



Supporting the Development and Retention of a World Class Workforce

Jeffrey S. Swartz, Executive Director

Robert Weil, Chair

**OPERATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING
MINUTES, JUNE 11, 2021**

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

ATTENDANCE

MEMBERS		15-Jan-21	12-Feb-21	12-Mar-21	9-Apr-21	14-May-21	11-Jun-21
DeBaere, Gregg T., CHAIR	Atlantic Coast Communications	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
Deitz, Jeff	NJDVRs	X	X	X		X	
McFarland, Salama	Camden County Board of Social Services	X	x	X		X	
Regensburger, Robert	Lockheed Martin	X		X	X	X	X
Sinclair, Nidia	Camden County Resource Center	X	X	X	X	X	
Weil, Bob	WDB Chair	X	X	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	X

WELCOME

Gregg DeBaere, Chair, called the meeting to order at 9:09am. Gregg welcomed attendees and referred to the agenda. He said it was a very ambitious agenda with 35 bullet points to cover. The Committee reviewed the minutes of the meeting Friday, May 14th, 2021. Gregg asked if there were any further corrections or additions to the minutes. Hearing none, he asked for a motion to approve the minutes. Bob Weil made the first motion; Frank Cirii made the second motion. By unanimous vote to the affirmative the motion was carried, and minutes May 14th, 2021, were approved.

ONE – STOP & WDB CERTIFICATION

Gregg asked Leslie Williams, Comptroller, WDB, to report on any of the latest updates from the State Employment and Training Commission (SETC) regarding the WDB Certification. Leslie reported there has been no further correspondence about the WDB Certification or regional and local plans. She noted the One-Stop Procurement is an action that is completed every two years by the local area to select the One-Stop Operator in an open bidding process. There is no formal approval required by the State, just to document that the process has been followed according to guidance set forth by the SETC. Gregg asked and Leslie confirmed that the Camden County Board of Commissioners approved the county to be the One-Stop Operator. The action will be ratified at the next WDB Quarterly Board of Trustees Meeting on Wednesday, June 23, 2021, in time for the start of the new program year, July 1, 2021. Jeffrey S. Swartz, Executive Director reported the SETC is still working with some local areas around the State that have not yet completed their 2018 certification process. Leslie said our local certification should be approved by the end of June although she was not sure of a specific date. Gregg said he and Jeff attended

the June 2nd, SETC meeting. He asked Jeff if he had any further takeaways from that meeting. Jeff said the presentation about how to deal with employee issues surrounding COVID response concerns was informative. Gregg agreed, noting the presenter covered many of the scenarios that might arise in the workplace.

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

Gregg asked Frank Ciri, Local Area Operations Director, to report on One-Stop and funding announcement updates. Frank reported that resolution requests have been submitted to the County for the 2021-2022 program year budgets. He said funding allotments were increased in most areas except the Learning Link. WIOA and Dislocated Worker funding saw an increase. Youth funding has also been increased. WorkFirst NJ funds saw the biggest increase. Leslie asked and Frank confirmed it is not inclusive of carryover funding not spent in the last program year. Frank said he was not too concerned about the cuts in Learning Link funding because there was an additional installment released in February of last year and there may be another coming in the upcoming program year. The Committee discussed funding and concerns that state waivers will continue through the end of the year and inhibit referrals. All agreed to remain optimistic as re-opening efforts continue and federal stimulus unemployment funds come to an end in September.

Frank reported that facilities and staff continue to follow safety guidelines and the County Administrator has announced that all county staff will return to full-time, on-site work on July Tuesday, 6th and will re-open to public access beginning Monday, July 12th. Staff will continue to serve customers virtually and see customers in-person by appointment as needed. Frank said he hopes the state staff will follow once they see that customers can be safely served in-person. Jeff said WDB Directors asked the State for a formal date of return to work but have not received any solid information. Frank said all county staff were surveyed to assess their percentages of vaccinations and reported back that 72% have been fully vaccinated and 80-95% have received at least one shot of the vaccine. The County's policy states that all those who have not been vaccinated will be required to continue to always wear masks in the workplace. Temperature screening has been discontinued but hand washing and increased cleaning schedules will remain in effect. All employees are still required to do a self-assessment before coming into work. Frank said employees who have been vaccinated are not required to wear masks but must do so when dealing directly with the public.

