

Operations Committee Meeting Minutes

July 21, 2022

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

COMMITTEE INFORMATION AND ATTENDANCE										
NAME	ORGANIZATION	TRUSTEE MEMBER	9-Dec-21	14-Jan-22	11-Feb-22	11-Mar-22	8-Apr-22	13-May-22	16-Jun-22	21-Jul-22
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	X	X
Connors, Kristi	NJ Department of Labor, Business Services	✓	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Deitz, Jeff	NIDVRS	✓	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Jones-Benjamin, Michaela	Camden County Board of Social Services				X					
Maguire, Laurie	Camden County One-Stop							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	X
Ludizaca, Raul	NJ Dept. of Labor		X							
Sinclair, Nidia	Camden County Resource Center		X		X	X	X	X	X	X
Weil, Bob, BSOT Chair	Connor, Strong & Buckelew	✓	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Levitt, Alex	WDB		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Swartz, Jeffrey S.	WDB		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Vaughn, Debra	WDB				X	X	X	X		X
Williams, Leslie J	WDB		X	X		X	X	X	X	X

Welcome

Gregg DeBaere, Chair, called the meeting to order at 9:07am and welcomed attendees.

Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

Gregg asked if there was any discussion or corrections to the June 16, 2022 meeting minutes. He asked for a motion to approve the minutes, pending edits and grammatical corrections. Leslie Williams made the motion, seconded by Frank Cirii. The minutes were approved by a unanimous vote to the affirmative.

Workforce Development Board (WDB) – Planning and SETC Updates

Leslie Williams, Comptroller and Jeffrey Swartz, Executive Director

- A meeting was held by the South Jersey Regional Collaborative (Burlington County and southern counties) to discuss the steps that will be taken to prepare for the regional plan. It was decided to review the draft of State’s plan on their website, update the information and follow the layout of the State’s plan. No official information has been provided as to what is expected for the regional and local plan. It was suggested to create a regional plan and each county add in some specifics to their local areas, instead of writing two separate plans, but the go-ahead has not been given yet. A meeting is planned for next month to collect and update information. The WDB plan is to reach out to Leslie Hirsch to get demographic information and other data that is specific, not only the local areas, but to the regional plan. Camden County WDB will take the lead on putting the plan together.
- Jeff Swartz stated the WDB is going to reach out to Philadelphia Works and try to get a new contact there, to bring them in as part of our regional activities. He noted there was a pretty long discussion on the offshore wind industry and what's involved with that, as that industry is expected to grow and will have a regional effect in terms of job opportunities.
- Gregg asked if anything is needed from him or from the committee at this time, to which Leslie responded, not as this time. She said the need for assistance will depend on what the State allows in creating the local plan. If the plan can be incorporated into the regional plan, then it will perhaps only be a matter of getting information from different people on the committee to update the local plan. If the State requires a separate local plan, that will be something that the Operations Committee will need to take on. Jeff commented that the White Paper authored by the committee is really something that captured a lot of what the SETC was

looking for in terms of how local areas pivoted or reacted during the COVID-19 pandemic and suggested that our local plan could be somewhat of a tweaking of the White Paper with additions.

MOU Update: Jeff commented that the State now has asked all the local areas to incorporate the Commission For The Visually Impaired and Blind in their MOU's, which is something that Camden County has already done, but other local areas have not. The concern was that the State had offered to get the signature from somebody from the Commission to sign and then failed to do so. After multiple emails, they responded that they would go ahead and obtain the signature.

One-Stop Director and Career Center Updates

Frank Cirii, Camden County One-Stop Career Center, Local Area Operations Director

There was a minor issue this morning with the air conditioning that appears to be limited to the testing area. The testing schedule will remain as it is unless the heat is oppressive. If necessary, employees will be temporarily relocated to different areas of the building until we get the AC working again at 100%.

There is a slight uptick in positive COVID cases. A security officer and some county employees tested positive, but as usual, their exposure has been through outside sources, family members, etc.

The only County Commissioner listing for tonight's meeting is for funding the Workforce Development Board, with a slight increase in funding this year.

Budgetarily, all resolutions proposed last month are approved and the One-Stop is ready for setting up the master budget. The fiscal staff went to Atlantic County to look at best practices at other areas to set-up accounts where line items will appear in a more general way, without unnecessary detail. Another objective is to improve all fiscal processes and approach the budget in a new way, while still getting the job done. The goal is to set up One-Stop's system modeling it after Trenton's new grant system. Using this approach, when an auditor comes in, there is an easy comparison.

