



Supporting the Development and Retention of a World Class Workforce

Jeffrey S. Swartz, Executive Director

Matthew Verney, Board Chair

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

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

ATTENDANCE

MEMBERS		14-May-21	11-Jun-21	9-Jul-21	6-Aug-21	10-Sep-21	12-Oct-21
DeBaere, Gregg T., CHAIR	Atlantic Coast Communications	X	X	X	X	X	X
Cirii, Frank	Camden County One Stop	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		
Martin, Lauwana	Camden County Board of Social Services				X		
McFarland, Salama	Camden County Board of Social Services	X				X	X
Regensburger, Robert	Lockheed Martin	X	X	X	X	X	X
Shump, Patricia	NJ Dept. of Labor				X		
Sinclair, Nidia	Camden County Resource Center	X					
Weil, Bob	WDB Chair		X	X		X	
Swartz, Jeffrey S.	WDB	X	X	X	X	X	X
Williams, Leslie J	WDB	X	X	X	X	X	X
Varallo, Kathleen	WDB	X	X		X	X	X

WELCOME

Jeffrey S. Swartz, Executive Director, called the meeting to order at 9:20am and welcomed attendees. He said Gregg would be joining the call in a few minutes. He asked the committee to review the minutes and said Gregg will probably go over any changes with Kathleen Varallo, Administrative Assistant, WDB. He asked if there were any additional corrections or edits. Jeff as asked for a motion to approve the minutes, September 10th, 2021, pending Gregg's review. Frank Cirii made the first motion; Leslie Williams made the second motion. By unanimous vote to the affirmative the motion was carried, and minutes September 10th, 2021, were approved.

• **ONE – STOP & WDB CERTIFICATION**

Gregg asked Leslie Williams, Comptroller, WDB, to report on any updates to the WDB certifications or planning. Leslie reported the certification was approved at the last State Employment and Training Commission (SETC) meeting, September 15th, and the certificate is posted in the WDB office. She noted again, the local WDB was the first in the State to be certified. She did not hear about any guidance coming forth for the local and regional plan. Gregg said they are now talking about a late fall, early winter timeline. Jeff said the SETC may be waiting to get more technical guidance from the FEDS regarding planning. He has spoken to the southern county regional WDB Directors, as discussed, about the idea of writing one regional plan instead of each county writing a separate plan. The plan would include highlights of the activities in the local areas, and would place a strong emphasis on regional economic growth. He

also noted the SETC did not want to see long lengthy documents, and were in favor of the idea, but are still waiting for more specific guidance. Leslie said she will begin to compile the statistics and demographic insertions, so we can be ahead of planning. She receives periodic statistical data from the State that can be used in the plan.

- **ONE-STOP CAREER CENTER UPDATES**

Frank Cirii, Local Area Operations Director, reported the One-Stop held its monthly WorkFirst NJ Operational Meeting on Wednesday, October 6th. He encouraged members of the Operations Committee to attend, if they are not already doing so, as their schedule allows. It was discussed at that meeting about how operations will resume. The discussion was facilitated from the vendor level, and addressed the impact that continued state waivers are having on every level of the system. He said the partner meetings also continue, on a regular monthly basis, and we are coordinating with Kristi Connors, Manager, Employment Services, DOL, on state partner's return to work policies and procedures. The State obviously has different rules and regulations regarding safety protocols. He said we'll be working to coordinate offices spaces, schedules, and merging some procedural changes.

Frank reported there have not been any major incidences occurring outside of some angry customers still needing help with Unemployment (UI) claims. In most cases they are getting redirected before they get a chance to enter the building. There are still many walk-up customers looking for help.

Frank reported there have been some software issues with the QLess scheduling system. Scott Stetzer, Manager, Tech Support, is working with the company to fix the system. He said we will be looking at the State's scheduling system, which is being implemented upon their reopening or returning to the building.

Frank reported the County did co-sponsor an in-person Job Fair at the Cherry Hill Mall, with Sun Newspaper, on Friday, September 17th, 10:00am-2:00pm, in the Nordstrom corridor. There were county tables with staff attending. The WDB hosted a table as well. There were non-profit agencies as well as 40 plus employers attending. Frank said he thought it was successful given the current conditions. There were 100plus people visiting tables, and about 125 that pre-registered for the event. The event went well considering the current conditions.