Kristi Connors, Manager, Employment Services, DOL, asked Frank if the directive will continue to include serving customers virtually as much as possible, so that if a customer comes to the door, they will still receive information about how to access services and make appointments. She said state staff will still be working remotely as far as she knows. Frank confirmed that public access will be limited as much as possible. He said they can be seen or set up an appointment as needed, and they will be notified by using the QLess scheduling system. Gregg asked and Frank confirmed that customers will be required to wear masks in the building. Both employees and customers will be wearing masks and social distance during interaction or appointments. Gregg asked what the response will be to customers who say they are fully vaccinated and do not wish to wear a mask. Frank said the county policy will be followed. Gregg asked if there was a timeframe for the county policy to remain in effect. Frank said it will remain in effect for the foreseeable future or until the policy changes.

Frank said there is no new update to the Unemployment (UI) situation. All UI contact is still being handled fully online. He has noticed a surge in UI claim concerns passed on by the County Commissioners. Kristi noted that it may be due to schools letting out. He said most of these complaints seem to be associated with PUA (small business owner and self-employment) claims that would not qualify for unemployment benefits under normal circumstances. These are claims that have been put on hold or escalated out another six to eight weeks. This is frustrating claimants more than helping, and they are calling any local official whose office will answer the phone.

Frank reported that management is coordinating with staff to make sure there is a smooth transition to using the Qless scheduling platform and DocuSign for processing onboarding documents and training vouchers. Gregg asked if the Board of Social Services worked out their interface issues. Frank said that theirs will be implemented under a different contract. Frank said DocuSign is being added to additional fiscal document processing since the last meeting, and he is looking into using it for internal employee time and scheduling requests.

Frank reported the application process has been completed and submitted for approval to make the One-Stop a testing site for the GED or High School Equivalency Test. Frank noted this approval will come from the Department of Education and he was informed that there will probably be no problem being approved but the timing of the process would be delayed because government agencies are addressed later in the year.

Frank said he set up a meeting on Monday, June 14th, with Camden County College and Business Services Reps to plan a process for implementation of Incumbent Worker Training initiatives. He wanted to move the process forward because it will take some months to set up and match employer candidates to customized training that will up-skill their current workforce. Frank said there are funds in the budget for this type of training and he wants to be sure there are some initiatives in place to use it by the end of the year. He foresees that Incumbent Worker Training will be added to the agenda of the Business Service and Outreach Team meetings. He is trying to form a team and motivate them to get this initiative up and running. Incumbent Worker Training is a big part of the Business Action Plan. He said Mike Leonetti, Paraprofessional, is working with the DOL Business Services Reps to contact local businesses in need of hiring services or help them as much as possible. Gregg asked what types of trainings are being considered in terms of incumbent workers. Frank said that will be a question posed at the meeting on Monday, such as the types of training the college can provide. The popular training may be in the area of software programs such as Microsoft Teams or Office applications and another popular demand is in the area of CDL training. He said Canada Dry has contacted us with the great need for CDL drivers. They might be matched with Mike's Driving school, an approved training vendor. Gregg said there may be some opportunities in OSHA 30 training. Many companies may have employees that have OSHA 10 and might benefit from up skilling to that next level of certification. Jeff said OSHA 10 is being offered through the Atlantic City Electric Training. Gregg said we might contact the local Unions for more clarification. He said there are all kinds of certified safety trainings that might make an employee more valuable. The Committee discussed different types of training programs that might be purchasable or qualified through this funding. Frank said these ideas can be brought up at the upcoming meeting. He offered an invitation to anyone on the Operations Committee to attend.

Frank reported staff continues to attend the food distribution events on Fridays and deliver the virtual services directory wherever they can. Kristi and her staff are making every effort to digitize and track referrals. He said she will speak more about it in her report. All One-Stop services are posted to www.camdencounty.com.

- YOUTH ONE-STOP (YOS) UPDATES:

Frank reported Youth Counselors are doing the best they can to engage youth in services and are doing a little more with referrals. He said the WorkGroup, a partner youth provider, is getting ready to start their first in-person cohort. Since the pandemic, providers have been able to recruit on their own, so this is a good sign for the Youth One-Stop. The Work Group is coordinating with YOS staff with any needs youth have and co-enrolling for services such as CASAS testing and onboarding.