UI: Service is still scheduled, and going well, with an average is about 50-51 scheduled people a day. It's been higher and lower, and people are now allowed to schedule their own appointments with UI. The direct-line phones are still on site, with a constant line for phones, so people are getting help with their issues. If the phones get too busy, they are shut down at 3:30.

Learning Link: Cross-training of staff continues for Learning Link and Learning Link Live. There are some hardware and software problems with testing, but they are being resolved. The issues have to do with a problem with the contracted vendor's paperwork (for installing cameras and running lines) with the State. The vendor was referred to the One-Stop by the county IT department but must now be replaced, which set the completion of the needed work by 3 to 4 weeks. New vendor delay aside, the One-Stop is still on track for the Learning Link being live in the Fall.

Chromebook Loaner Program: Nidia Sinclair has been working on processes with Denise Tagwua (NJ DOL) from the State and will be working with the Board of Social Services, Salama and Kristi, on the flow of SNAP/TANFF clients and how they're moving through the system. Gloria has submitted the new flowcharts to the State. A weekly report of the One-Stop's SNAP/TANFF clients are required to be submitted to a State moderator every Friday. The State is expecting the One-Stop to be much more active and engaged with clientele, so there will be more discussion coming in the Fall. The plan for One-Stop's outreach using the extension of our 2021-2022 funding is ongoing. Nidia and Eric Romolini have met with the county's marketing consultant through Frank Filipek, Jr. and will meet with them again next week. The State has modified rules on what messaging is allowed to be conveyed to constituents targeted for outreach. Mentioning SNAP/TANF or in any way alluding to promoting SNAP/TANF benefits is prohibited and considered illegal use of funds by the State. The One-Stop cannot be seen as advertising or educating potential clients to apply for SNAP or TANF benefits. A creative approach must now be taken to promote the One-Stop system for that constituency. The rule changed again a week and a half ago, so adjustments must be made in the implementation of our outreach. The Chromebooks will be outfitted with bags and covers for protection and to prevent loss of chargers. In the event of loss, a police report must be filed for the purpose of insurance coverage. All SNAP/TANF and G-Jobs participants will be issued Chromebooks. Loaners will be available at the library for GA-28 participants with a provided referral.

Training Activity: While this is normally a slow time, training is picking up. The concentration of studies has been focused mostly on CDL medical fields, with people also seeking training for IT, cosmetology and other computer-oriented training. Referrals and vouchers have been coming through and the steady activity right now should be a good sign for the Fall.

Incumbent Worker Training (IWT): Incumbent worker training is off the ground. There are some bumps, as there always are in new programs, but there are 15 people in the program at the college. IWT is moving forward with other possible cohorts as the college identifies more potential businesses.

- **IWT CDL Training for Consideration for County Laborers**

Gregg raised the question to Frank, based on a comment he made at the previous committee meeting, as to whether anyone reached out to the county government agencies regarding CDL training as an IWT cohort. Frank commented that Truck Driver is a separate Civil Service title, but training laborers is an opportunity to offer IWT. He stated an offer was made, but the number of people under consideration to participate was too small and a cohort of at least 10 would be necessary.

<https://info.csc.state.nj.us/jobspec/02248.htm>

"LICENSE

Appointees will be required to possess a driver's license valid in New Jersey only if the operation of a vehicle, rather than employee mobility, is necessary to perform essential duties of the position.

Appointees may be required to possess a valid Commercial Driver's License (CDL) and applicable endorsements for the class and type of vehicle being operated.

NOTE: The responsibility for ensuring that employees possess the required motor vehicle license, commensurate with the class and type of vehicles they operate rests with the Appointing Authority."

Youth Work Experience:

Frank Cirii, One-Stop, Local Are Director

The 6-week work program has begun and is going well. Frank thanked Leslie Williams for her help. The kids are at their worksites and engaged. Jyi Peterson has been effective in making sure everything needed is available, with Diana Plaza helping keep things moving along. Diana is a huge support for Jyi, assisting him with paperwork, tracking down contacts, his schedule and scheduling for people in the program. There was slight confusion in the process to reimburse WDB. Eric Romolini and Aaron Cream worked to resolve the issue and a PO has been requested through County finance, so it should be taken care of shortly. The work experience is a feeder program for other youth programs, as it provides a skills gain to the participants and an opportunity to move into real training, jobs or supporting them rolling toward their goals. Most of the program employers are private sector, in businesses such as a beauty salon in Gloucester Township, construction and a car wash dealership. Jeff suggested adding the business names as potential candidates for the 2023 Summer Youth Employment Program.

