

**Operations Committee Meeting Minutes
March 11, 2022
WDB Office, 1111 Marlkress Road, Cherry Hill (Zoom Conferencing)**

COMMITTEE INFORMATION AND ATTENDANCE								
NAME	ORGANIZATION	TRUSTEE MEMBER	10-Sep-21	12-Oct-21	12-Nov-21	9-Dec-21	14-Jan-22	11-Feb-22
DeBaere, Gregg T., CHAIR	Atlantic Coast Communications	✓	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
Deitz, Jeff	NJDVRS	✓		X		X	X	X
Jones-Benjamin, Michaela	Camden County Board of Social Services							X
McFarland, Salama	Camden County Board of Social Services		X	X	X	X	X	
Regensburger, Robert	Lockheed Martin	✓	X	X	X	X	X	X
Ludizaca, Raul	NJ Dept. of Labor				X	X		
Sinclair, Nidia	Camden County Resource Center					X		X
Weil, Bob, BSOT Chair	Connor, Strong & Buckelew	✓	X		X	X	X	X
Levitt, Alex	WDB					X	x	X
Swartz, Jeffrey S.	WDB		X	X	X	X	X	X
Williams, Leslie J	WDB		X	X	X	X	X	

Welcome

Gregg DeBaere, Chair, called the meeting to order at 9:03am and welcomed attendees.

Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

Gregg reviewed the minutes from the February 11, 2022, meeting. Hearing no questions, Gregg asked for a motion to approve the minutes. Bob Weil made the motion, seconded by Jeff Swartz. By unanimous vote to the affirmative, the motion carried and the minutes from February 11, 2022, were approved.

WDB Planning and SETC Updates

Gregg called on Leslie and Jeff for an update after his recent governance meeting with the SETC. Jeff stated that a recent GSETA meeting revealed that the SETC is still waiting for the Feds to confirm the State plan, which has not been finalized yet. He was told the State and local plans will be a 6-month process. The deadline for execution of the coming plan will likely be the end of the calendar year. Jeff stated that he felt the 2020 regional plan would be useful and that the White Paper could be incorporated into a local plan.

One-Stop Director and Career Center Updates

Frank Cirii, Camden County Career Center, Local Area Operations Director

Facility & Safety Update

- Safety Issues – Armed and unarmed security personnel are in place for the upcoming opening of the UI to claimants by appointment only. Utilizing the One-Stop’s phone system as a PA System in the event of an emergency is being explored. There are concerns with the way UI plans to return and the methods they intend to use to address claimant problems by agency-set 15-minute appointments only. There is apparently no option in the event the claimant’s issue needs to be immediately escalated by phone contact with UI. Nidia went through the ID.me process with a client and it took 2 hours to complete the requirements. The UI plan does not address the issue of the unknown number of people who will show up trying to make an appointment or suggest they will provide signage to offer any guidance to those walk-in people. Additionally, UI will not assign a navigator for the intake of walk-ins who come in for assistance and is passing the responsibility to the One-Stop reception

desk. Jeff stated that a meeting between GSETA and UI will be held on March 16th to obtain information and raise concerns about UI's safety and procedural plans for the opening on March 28th. Jeff said that he would update the group after the meeting. Frank stated there will be a discussion with all One-Stop partners to determine when they will return to functioning in-person.

- Gregg commented that UI rarely discusses where they fall short, or a strategy to discern the root of the underlying issues of the backlog and how to address them. UI has failed to assess the claim issues and create a plan to guide people to personnel who are best qualified to resolve their problem.
- Frank reminded the committee that only Atlantic and Camden County One-Stops will have UI on premise conducting their appointments. Offers for Camden One-Stop partners to be trained to assist with low-level UI claim problems was declined.
- The lease extension, expected to be for 5 years or more, is under review but imminent. The negotiations went well, and the lease cost will not increase.

Staff Training, Meetings and Learning Link

- Sponsored GSETA training and internal training is on track. QLess and customer tracking numbers are being maintained by all partners for reporting purposes. Weekly training meetings continue, with an upcoming training subject dealing with the timely subject of working with irate and difficult customers.
- The agreement for procuring software for CASAS and GED/Hi-Set is being finalized and staff is being trained for certification. The implementation and billing processes for testing are now under consideration. A complication to the previously estimated 6-8 weeks to training implementation is that GED mandates cameras in the testing bank will view the heads, hands, keyboards, and screens so the proctor and cameras observe all activity during testing. On-site IT must be consulted for the installation of the required camera system. The cameras currently in use do not meet specifications for GED testing. In addition, lockers will have to be installed for the storage of phones and personal items of all test takers.
- Gregg asked that Frank and Kristi consider collaborating to create a format for the customer tracking data, which then can be used to compile an annual summary report at the end of the fiscal year.