Frank reported Laurie Maguire, Manager MIS, has completed the documents for Incumbent Worker Training (IWT). The application package is complete and was approved by Jeff, so that it can be filled out electronically, by the employer, with assistance from Camden County College. Software is on order, to enable that fillable capability. He said the sub-committee, including the College, will continue to meet on a regular basis to hopefully get the first cohort into training over the next 30-60 days.

Frank said staff is continuing to promote the Virtual Services Directory with the QR code Kristi added. It was handed out at the Job Fair on September 17th. Email outreach continues as well. Jeff noted the directory is posted to the WDB website and it was sent out to the Literacy Committee along with meeting materials. Members of the Literacy Committee have contacts in the southern part of the County. Jeff asked Frank and Kristi if staffs are keeping track of customer numbers, appointments, and zip codes. Kristi said her staff in ES is using the same

check-in form even for virtual services. She said when it comes to overall counting; it's not clear how QLess is tracking customer flow. There have been some problems with that system. She will be working with a new scheduling system the State is presenting, and trying to coordinate with partners at the One-Stop. Kristi went on to say there may be three customers in the building per week, but virtually we may have provided services for over 100 customers. The Committee discussed the challenges with hosting two separate scheduling systems. All agreed it may be wise transition to one system augmented with some manual entry. Gregg said it wouldn't be the first-time data had to be pulled from multiple sources to create reports. He did ask how virtual services are being counted. Frank said all measurable customer service is entered in to the AOSOS system.

- **YOUTH ONE-STOP UPDATES**

Frank reported youth sub-committee continues to meet regarding the Youth One-Stop Video. He said Alex Levitt, Administrative Assistant, WDB has done an awesome job with the video that was presented at the September Quarterly Board of Trustees Meeting. He will be incorporating feedback from that meeting, and the final video will be posted to the county site along with the virtual services directory and other onboarding information. He said we will be promoting youth services more aggressively on social media as well.

Frank reported youth experience has been a challenge now, mainly because current youth coming through the system are older, and want to go straight to work. Some of these youths are getting put into training, but paid internship experience continues to be a challenge. He said we will continue to look at that challenge. Financial Literacy is in place for those requesting that type of counseling. Gregg asked if there is an age cut-off for youth work experience. Frank said once youth reach the age of 19-21, they just want to be trained and go to work. Frank felt that once more youth customers are being seen live, counselors will find ways to improve outcomes. He said everyone coming through the system is requesting training in CDL, CMA, and Tech with some asking for HR and Management courses.

Gregg asked about the overall temperature at the Job Fair. He asked if people were looking for new careers, and or was there a sense of urgency to get back to work. Frank said there were a normal percentage of people just looking or browsing. He said he's never seen this type of circumstance where there were more vendors and employers than job seekers. Some jobseekers in attendance were very specific about the job they were looking for. He noted one gentleman that was looking specifically for a job in the radio industry. Jeff said most of the jobseekers he spoke with were of a more mature age category. He was hoping to speak with a younger demographic about the ACE program and other initiatives, but did not see many in attendance.

- **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 new hires that started in August have been distributed to various departments. Most of the new

hires will go to the processing department, and those in that department will get placed in departments that have the greatest need. She was informed about two more new hires that started on September 15th. One was very new to the department.

Salama reported, for the month of September, the Board received 1574 new online applications plus 201, by mail. She said notices will be sent out to TANF and eligible-to-work GA recipients letting them know that mandatory work activity requirements will begin as of January 2022. Gregg asked if that meant the State is not going to a voluntary system. Salama said voluntary participation may remain for SNAP recipients. It's still not clear how waivers will be retracted. Specifics are still being discussed. Kristi asked if GA 28-day requirements will resume. Salama said no one wants to overwhelm the system, so they are discussing a gradual roll-back. She is not sure which program will start first. Kristi asked Salama to keep her posted, and she would do the same.

Salama reported in September, staff outreached to 999 SNAP recipients, 422 TANF, 499 GA, and currently referred 34 SNAP participants, 9 TANF, and 10 GA. The numbers actively participating in volunteer work activities are 1 SNAP, 39 TANF, and 74 GA. Of those, 2 TANF recipients are receiving childcare, 9 TANF are receiving transportation, and 14 GA are also receiving transportation assistance. Gregg said it sounds like volunteer activity is holding solid. He asked if there were any further questions for Salama, hearing none he moved to DVRS updates.

