

CONNECTICUT EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING COMMISSION (CETC)

September 22, 2016

9:00 a.m.

CT Department of Labor – Conference Rooms A&B

Wethersfield

Minutes

Present: Donald Shubert (Chair); Andrea Comer; John Harrity; Scott Jackson; Zdzilaw Kremens; Kathleen Marioni; Deborah Monahan; Mark Ojakian; Lori Pelletier; Amy Porter; Stuart Rosenberg; JoAnn Ryan; Paul Timpanelli; Kurt Westby; Lyle Wray; Glen Peterson (for Dianne Wentzell); Bill Seedman (for Roderick Bremby).

Minutes

On a motion by Ms. Monahan, seconded by Mr. Jackson, members voted unanimously to approve the June 9, 2016 minutes as submitted.

Correspondence

Chair Donald Shubert reported on receipt of a letter dated June 29, 2016 from US Department of Labor Assistant Secretary Portia Wu, US Department of Education Deputy Assistant Secretary Johan Uvin and Acting Assistant Secretary Sue Swenson, and Rehabilitation Services Administration Commissioner Janet LaBreck to Governor Malloy, stating that Connecticut's four-year Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Unified State Plan is deemed substantially approvable, and that the Plan is approved for the period July 2016 through June 2020, subject to clarification of conditions included in a 4-page attachment to the letter.

Public Comment

No public comment was provided at this meeting.

Presentation: BOR/CSCU President Mark Ojakian

Board of Regents for Higher Education (BOR) President Mark Ojakian provided an update of recent noteworthy developments in the Connecticut State Colleges and Universities (CSCU) system. He noted that he had spent significant time to rebuild and repair relationships between the BOR/CSCU central office and key stakeholders throughout the extensive, statewide system of 2-year and 4-year public colleges and universities, particularly in light of significant, unavoidable and rapidly growing budget challenges. He asserted that BOR/CSCU strives to be an effective partner of the larger State team, working closely with other key State agencies, specifically mentioning ConnDOT, CTDOL, DSS CSDE and the Office of Early Childhood. He emphasized the importance he places on nurturing effective relationships with Connecticut businesses and employers. He noted recent efforts to connect the community colleges with the SNAP E&T program, whereby participating colleges can be reimbursed for providing non-credit course instruction to low-income students not otherwise enrolled in DSS programs.

President Ojakian provided an update of the statewide/system-wide *Make It. Here* initiative based in the community colleges Advanced Manufacturing Technology Centers and supported by the Federally-funded CAMI effort. He noted that enrollments this year are double where they were two years ago and are expected to double again to exceed 1,000 new student enrollees annually within the next 24 months, asserting that the system is well-positioned to become Connecticut's manufacturing talent pipeline going forward. A new effort is underway working with CAACE to tap the pool of adult education students as a rich source of recruitment for the advanced manufacturing efforts. Mr. Ojakian acknowl-

edged the importance of making these programs directly accessible to residents of our urban centers and indicated that he is in dialogue with several large Connecticut-based defense manufacturing companies to encourage increased direct business sector investment to help underwrite the cost of providing these critical education and training services. He noted recent efforts in conjunction with Jonathan Slifka, Governor's Liaison to the Disability Community, to develop opportunities to increase access to and participation by individuals with disabilities.

CT Workforce Development Council Update

Mr. Shubert noted that Bill Villano was unable to attend the meeting to provide an update on key recent developments among Connecticut's five local workforce boards. Catherine Awwad, Executive Director, Northwest Regional Workforce Investment Board (NRWIB) – unable to attend CETC's June meeting – provided an overview of the recently developed WIOA-responsive strategic plan for the northwest regional/local workforce area, submitted to OWC in June. Ms. Awwad described the extensive planning process employed to develop the regional plan. She noted that the region has chosen to focus its strategic workforce development efforts on five key sectors, reflected in the plan: healthcare, manufacturing, information technology, construction and human services. She described the person-centered SDII (Service Delivery Improvement Initiative) strategy that is being built into the core of the region's service delivery process, discussed the region's engagement in the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston's Working Cities Challenge, described the new American Job Center office in Torrington, and provided information on the recently awarded \$4 million TechHires grant on which NRWIB and Workforce Alliance successfully partnered with IBM, Cigna, Frontier Communications, CT Technology Council and others to develop and provide IT technical skills training for youth, young adults and incumbent workers focusing on career opportunities in cybersecurity.

