoming calls and the requests for service forms previously mentioned. The weekly form is averaging approximately 500 services per week. Kristi said Jeff D. is giving his information to her and she will make sure that Jeff S. is getting the link to view the tabulation report.

Kristi also reported there is a Supervisor's Ethics Training scheduled for March 16th and 23rd provided by the State. There are 50 RESA customers schedule every week for activities. The usual response rate has been 50-55% but for some reason 75% showed this week. There seems to be a higher participation rate because of the virtual offering and some customers do not have to arrange for childcare or transportation. ES has been using the phone and virtual services to

engage with customers and it seems to be increasing participation. Kristi is working with staff weekly to train them on the latest technical developments. Little by little people skills are getting better. The last thing Kristi reported on was the adobe intake form she created. She sent it around and is requesting further technical assistance to get the form uploaded to the new website and interface with the AOSOS system. The Committee discussed the form and agreed it will make intake much easier. Kristi said she will share the form with Frank and Nidia and other counties as well. The form does not require input of a personal Social Security number. She is also in the process of changing it from Google Docs to MS Forms as of March 1st. Staff will be able to sign in and out and document their work activities. She hopes this will work for all 21 counties as some are still using a paper form and scanning it. She also sent the links to Kathleen about Corseva. There are a lot of links to training. Kathleen Varallo, Administrative Assistant, WDB, said she looked at the site and did not see any links to Microsoft Teams training but she is collecting links to You-Tube demonstrations about how Teams work. She will send them to the committee. She also sent a request to Corseva as well.

- **REGIONAL ACTIVITIES**

Jeff reported Camden County and Atlantic County will be running the Line School Training in April at the Anthony Canale Training Center in Egg Harbor Township, NJ. Gloucester County is currently running the WISE and GIE Math Courses virtually in their local area. He said our local area will not be running those programs until the first and second cohort finishes the line training. Those interested in starting these courses can be referred to the participating counties but otherwise Camden County will be recruiting again for the 2022 year later this year.

Jeff reported he is continuing to participate in the Camden Works Initiative. During last week's call it was reported that a total of 467 jobseekers were registered in the data base, of which 163 customers have been placed and are working. Camden Works started a Facebook page and agreed to post information about One-Stop services on that page. Gregg asked if all registered jobseekers are residents of Camden City. Jeff said most are but the site is not limited only to residents. Information is collected, so that Camden City residents are identified. The site is geared toward employing residents who may have transportation challenges.

Jeff reported meetings continue to be conducted virtually by the State Employment and Training Commission (SETC) and Garden State Employment and Training Association (GSETA). Many of the same challenges such as Board of Social Services waivers and referrals are being shared by WDB Directors from across the state. Many local areas share the same concerns. The GSETA Executive Committee did resume their quarterly meetings with the Department of Labor Staff. High Bailey, Assistant Commissioner, was present at the meeting on February 4th. He said discussions are beginning to negotiate the GSETA Employment and Training Conference, October 2021. It is still undecided whether the event will be held in-person or virtually. Virtual options are being proposed.

- **CONSORTIUM & INDUSTRY PARTNERSHIP UPDATES**

Jeff reported the Prologis Pilot Training Program is going well. The pilot program initiative is being sponsored by Prologis, which is a national leader in transportation, distribution, and logistics. 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 through the end of February 2021.

- **BUSINESS SERVICES (BSR)**

Jeff reported the Business Services and Outreach Team did not meet this month due to some Rapid Response events being conducted by Jeanne Page-Soncrant and Ricky O'Hara, Veterans Rep. They continue sending their regular reports of employer engagement and continue to work on the Job Matching Initiative. Jeff noted he participated in a call with WDB Directors and Michael Blatt, State Director, USDOL Apprenticeships. There is an effort to clear up confusion about the differences between state funded and federal apprenticeship guidelines. Jeff said he thinks there will be more activity and participation by the Fed around developing apprenticeships. Gregg asked and Jeff confirmed that these opportunities will be developed in non-traditional fields such as Security Technicians. Jeff said there will be specific criteria established such as eligibility and registration with the One-Stops and the apprenticeship will follow the Industry Demand List. Gregg asked if the Trade Unions will be brought to the table in these discussions. Jeff said he thought they will be because there are established apprenticeships opportunities already established with the trades and there are requests. Jeff said he is participating in discussions with American Water and the CCMUA about developing these types of new pilot programs. The Committee discussed and agreed it all starts with educating students about alternative careers that pay very well and provide great benefits.

Kristi asked if the Hilton Garden in Camden completed their hiring. She was surprised they did not use the services of the One-Stop. Frank said he reached out but they never returned his calls. Bob Weil, Chair, WDB, said he toured the hotel and they are currently working with a skeleton crew. The Committee discussed some other possible businesses moving into the local area. Jeff said the South Jersey Workforce Collaborative is teaming up again to promote regional job opportunities such as Holt Industries. These are posted to the WDB social media platforms.

QUARTERLY BOARD MEETING

Jeff reported the next WDB Quarterly Board of Trustees meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, March 24th @8:30am via Zoom Conferencing. Kris Kolluri, CEO, Coppers Ferry Partnership, will be speaking about the Camden Works Initiative.

NEXT MEETING

Hearing no further questions, Gregg thanked the committee. The next Operations Committee will be scheduled on Friday, March 12th, at 9:00am via Zoom Conferencing.

Submitted by:

Kathleen Varallo

Administrative Assistant