- **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 Dietz, Manager, DVRS, DOL, reported they are working with a lot of customers virtually. Counselors are very busy with clients who have fears about returning to work for mental health and safety reasons. He said it's like all other agencies; they are having a hard time with job placement. It has given counselors a chance to hone their coaching skills.

Jeff D. reported the Project Search program is started. He said there are no county participants in the Jefferson/Kennedy cohort, but we have 8 participating in the TD Bank cohort. The training is beginning in-person. Gregg asked if the Lenape School took over. Jeff D. confirmed they did take over the license, and the Advisory Committee is watching closely to see if there are any conflicts of interest in cohort selection as a result. This year's program puts a greater emphasis on placement outcomes. The training providers will be paid based on positive outcomes for the cohort. They are being trained in bookkeeping, general, and hotel operations.

- **EMPLOYMENT SERVICES, DOL, UPDATE**

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/career-services/>

Kristi Connors, Manager, Employment Services, DOL, reported her division is planning to return to in-person work schedules as of October 18th. Staff will continue to deliver services virtually. The State is currently in the process of beta testing the NIC Telegov scheduling system. She has been in meetings with the Vendor, State Chief, and other ES Manager to figure out what is needed to implement the system. This is the same system used by Motor Vehicles. She said the thing we have to convey to the vendor is that Motor Vehicle has a different menu of services. ES is comprised of an umbrella of services, and agencies with many different menus of services, so it will have to be approached in a different way. Access and administration will be very different. She said it is a pretty intuitive system that uses point and click options. The system will allow staff to vet customers with use of a form. This may sort out those wanting to get into the building just to see someone about UI claims.

Kristi reported a temperature scanner has been placed at both entrances as required by the State. This is an honor system check as there will not be guards there to monitor or record temps. The system measures with a green red light. If the light is red, staff or customers will be required to inform a supervisor, return to their car for ten minutes, and then check again. Kristi said she is coordinating with Frank to let staff know the monitoring system is near the time clocks, and this is a state requirement, not county. Kristi said she is still waiting for guidance about non-vaccinated staff, and Covid testing requirements. She said all her staff has been vaccinated, so she is not expecting any issues with mandates.

Kristi reported Unemployment (UI) staff will be returning to in-person work. They will be looking for extra desk space, because they hired 12 people. They may have to take space at the front of the facility, which could cause an issue with walk-in customers looking for help with claims. Gregg asked what roles the new hires are taking on. Kristi said they are adjudicators. These are not front line staff as those positions are being phased out. She said desk space is tight, so they may have to use classrooms to safely meet with customer's in-person. Jeff asked and Kristi confirmed that customers will be temperature scanned. She requisitioned another scanner for the customer entrance. Kristi asked and Jeff confirmed that the security guards will be responsible for monitoring the customer check in point.

Kristi reported her staff has been involved with training staff, and other local areas on the process of uploading forms and documents. A new system was implemented, so this is causing troubleshooting since the transfer to single device docking station computing.

Kristi reported year-to-date check-ins, as of today's meeting, were 2074. Virtual service requests forms 1633, and of those, 400 were referred for training. Training counselors referred 48 customers back to ES. The voluntary call campaign, initiated by the Board of Social Services, produced 46 referrals to ES for services. Kristi said she will keep everyone posted about the results of the new scheduling system, and how it can be coordinated with QLess to keep accurate check-in customer counts, and work flow reports. She can create a QR code for a manual check-in as needed. Some data can also be manually uploaded to work flow reports. The Committee discussed the easiest ways to capture customer information, and keep track of customer flow. All agreed the customer counts, zip codes, and service requests, has been important information to document. Kristi said head counts will be important even if it's for those who are turned away because of UI. If numbers increase, she will be able to make the case for increased security.

- **REGIONAL ACTIVITIES**

Jeff reported WDB staff has been attending some outreach efforts to promote the ACE program for 2022. The next cohort of WISE and GIE math classes will be start in January. As mentioned earlier, he and Leslie attended the Job Fair on September 17th, and will be attending the two high school career days in Camden and Winslow Township. Gregg asked and Jeff confirmed that participants of the past line school cohorts receive regular updates about progress for that training.