Frank reported a Financial Literacy Workshop has been created and is on hold waiting for more youth participation. The youth work experience is still a challenge, and the Youth Committee is looking at ways to address this concern, as it was a finding in a state audit

Frank reported the Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP) is going smoothly thanks to Leslie Williams. She is coordinating with YOS staff, and they have a process in place for onboarding candidates to that program and especially with getting data inputted into the AOSOS system. She will report on that update.

Leslie reported the SYEP is going well considering the current environment. The WDB has received 28 applications and of those, 26 youth have been placed to start at employer worksites. She met with some additional employers and is currently waiting for their worksite agreements. More applications are being requested by youth, and if those are processed, the total youth in the program will be at 35, with a goal of serving 45 youth. A Youth Orientation to the program is scheduled for June 16th @3-5pm, via zoom conferencing. WDB and One-Stop Staff will be presenting information about the program during that orientation. The youth will start their work weeks on June 28th and they seem to be very excited about the program. Leslie said she has been working with parents and youth to make sure they are placed somewhere where they have the best chance for success. The jobsites are around the county not just in the City of Camden. She said Kathleen Varallo, Administrative Assistant, WDB, is working on the Work-Readiness Workshops and the NJ SkillUp course assignments. These are required elements of the program. Youth are paid for their time and participation in these activities. The challenge this year is the State's the wage cap at \$12.00 per hour, while many employers are offering higher wages for summer youth employment as well as signing bonuses for retention of ninety days or more. She said we are getting the 16-18-year-olds but youth ages 18 and older are not interested. Gregg asked if the goal of 45 participants is doable and if there was a deadline. Leslie said there will be more than 26 youth but the goal of 45 may not be reached. The absolute deadline will be the start of their eight weeks of work on the 28th of June, but she hoped all applications would be in before the orientation on June 16th. She said it looks like the number served will be more like 35 this year. Gregg asked and Leslie confirmed that the number of participants budgeted for was 20 in 2020, but that was because of COVID restrictions, and all work had to be done virtually. The year before was 40 participants. Leslie encouraged the committee to continue to pursue candidates and spread the word, and there are no eligibility requirements this year, only

that youth live in the county. The Committee discussed the challenges of recruiting youth in a year when wages for youth ages 18-24 are rising and the demand by employers for help is higher.

Gregg asked if there were any questions for Frank or Leslie regarding updates. Bob Regensberger, Lockheed Martin, commented on the re-opening plan. He forwarded to Jeff an email directive from the Governor's Chief of Staff that outlines the requirements by each agency and department within the State to develop a plan by the end of June that addresses the phase 3 opening and the re-entry of employees into the workplace. He said Jeff can share the correspondence with the rest of the committee. The email lays out details for health and safety protocols and what is required by each agency to submit by the end of the month. Jeff said he will share it with the committee. Kathleen will also send the Governor's re-opening Executive Orders to the committee as well.

EMPLOYMENT SERVICES, DOL

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 a new hire has been onboarded and is in the process of virtual training; she is looking to post for another position in the coming months.

Kristi reported staff provided virtual services to 5,350 customers so far this fiscal year, and referred 922 customers for training, which is 94 since the last meeting. She met with counseling and MIS staff on Wednesday, June 9th to discuss further streamlining of the referral process. They last met back on October 28th, 2020. Prior to October, ES staff referred customers to administrative staff when someone wanted training. Customers received a template email with links to the orientation, the EPTL list of training providers and breakdown of the process and instructions. Now, once customers access and follow instructions, it can be posted as an activity to AOSOS. Laurie Maguire, Manager, MIS, will be able to run a weekly report to capture the customers interested in training and they will send a more robust email to training candidates and follow-up with them. Kristi said she will send a weekly spreadsheet so Laurie can compare the referral list with customers that are following through with the process. She said ES is referring a lot of customers, but they may not be pursuing the steps necessary to qualify for training. The new process will help to narrow the list down to candidates who are seriously considering training opportunities and will also help tracking and outcomes. Kristi reported the number of service request forms filled out by customers from the State's new website has numbered 2266 since the last meeting.

Kristi said the resume writing video is entering the completion process with final edits being made. She sent it to staff for peer review. She will forward the video when its complete and it may be used for the SYEP interns for a workshop.