Virtual Service

- The One-Stop will be promoting its services on all avenues possible. Commissioner Jonathan Young's appearance on Comcast News Makers went well.

Incumbent Worker Training (IWT)

- The projected start date for the IWT program is in May with a conglomerate of ShopRite stores (Zallie's, Ravitz, Wakefern, Brown's, etc.) that are expected to be multi-year partnerships. There are leads for additional partners to participate in the training program. Consideration will be made in the process because it has been discovered that all the applications have their own specific criteria such as differing matches and what needs to be procured outside of Camden County College, the type and length of training, etc. In the cases of participants needing to soft-exit and continue at another time, a One-Stop employee will follow up with participants to close them out or update notes to keep them active in the program.

Youth Engagement & Virtual Services Updates – Laurie Maguire

- Laurie stated that going forward the MIS will do the data entry from providers, currently done by youth counselors. The youth counselors for provider contracts will be reviewing the initial assessment and providing a summary, and upon exit of the client, the counselors will provide a summary of outcomes. This change will minimize the amount of time youth counselors spend on data entry and eliminate the amount of data that providers have habitually left until the end of a quarter to submit.
- Two youth providers have not been referring their successful clients back to the One-Stop. One provider was unaware that those clients could be sent to Camden County College. Those providers

have been asked to provide reports of youth who completed training going back to July 2021. To date, neither provider has submitted the information requested. Jeff offered to intercede on Laurie's behalf if the information was not received.

- Jyi Peterson has identified four employers for youth employment experience, one of which requires a copy of a Covid vax card before granting interviews. Information will be compiled on a spreadsheet providing each employer's prerequisites and specific requirements for possible work experience. Laurie stated she and Jyi have not been able to reach Rosie Arroyo with the Camden County Youth Commission, but they are moving ahead with creating a test program using a fictitious entity.
- Regarding virtual services, Jyi and Laurie have received links from the State for a number of different types of assessment tools. They will create a spreadsheet that matches each website link and its assessment tools to one of the 14 elements, so that when work experience starts with two days a week of in-house or virtual training, the links and tools will have been tested. In addition, Laurie stated they will be looking at OSOS activities to be able to report youths that are being served but never get to enrollment. She believes that collecting that data will provide a clear picture of the issues reflected in lower enrollment before it gets to WIOA. The method of payment for the youth work experience needs to be resolved. Jeff asked if the Youth Work Experience and Summer Youth Program could be linked together and have some of the youth get the benefit of both programs. Laurie responded that some technical matters could be worked out to coordinate the gaps between training dates and accommodate the combined work experience.

Hope Work & The Dream Center- Jeff Swartz

- HopeWorks participates in the Camden Works call and remains engaged. Efforts are made to co-register their participants with One-Stop, but HopeWorks is funded by private foundations, so their youth programs involvement with One-Stop is not a priority.
- The Dream Center received a US DOL apprenticeship grant that the WDB provided a letter of support for. Keith Davis continues to focus their work on the residents of Camden.

Board of Social Services

Salama McFarland, Board of Social Services

Administrative Updates, Staff & Training

- Beginning March 2nd, the office opened to the public. Starting March 8th masks are no longer a requirement, but remain optional, in the building.

*SNAP - *Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program* ,

*TANF - *Temporary Assistance for Needy Families*

*GA - *General Assistance*

*E&T - *Employment & Training*

February

CSA's 404-Total 310-GA 94-TANF

Activity Placements 126 in various places

G-Job February - 46 people were referred to G-Job but only 6 reported for March. Of the 6 reporting, 1 was believed to be employed and the other 5 kept. As of today (3/11), 53 people have signed up for the April class.

Frank commented that Nidia was doing a great job with the class, determining the needs of the participants, and offering needed assistance.