Jeff reported Camden and Atlantic County have been working diligently to get the Line School Training up and running at the Anthony Canale Training Center in Egg Harbor Township, NJ. Sherwood Taylor, Atlantic Cape Community College, who oversees the program, is still waiting for some of the yard equipment, and safety gear to be delivered to the training site. They are hoping to start the yard training in the next few weeks. Gregg suggested that the WDB get there in-person, and take some photos of the cohort in the process of training.

Jeff reported Camden Work is going well. A progress press letter was sent around noting that over 400 candidates were successfully placed in jobs. The program is going into its 3rd year, and is exceeding its original expectations.

Jeff reported GSETA is in the process of planning a virtual employment and training conference scheduled for November 15th & 16th, 2021. Jeff said they are lining up some outstanding presenters who are committed to speak. More information can be found on the newly launched website; www.gseta.org. The link to registration for the conference will be posted to the site in the next week or so. Jeff said he will be looking at several hotel properties to plan for next year's in-person conference 2022.

- **CONSORTIUM & INDUSTRY PARTNERSHIP UPDATES**

Jeff reported there have not been any Medical Consortium meetings convened. He did participate in a meeting to launch a second Industry Partnership consortium in the energy sector. There were representatives from ACE, PSEG, and others on the call. The first sector partnership was in the manufacturing sector. Several work groups will be formed, and he will continue participating, and give updates about these partnerships.

Jeff reported the NJ SkillUp program seems to be going well. The WDB is continuing to promote the learning platform that is being offered free to all residents in the State. Kathleen said the State has not reported participation numbers recently. Gregg asked if the State is promoting the program, and if so how. Jeff said other than the career source website; the State has not done much else to promote the program. They are leaving it up to the local areas to promote it. The State is covering the cost of licensing the program for all local areas.

- **BUSINESS SERVICES & OUTREACH TEAM (BSOT)UPDATES**

Jeff reported the State Business Services Reps have been helping employers organize lots of virtual job recruitments. He said Jeanne Page-Soncrant, BSR, and Ricky O'Hara, Veterans Rep. are continuing the job matching initiative. Amanda Modale, Supervisor, BSR, DOL, is continuing to send weekly reports of employer engagement while Jeanne is on partial leave. Jeanne is

working behind the scenes while on leave. The Committee is active and moving forward. Gregg asked if there was any change or progress with Amazon. Jeff reminded the committee that Amazon formally contracted with a staffing company that presented challenges to the BSRs, in that they let them promote and host recruitments, but did not credit hires back to the State. Jeff said Amazon is no longer working with that company, so Jeanne has made a direct contact with the Community Outreach and Engagement Team. They will be working on some hiring events. The WDB is posting lots of job events on the social media platforms. He said we are sharing lots of regional events as well, because we see it as a regional effort and economy. Amazon has a few facilities in different areas of the South Jersey region. These efforts will produce good results that can now be credited to the State BSR's thanks to Jeanne and this good contact made with Amazon.

- BEST PRACTICES DOCUMENTATION

Gregg asked the committee to weigh in on how they did with writing contributions to the best practices white paper. The Committee discussed their efforts to write contributions for the write paper. Kristi said she sent a draft. She asked Gregg to review it for feedback. He said he will work with Bob Regensburger, Project Principal, Economic Development Programs, Lockheed Martin, on review and editing. Gregg asked everyone to finalize their contributions by Friday, October 15th.

- QUARTERLY BOARD MEETING

The next WDB Quarterly Board of Trustees meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, December, 15th. @8:30am via Zoom Conferencing. Jeff Dietz said he will contact Karen Carroll, State Director, DVRS, to speak at that meeting.

NEXT MEETING

Hearing no further questions, Gregg thanked the committee; the next meeting will be held on Friday, November 12th. 9:00am via Zoom Conferencing. Gregg asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Salama McFarland made the first motion; Jeff Swartz made the second motion; by unanimous vote to the affirmative the motion was carried, and meeting adjourned at 10:23am.

Submitted by:

Kathleen Varallo

Administrative Assistant