Summer Youth Employment Program

Leslie Williams, Workforce Development Board, Comptroller

There are 40 participants engaged in the program with 23 employers. The youth completed 35 hours of paid work-readiness training sessions which were facilitated by members of the committee, One-Stop staff and the business community. Jeff Swartz acknowledged Leslie's daughter, who taught his class when his father-in-law suddenly passed away. Monthly reports for activities and finances, with a voucher are submitted to the State and a reimbursement package is also submitted to Joe at the county finance office. The program is running very well.

MIS, WIOA, Youth Work Experience

Laurie McGuire, Camden County One-Stop Career Center, MIS Manager

Absent. No update provided

Board of Social Services Report

Salama McFarland, Board of Social Services, Case Management Administrator

Administrative Updates, Staff & Training

- The Board staff is busy preparing for the agency relocation. One clerk was transferred into a new file retention unit, to gather all of the files in the agency. A vendor has been retained to scan all the paperwork for all the case files, to bring the office to where they need to be for scanning records. A new supervisor, to fill Anna's position (she retired in April), is expected to start in a few weeks. In addition, the Safe Coordinator also retired in April, so weekly meetings have been held to train staff on the SAFE program. Salama reached out to the new Director at Catholic Charities and another "meet and greet" will be arranged as there are many new staff there. There is a high turnover rate and there is a new learning curve for social services as they adapt to the "new normal" and the policy changes being implemented.
- Mandatory requirements and protocol changes began on 7/1. More business is being conducted virtually, over the phone and by email. Time limit reviews still need to be completed. Salama stated there are many clients who continued to receive SAFE assistance during the pandemic, and who are now over the max of 72 months (or more) without permission to roll back the clock. They will have to qualify for an exemption. In the event the clients cannot provide documentation of barriers that preclude them from being able to work, cases will be closed.
- Salama stated she is not sure she will be able to back-fill vacant positions due to retirements April and September. Remote work is not feasible because of the capability of the systems used and it would take State approval to make process changes happen. Gregg asked if virtual services is more effective for the population than in-person service. She commented that some in-person contact is better for social work (with visual cues) but there is a segment of customers that prefer the convenience of not having to travel due to transportation barriers. Salama stated that there is an effort to build the staffing numbers, especially caseworkers, but they still continue to work with clients mostly over the phone. The referral process has shifted from where a piece of paper from the interviewer was brought down to the basement for service by case management to phone interviews by clerical staff with an email referral system to case management. She is assessing best practices and reaching out to the State for what is mandated for assessments and other protocols
- The approval was given for August to continue providing SNAP households with the pandemic maximum allotments.
- The following numbers are for June's activity:

New Applications Received in June		YTD Applications Received 10336	
Total June CSA's - 23	GA - 14	TANF - 9	
YTD Total CSA's - 785	YTD GA - 506	YTD TANF - 279	
<i>CSA is an assessment to determine the type of work activity assigned or deferment from the work requirement</i>			
		June	
Employable activities		42	
Unemployable referrals/exemption from work requirement		93	
Referred to G-Jobs		19 referrals (3 reported, 3 remained in class)	
CWEP referrals		9	
Employed (received support from case management)		9	

- A recent meeting determined that sanctions will be delayed. The agency's pro rata is shifting, so clients will be able to retain benefits over a 6-month period. The systems all have to be prepared in order for that shift to happen. The contact will be made with clients to obtain information and paperwork will be done, but not processed to initiate sanctions for non-compliance.
- Salama stated that converting agency files to digital format was supposed to commence on June 1st but has not started to date. Once the file digitization plan is in place and staff are in place with training, a report will be submitted to the State for approval to begin to destroy documents.

Division of Vocational & Rehabilitation Service Updates

Jeff Deitz, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services, Manager

- Jeff stated that counselors have been seeing clients virtually, but he has been going out to do presentations for prospective referral services and will continue to do so. He is also meeting with referral agencies to reaffirm relationships.
- A new counselor started on July 18th. Three new people have been hired and in-house training begins very soon.
- Project Search: Clients have all been told that they have been accepted and evaluations have been completed. There will be 5 for Jefferson and 5 at TD Bank that will be ready to start in September. Gregg asked about Washington Township's involvement in Project Search. Jeff stated they will be using the Jefferson facility in Washington Township. When Gregg asked for his opinion about Lenape's acquisition of the TD Bank license. Jeff commented that with Lenape having a license and being on the Steering Committee, he feels there is a conflict of interest involved in their use of the license. He said Jefferson is a model program but TD Bank's program seems to lack direction.