Kristi reported the online intake form has been created in a PDF format that can be completed

without having to enter a social security number for privacy concerns. She also created a QR code and a link to MS forms. This will make it easier for customers to fill out the form using their smart phone. ES is trying to make it as easy as possible for customers to access onboarding documentation and she is also working on MS forms to create a career packet. Once the packet is complete it may be able to be posted to the Camden County website. She said its not clear what the volume of walk-in customers will be once the One-Stop is open to public access, so we are continuing to make it easy for customers to access services virtually. The other concern is that customers will set up walk-in appointments for minor reasons and then when they arrive onsite turn their appointment into a UI concern.

Kristi said it is not clear when DOL staff will return to in-person work and services to customers. She was visited by a person from State Facilities and a Union Rep this past Monday to do a walkthrough of the building and look for any potential safety concerns. The Union Rep was familiar with issues regarding large crowds because of having dealt with the Department of Motor Vehicles opening and customers lining up not aware they had to schedule an appointment. She was told the State will be adding one or two more security guards and they would have more of a role in guiding or directing customers before entry as opposed to regular staff. She also received an email from the State making staff aware that a plan is being developed for re-opening to public access and that all staff must continue to wear masks while in the building. This will be required and not optional for those who have been vaccinated. They are looking at staggered schedules and they will continue to temperature screen staff before entering the building. Kristi said she would forward the email to the WDB. She also got another email inquiry about how the county and partner staff would be handling reopening and scheduling. She will be meeting with Frank to discuss those details. Jeff thanked her and noted there has not been any clear information sent to WDB Directors. The Committee discussed concerns about the county and state staff not being coordinated for re-opening to public access. All agreed there should be coordinated and communicated efforts by the State to facilitate best practices for what is working in other areas that have opened. Kristi said there should be a central portal where local areas can access new implementations or processes that are working and could be shared. She is working with other managers from around the State and picking up new ideas by happenstance. Kristi said she is not shy about contacting these other areas about how to implement shared best practices that have already been thought out and tested rather than starting from scratch. She noted NJ SkillUP as an example. Other counties have been using the program for months so they can help her staff better understand how to incorporate it into career services and administrative reporting. Leslie said she would forward a contact she used to help her set up the required reporting and courses for the SYEP. She said they can customize its use for Employment Services and outcomes. Jeff reminded the Committee that the WDB and One-Stop wrote and submitted a re-opening plan to the State and the County several months ago. Kristi said the current request is less formal and more about meeting with Frank and coordinating next steps and the differences between county and state safety protocols such as mask wearing and screening. Jeff suggested that the State communicate its policies directly to the individual county administrators or officials and should be consistent across partner agencies housed in one facility. The Committee discussed and agreed that communication will be key to re-opening to public access and eliminating confusion between the policies of each partner agency. Customers will not be aware there are separate safety protocols; they will want to get help with their personal concerns. Kristi said the managers from each partner agency should meet to coordinate scheduling and standards for managing customer expectations so

that security will better understand how to direct customers. Once the announcement is made that the One-Stop will open to public access on July 12th, customers will be showing up at the door and will not want to hear that there is a different set of rules for each partner agency. The Committee discussed and agreed that the public messaging from the Department of Labor needs to be clear and consistent with each local area. Frank said there will have to be a customer handout ready at the door with clear instructions on how to access each partner agency and security will be posted outside of the customer entrance. Kristi also suggested preparing a QLess scheduling guide sheet for staff and some sort of refresher training as well. All agreed re-opening cannot be a halfway plan with UI staff being present in the building but not seeing customers. If all UI service will remain online and by phone than messaging should be clearly made by the State and even then, customers will be showing up expecting some in-person help with their concerns. This was a concern even before the pandemic. Kristi said she will check the WIOA law to find out if UI is a required partner agency under the law. The State may consider phone and computer access to be fulfilling that requirement. Frank said the One-Stop will open on July 12th and will greet customers with clear messaging and help them in the best way possible to serve their needs and if the State will be continuing to outsource access to the call centers, again he stated the messaging should be clear.

- **REGIONAL ACTIVITIES**

Jeff reported Camden and Atlantic County started the first cohort of 28 participants with online OSHA safety and CPR trainings related to the Line School Training at the Anthony Canale Training Center in Egg Harbor Township, NJ. Sherwood Taylor, Atlantic Cape Community College, who oversees coordinating all the components of the line training, is still waiting for some of the yard equipment and safety gear to be delivered to the training site. The pole climbing, bucket truck orientation, and training will start once items are delivered.