Nidia stated that the March class has 7 participants. When she tested the participants (1 were TANF, 6 were GA), the levels were very low overall (in the 4's). The TANF person tested at 12.9 in Reading and 9.3 in Math but has issues that will affect her the training direction that she wants to pursue.

- Kristi expressed a concern with how G-Job participants will gain access to the building when UI opens on 3/28. Nidia stated she would like a security person stationed in the lobby entrance to admit entrants for G-Job training. QLess is not a viable option for this training class because not all the participants have experience with the technology to use it or a cell phone. Badges for building access to training are being considered for future use. Name tags or badges are being considered to differentiate the G-Job entrants from everyone else trying to access the building once UI has its claimant appointments start.
- There are only 9 providers for CWEP. Additional providers are being sought.
- Total Applications received by the Agency in February was 1,685.
- Gregg asked that Salama and Kristi add a column for year-to-date numbers in their outcome tables going forward.
- There is no update on GA-28 Day, except that it will not take place in April.

Division of Vocational & Rehabilitation Service Updates

Jeff Deitz, Manager, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services

Facility Safety

- The NJ State Police were called to the Bridgeton office when a client returned and threatened to kill the staff. He was seen in the parking lot the next day and was again removed by police. Photos of the client were distributed to the Sherriff and on-site security. To bolster safety for the employees, 2 new State Troopers will be assigned to the office for 45 days and 2 additional security guards have been hired.

Administrative Updates & Staff Training

- DVR is interviewing for two new counselors to replace people who retired or were promoted.

Project Search

- Students are being interviewed for next year but there is still no employer committed to participating in the program. Lenape High School has not indicated what it will do with the license it obtained from TD Bank. TD Bank is no longer providing their facility for meetings, so a new place needs to be found. Gregg suggested looking into another bank as a prospect for the program, specifically naming Truist Bank.

General

- DVR's interaction with clients is still virtual and they share the concerns about the impact of UI being back in the building with customers.

Employment Services-LWD Updates

Kristi Connors, ES Manager, Labor and Workforce Development

Administrative Updates and Staff Training

- The new Employment Service trainee will be onboarded on April 10th. He has had a working relationship with ES and comes with a lot of experience serving ex-offenders or justice-involved clients with a very good track record for placement. Training for the Re-Entry Division is being ramped up to better serve ex-offenders in Camden County. The current re-entry specialist is undergoing 14 required modules through the Institution of Corrections E-Training, and the new employee will be asked to take the same training.

Virtual Service Updates and Referrals

- Services are still being offered virtually, but primarily by phone. When Gregg asked for her opinion on the use of Zoom or MS Teams, Kristi commented that Zoom is more user-friendly for clients.
- One-Stop staff are still required to wear masks. Beginning March 14th, wearing a mask will be optional for State employees.
- On Weds. March 9th, State Facilities rep. Patrick Andrews was at the One-Stop. A discussion was held at the front door between Kristi, Nidia, Patrick, Brian Ferguson, and Keith Austin on how the UI

opening on March 28th would be managed. Keith stated that phones would be on the premises for claimants to make follow up calls on site, but it is not confirmed. Keith is expected to retire on May 1st but may leave earlier because he likely has personal time he must use. No successor for Keith has been confirmed but one of his supervisors, Steve Buscher, or the clerk supervisor, Adrienne Valentine might be possibilities. Kristi stated that a UI employee came to her and robustly expressed concerns for safety. Kristi instructed her to reach out to Human Capital Strategies and to her union representative about her concerns. UI’s union reserved a room at the One-Stop for March 23rd to meet with employees.

- Nidia, Patrick, Brian, Keith, and Kristi discussed whether the front door should be kept locked on March 28th or not. Kristi stated that her Assistant Director informed her that Central Office decided that the front door is to be locked and for people to be admitted as they show their appointment. The State Health & Safety rep is coming to the One-Stop to take photos of the interior and exterior of the building. There is no PA system in the building, so the adapting the phone system is being considered. It has been brought to Patrick’s attention that there is no back door to use for an emergency exit from the ES work area, which is in the rear of the building. The emergency exit strategy from the ES station needs to be determined and active shooter training has been requested.
- See employment services outcomes below:

Employment Services Outcomes	
Year to Date Check in	4848
Provide Outcomes to Virtual Services	3478
Referred to Training	852
Referred from Training Counselor	84
Voluntary Work Campaign	112
*Correction to January – Voluntary Work Activity Campaign, the total was 96, not 24	
*Correction to December – Referred to Training total was 587	