Employment Services-LWD Updates

Kristi Connors, Labor and Workforce Development, ES Manager

- Kristi stated GA-28 Day started on July 7th and 4 orientations have been held thus far. There were 77 people scheduled, 40 attended (52% show-rate, pre-pandemic was 35%). Thirty-five people of the 40 who attended, opted for of Zoom sessions with Owl technology (87.5% Zoom, 12.5% chose in-person) The Zoom links were texted 1.5 hours prior to the sessions to minimize missed attendance. The workshop is given to the facilitator on a flash drive with all necessary links and documents. During the orientation, there is a link in chat and a QR code provided for the attendees to fill out a short MS form and attendance information can be captured. Just by attending the orientation, customers learn how to use a Zoom meeting, how to use a QR code and how to fill out a form. In the event that intake forms are not turned in, skeleton files are created file activity information and calls are made to obtain what is needed for AOSOS.
- Forklift Safety Certification class – Attendance has been low, so a new marketing plan is needed. Six people have earned certifications in 2 class sessions. No forklift experience is required.
- UI has interviewed for the manager position, but no hire has been made. A new Chief has not been named. On June 20th, Navient's contract ended to provide call center services for UI. Starting July 1st, people can now self-schedule their own UI appointments. The appointment backlog was at 80,000 and is now at 18,000. A meeting of UI managers revealed that UI wants the phones used at the One-Stop by people with appointments. Hand-outs will be created to let people know how to self-schedule appointments. The April/May UI scheduled appointments averaged 56 and June/July averaged 40 because of the end of the month lull when Navient's contract ended. Appointments are being capped at 52-53 because of staffing.
- Google Suite is still being blocked, so Kristi needs to use her own laptop to provide fiscal year comparison information.
- Kristi will be meeting with the Re-Entry Coordinator to get more insight on the justice-involved customers. Twenty-seven people were referred from probation who were contacted, but only 3 people responded. Kristi's thought is that when probation meets with its clients, they could assist them with completion of an intake form for ES.
- Options to moving away from AOSOS are still being explored by the Modification Team. Geo-Cities and Salesforce are being considered. Of the 15-16 ES Services originally using AOSOS, only NY and NJ remain. Kristi wants to poll the agencies that changed systems about what change was made and if it is an improvement over ASOS.

See Employment Services Outcomes below:

Employment Services Outcomes	Fiscal Year 2021	
	May 13 – June 15	YTD
Customer Check in	507	6613
Virtual Service Center Outcomes	265	4483
Referred to Training	73	1117
Referred from Training Counselor (Path to Employment Referrals)	7	117
Voluntary Work Activity Campaign	1	121
<i>*Path to Employment – MIS is starting to send people to the Career Connections Lab. Training participants are given 3 hours to provide their resume for assistance with revisions and updates with newly obtained credentials.</i>		

- ES is on a hybrid schedule with staff working remotely 2 days starting on July 1st. Kristi stated that she believes the people are more productive working from home. It is a pilot program. The AWP option offered makes it possible for people to work an extra half hour for nine days and get the 10th day off. The DOL is working to give people options, which seems to be good for morale.

Business Services Outreach Team (BSOT)

Leslie Williams, Workforce Development Board

The next BSOT meeting is scheduled this afternoon, so a better update will be available after that meeting.

- Robert Brown introduced himself as the new Burlington/Camden/Gloucester County veterans business rep.
- **ACE:** Camden County College reported that the 2022 WISE/GIE cohort of individuals who took the CAST Test all passed, and the program now has a 100% pass rate.
 - ACE has partnered with another company CCI (Contact Callers, Inc.) for an 18-month project to replace 500,000 electrical meters, starting in the southern part of the state. Jeff attended a recruitment event at CCI. The project is to replace both residential and commercial meters with what they call “Smart Meters” and may possibly result in permanent positions. The new ACE representative, Rachelle Dorsey, specifically requested the contact information of the people who participated in the cohort at Camden County College and passed the CAST Test. The service vehicles for the jobs will have to be picked up daily in Bridgeton.
- GSETA has an Executive Director, in addition to the President, who is now a paid staff member. GSETA annual conference will be held virtually in October. The conference information will be provided in August.

Adjournment

Gregg asked for a motion to adjourn. The motion was made by Frank Cirii and seconded by Salama McFarland. The meeting adjourned at 10:21am.

The next meeting for the Operations Committee will be on Thursday, August 18, 2022 at 9:00am.

Submitted by:

Debra Vaughn

Assistant to the Executive Director