WDB Directors and the ACE team have resumed bi-weekly conference calls and ACE team is offering some job openings and instructions on how candidates from the training program could apply and will be given first preference toward application review. The meetings continue to coordinate efforts and keep things moving toward good outcomes for the ACE Program. Jeff said promotions and information sessions are being planned to recruit for the 2022 program. ACE is planning to add some additional curriculum to the Worker in Sustainable Energy (WISE) program that addresses new employment opportunities in home energy auditing.

Jeff reported the Camden Works program is continuing to successfully place residents in jobs in and around the City of Camden. He said there was an official opening of the Hilton Garden Hotel which is the first hotel to open in the city in forty years, so that is exciting news.

Jeff reported meetings are continuing monthly with the State Employment and Training Commission (SETC) and the Garden State Employment and Training Association (GSETA). As discussed in prior meetings, the Employment and Training Conference usually scheduled in October was cancelled in favor of offering a series of online trainings and workshops for frontline and management staffs. Jeff said GSETA is in the final stages of revamping and launching a new website that promises to be very interactive.

- **CONSORTIUM & INDUSTRY PARTNERSHIP UPDATES**

Jeff reported he served on a panel yesterday, June 8th, with six other WDB Directors in a southern regional workforce development roundtable. The Department of Secondary Education was also participating in the discussions. The virtual round table was organized to address the Perkins Grants that fund many of the local colleges. The Colleges wanted input directly from WDB Directors about ideas and initiatives they could incorporate into their curriculum in the coming year. Jeff said it was very impressive to see so much engagement by participants and it was time well spent. Jeff said there was an industry partnership meeting conducted on June 8th as well which he was unable to attend because of the other event but he will get an update about that meeting for the next Operations meeting.

Jeff reported the NJ SkillUp program seems to be going well. It has been confirmed that Sarah Singer Quast, Technical Advisor, DOL, will be presenting information about the program at the next Quarterly Board of Trustees Meeting on Wednesday, June 23rd. Staff here at the WDB are registered and taking some NJ SkillUp courses. Leslie said the program is easy to use and she is looking forward to seeing how it works out for the summer youth interns. She will have reporting capability to track student progress. It can be tracked in the AOSOS system and used to provide training for customers at the One-Stop. Leslie said she will forward the form for administrative access. Kristi said she is planning to assign staff to some upskilling courses such as Microsoft Teams once approved by the State.

- **BUSINESS SERVICES (BSR)**

Jeff reported the Business Services and Outreach Team will meet on Thursday, June 17th and Bob Weil will be attending in preparation for taking over as Chair of that Committee. Kathleen said she has been helping Jeanne Page-Soncrant and Ricky O'Hara, Veterans Rep. with virtual recruitments by posting them to the State calendar and assisting with admitting participants during the online sessions. They are using MS forms and QR Codes to make it easy for candidates to register for these events. The advantage to the employer is a full registration spreadsheet with contacts and information about those that registered is sent to the employer after the event. Registration is usually higher than attendance, but employers get the full list and can follow-up. The Recruitments are being run very efficiently and DOL services are explained before introducing the employer presentation. Participants receive a follow-up email from Jeanne or DOL after the recruitment or information session with service links and instructions on how to apply for the jobs being offered by the employer. Kristi said Howard Miller, Director, Business Services, DOL, took to format developed in MS Forms by Employment Services and passed it on to the BSR Reps.

QUARTERLY BOARD MEETING

The next WDB Quarterly Board of Trustees meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, June 23, @8:30am via Zoom Conferencing. Jeff said it is imperative to have a quorum of member voters because a new slate of officers will be elected and the appointment of the County as the One-Stop Operator, will be ratified at that meeting.

NEXT MEETING

Hearing no further questions, Gregg thanked the committee. There was some discussion about changing the next meeting until after the One-Stop public access opening or a day change for

the summer months but the Committee agreed to keep the July meeting scheduled on the usual date and time. The next Operations Committee will be scheduled on Friday, July 9th, at 9:00am via Zoom Conferencing.

Submitted by:

Kathleen Varallo

Administrative Assistant