Regional Updates

Jeffrey Swartz, WDB Executive Director

Atlantic City Electric Initiative

- Informational sessions continue 2 virtual, 1 at Camden County College and one recently at Overbrook HS. The events were well attended with 16-20 youth at each session. In addition, events are planned at Mastery, Cherry Hill West, Triton, and Sterling High Schools.
- One piece of safety equipment is on order and then the training can commence in April at the Anthony Canale Training Center in Egg Harbor Township

Summer Youth Employment

- Employers are being sought for jobs in the southern part of the County. Employers will be accepted outside of Camden County, but the participant must be a resident of Camden County.
- Leslie William stated, for the record, the grant award for the Summer Youth Employment Program is \$138,600.
- The program will consist of 7 weeks of training and 1 week of educational training that includes financial literacy, teamwork, etc. Leslie has arranged to use a work readiness training curriculum which came from a One-Stop Career Center in Texas that shared all its training resources.

Camden Works

- Gregg asked why there was no interest in participation. Jeff offered that the reasons are personal in nature. He cited these possible reasons for non-participation: work found, relocation, under-the-table employment or just walked away from the program.

SETC and GSETA

- GSETA will hold a virtual conference in the Fall. SETC will hold its Board Meeting in April. Gregg noted that the collective frustration expressed by Frank about UI is shared by the SETC.

Business Services Update

Robert Weil, Business Service and Outreach Team Chair

- Amanda Modale, Business Services Representative, LWD, continues to send updates on Camden County activity, as does Ricky O’Hara. Sho Islam, the newest business advocate serving Camden County, attended the last meeting.
- Ryan Bennett of Truist Bank is expected to be approved as a board member at the April meeting. Gregg pointed out to Jeff Dietz that Ryan works for Truist Bank, in reference to Jeff’s Project Search discussion. Bob stated Ryan will immediately be named Vice-Chair and will bring ideas, resources, and some diversity to the Business Service and Outreach Team (BSOT) Committee.
- One of Amanda’s last reports as the Camden County representative noted that Jeannie Soncrant will be returning sometime in the Spring.
- Gregg asked Bob and Kristi if, overall, the level of activity is getting busier, staying the same or still progressing slowly. Bob commented that per Ricky’s reports, things are moving slowly, and numbers are coming in at about half of desired levels. Kristi stated that her monthly check-ins seem to have plateaued at 525 to 540, and people are getting back to work because their unemployment ran out. Jeff commented that previously employed people who may now be self-employed are not being reflected in reporting, and that possibly entrepreneurial activity may be affecting the slow recovery but may come up if those new business owners start to hire.

Best Practices Documentation Updates & Review (White Paper)

Gregg DeBaere, Chair, Operations Committee

Committee Discussion

- Gregg thanked Kristi Connors, Salama McFarland, and everyone else for their contributions to the White Paper. He then stated that he incorporated those contributions and passed the edited document to Bob.
- Jeff noted that sharing the White Paper at the Quarterly Board Meeting would be a great opportunity to show what the WDB does. He discussed his idea with Bob and Gregg, who felt the contributors should present the document. With that, he invited Kristi, Jeff, and Salama to discuss the White Paper at the Quarterly Board Meeting.
- Bob Regensberger thanked everyone who participated in the creation of the White Paper. While he and Gregg started the project, Bob felt that the people who contributed the work on the processes should make the presentation at the Board Meeting. He suggested an edit to the One-Stop in the organizational chart draft to Jeff, which he agreed to. Bob then recommended that everyone have a pass at the most recent version of the full document so everyone can familiarize themselves and make comments to be included in the final White Paper. Overall, he felt the document was near completion.
- Jeff asked Salama, Kristi and Jeff Dietz if they were comfortable making a presentation to the Board about their contributions to the White Paper. Gregg asked Jeff and Kirsti to invite people she has shared her work with to the Board meeting, including the Bergen and Burlington County Workforce directors.

Adjournment

Gregg asked for a motion to adjourn. The motion was made by Frank Cirii and seconded by Bob Weil. The meeting adjourned at 11:00am. The next meeting of the Operations Committee is Friday, April 8, 2022, at 9:00am.

Submitted by:

Debra Vaughn

Administrative Assistant to the Executive Director