Report of the Chair

Chair Donald Shubert reported that the proposed new WIOA-responsive CETC By-Laws had been approved by way of a vote conducted by email. Office of Workforce Competitiveness (OWC) Executive Director Kathy Marioni provided a brief update on work that had been conducted over the summer to provide requested clarifications in response to the conditions noted in the letter from US officials approving Connecticut's Unified State Plan. She acknowledged the efforts of colleagues from CTDOL, DORS and CSDE in supporting this time consuming process.

Ms. Marioni noted that all five local/regional WIOA-responsive plans had been received in a timely manner, staff had reviewed them all and followed-up with the local boards as necessary to clarify matters of concern, all are determined to be in compliance with WIOA requirements as currently understood – in the absence of final Federal regulations – and are complete, except for having executed MOUs among all key partners – a work in progress. Ms. Marioni and Mr. Shubert suggested – consistent with a prior commitment and CETC's role as the State Workforce Board – that CETC endorse all five local plans and recommend the Governor's approval. On a motion by Ms. Pelletier, seconded by Mr. Timpanelli, members voted unanimously to approve all five local plans for a two-year period (July 2016 – June 2018). Ms. Marioni noted the plans will be available for on the CETC/CTDOL website.

Calling attention the "CETC Committee Structure and Related Work" handout in members' meeting folders, Mr. Shubert asked Rich Pearson for an update on the revised CETC Committees, including a brief overview of each committee's proposed focus, oversight activities, action items and deliverables. The following prospective Committee Co-Chairs were noted: Amy Porter and Alice Pritchard – Service Design and Delivery Committee; Scott Jackson and Lyle Wray – Planning and Performance Evaluation Committee; and, JoAnn Ryan and Stuart Rosenberg (tentative) – Business Engagement Partnership Committee. Mr. Shubert encouraged all CETC members to volunteer to serve on at least one committee, noting that

assigned staff would follow-up shortly to meet with the co-chairs to populate the committees, get organized, schedule initial meetings, and begin implementing their respective workplans.

At Mr. Shubert's request, CTDOL Commissioner Scott Jackson and John Harrity reported on Connecticut's Investing in Manufacturing Communities Partnership (IMCP) initiative, the designation awarded by the US Economic Development Administration. They noted that the eleven-member Manufacturing Innovation Fund Advisory Board (administered by DECD) provides guidance and direction for the State's IMCP-related efforts. The Connecticut Manufacturing Innovation Fund (MIF) is intended to support growth, innovation and progress of CT's advanced manufacturing sector. Funding is available to: encourage company/university collaboration in research and development; provide vouchers to assist business development and technical needs; fund job training and educational programs to strengthen workforce skills; and, provide matching funds for Federal grants.

Messrs. Jackson and Harrity serve as Co-Chairs of the MIF Advisory Board's Workforce Committee. The mission of the IMCP initiative is to: create a center for manufacturing innovation excellence; strengthen the supply chain network; and, ensure continuous workforce development. Workforce development-related priorities include: investing in a focused incumbent worker training program administered by CTDOL; expanding use of apprenticeship strategy among small-medium manufacturers; and, strengthening the talent pipeline of students and youth pursuing manufacturing career options. They indicated that the Committee is at work on all three priorities and their intention to report on progress going forward at future CETC meetings and through the CETC Business Engagement Partnership Committee.

Office of Workforce Competitiveness Report

Ms. Marioni reported on efforts staff had pursued in recent weeks to address the questions raised in the Unified State Plan approval letter from USDOL et al, outreach to the local workforce boards to ensure that state and regional/local efforts are in synch, and the considerable effort in recent weeks to pursue several Federal competitive grant opportunities. Ms. Marioni noted that the State/CTDOL had been successful in winning a new \$2.5 million Disability Employment Initiative (DEI) grant award effective through 2020, including an emphasis on 14-24 year olds with disabilities, focusing on opportunities in manufacturing, health care and information technology. She noted that paid internship opportunities are a feature of the initiative and encouraged CETC business members to consider participation. Ms. Marioni reported that OWC staff had also been intensively engaged in helping to develop proposals for Federal competitive grants to expand current apprenticeship efforts and enhance technology options.

Other Business

JoAnn Ryan reported that the Northwest Connecticut Chamber of Commerce hosts the (annual) Manufacturing Summit 2016 the morning of September 30 at Chatterley's in Torrington and encouraged CETC members to attend. Andrea Comer provided a brief update on recent efforts of the Connecticut Energy Workforce Development Consortium and provided an opportunity for members to review a draft promotional brochure being developed.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 10:35 a.m.