

CONNECTICUT EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING COMMISSION (CETC)

December 17, 2015

CT Department of Labor – Conference Rooms A&B
Wethersfield

Minutes

Present: Donald Shubert (Chair); Chris DiPentima; Elliot Ginsberg; John Harrity; James Ieronimo; Kathleen Marioni; Deborah Monahan; Dennis Murphy; Mark Ojakian; Amy Porter; Catherine Smith; Jeffrey Smith; Lyle Wray; Peter Palermino (for R. Bremby).

Minutes

On a motion by Mr. Ginsberg, seconded by Mr. Harrity, the September 24, 2015 CETC meeting minutes were approved unanimously.

Correspondence

CETC Chair Shubert reported on three relevant items of correspondence since the June 25 CETC meeting, including: an October 2 communication from Danielle Worthen-Ramos (USDOL/ETA) approving Governor Malloy's designation of CETC as the State Workforce Board under WIOA "alternative entity" provisions; a November 24 letter from Board of Regents President Mark Ojakian re: serving on CETC and designating Chief of Staff Alice Pritchard as his alternate; and a December 4 letter from Governor Malloy to USDOL Secretary Perez designating lead State agencies for WIOA programs: Titles I, III, V-CTDOL; Title II-CSDE; and Title IV-DORS.

State Agency Partners Updates

CTDOL Deputy Commissioner Murphy reported on the Eastern Connecticut Manufacturing Pipeline Initiative, involving the collective efforts of CTDOL, Eastern Connecticut Workforce Investment Board (EWIB), Eastern Advanced Manufacturing Alliance (EAMA), Electric Boat and other manufacturers. DECD Commissioner Smith discussed recent activities supported by the Manufacturing Innovation Fund, including an emphasis on innovative apprenticeship strategies. Commissioner Smith noted the importance of addressing a gap in technology training to develop a skilled workforce capable of addressing looming needs in the area of Big Data management. DORS Commissioner Porter described efforts underway to produce the requisite BRS/VR and BESB/VR content to be incorporated into the WIOA Unified State Plan. Commissioner Porter noted the importance of redesigning a pre-employment system for impacted in-school youth. On behalf of DSS Commissioner Bremby, Peter Palermino affirmed DSS's ongoing participation in the State's collaborative WIOA planning process, reported that intensive planning underway to address changes in TANF authorizing legislation should be aligned with future WIOA implementation efforts, and noted the importance of focusing on non-custodial parents as a critical focus in collective workforce development efforts going forward. BOR President Ojakian remarked on efforts underway to forge stronger linkages between workforce development and higher education, and strong partnerships with businesses and employers, noting outreach efforts to regional Chambers, CBIA, CCAT, etc.

CT Workforce Development Council Update

On behalf of the five WIBs, William Villano (Workforce Alliance) reported that more than 5,000 youths participated in the 2015 Summer Youth Employment Program, with \$5.5 million in State funding and an additional \$2 million in leveraged support. He noted recent Health professional Opportunity Grants won by Connecticut WIBs totaling \$27.5 million over the next five years. Mr. Villano reported that the WIBs are each working on developing their regional/local WIOA plans, addressing a number of potentially problematic policy changes, looking for consistency with the direction from CETC and the Unified State Plan. Mr. Villano noted that while WIOA is a significant piece of underlying legislation framing the larger workforce system and providing essential funding, the "other grants" story in Connecticut, involving millions of dollars (direct and leveraged), from multiple sources, to numerous entities, is the complex "big-picture", fuller story of the workforce system in Connecticut that needs to be understood better to guide effective strategy and policy. Commissioner Smith emphasized the importance of developing and maintaining an inventory of all relevant workforce training resources and programs in Connecticut.

Report of the Chair

Mr. Shubert welcomed Board of Regents President Mark Ojakian, noting the importance of developing educated, credentialed, skilled talent to promote Connecticut's economic competitiveness. Mr. Shubert thanked all those who had participated in the recent planning process to develop the WIOA DRAFT Unified State Plan and introduced

Rich Pearson to provide an overview presentation focusing on: core WIOA programs and agencies; timing of planning process and submission; key strategic themes; strategies elements – including vision, goals and strategies, CETC’s role, and key operational elements. In the ensuing discussion, CETC members offered comments and questions addressing:

- Importance of linking Unified State Plan explicitly to DECD’s Strategic Plan.
- Need to address strategies to serve youth as Connecticut’s future workforce as a key component of the Unified State Plan, emphasizing the critical role played by local workforce boards.
- Need to emphasize linkage with the contributions of the TANF program to efforts focusing on public assistance participants as a key target population, and the partnering role DSS plays.
- Use of job-loss/job-recovery chart/table as effective method/tool in lieu of narrative.
- Importance of developing a clearly understandable “map” of the workforce system in Connecticut as conceived under WIOA, easily usable with/understandable to various interested parties.
- Building discussion of strategies/services/programs to serve individuals with disabilities into the main body of the Unified State Plan narrative.
- Opportunity to include interests/perspectives/contributions of philanthropic entities.
- Strategic value of addressing related investments/services of Department of Corrections.
- Strategic value of addressing related investments/services/programs of Connecticut State Colleges and Universities.
- Practical value of drafting 5-10 page Executive Summary distilling priorities.

Mr. Shubert noted that the DRAFT plan would be posted on the CTDOL website for a 30-day public comment period, incorporating Title II content from CSDE concerning adult education and Title IV content from DORS addressing rehabilitation services for individuals with disabilities. Mr. Shubert concluded by noting that given the level of effort and time required to develop the Unified State Plan he intended to submit the WIA PY 14 Annual Report in lieu of drafting a separate CETC 2016 Annual Plan.

Office of Workforce Competitiveness Report

OWC Executive Director Kathleen Marioni reported on the numerous meetings recently attended with various stakeholders and partners interested in learning about WIOA and the related state planning process, including the Secure Jobs Advisory Committee (addressing a rapid rehousing clientele), the Adult Education Policy Forum (comprising state and local adult education administrators), the Department of Rehabilitation Services Annual Meeting (addressing staff from BRS and BESB), the Bureau of Education and Services to the Blind (BESB) Advisory Board, representatives of the construction industry, etc. Ms. Marioni noted that a team representing key State and local, public and private WIOA partners and stakeholders would attend a three-day “One Team, One Vision, One Conversation” national convening focusing on collaborative implementation of WIOA in January in Washington DC.

Ms. Marioni noted that guidance to directing regional WIOA planning efforts of local workforce boards would be produced and distributed in the near future. She noted that the WIA PY14 Annual Report was completed, had been submitted to USDOL, and – as indicated previously by Mr. Shubert – would serve as CETC’s 2016 Annual Plan, to avoid redundant planning time and effort. Karen Quesnel (CTDOL/OWC) and Amy Blazawski (DDS) reported that Connecticut is one of four states participating in the 2016 Employment First State Leadership Mentoring Program, in which six state agencies – CTDOL, DDS, CSDE, DORS, DMHAS and DSS – will partner to coordinate and streamline employer engagement efforts to improve employment outcomes for individuals with disabilities, with an emphasis on youth transition. Implementation team work groups have been identified and begin meeting in February. John Harrity (Connecticut State Council of Machinists) provided an overview and update of Connecticut’s Investing in Manufacturing Communities initiative. Ms. Marioni noted the recent announcement of the national TechHire grant initiative, reporting that two Connecticut local workforce boards are interested in pursuing the opportunities targeting IT career options, with a particular emphasis on 17-29 year olds with training barriers. She noted that employer participation is key and encouraged CETC members to reach out to local companies to consider participation and support.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 10:40 a.m.