

## CONNECTICUT EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING COMMISSION (CETC)

September 24, 2015

CT Department of Labor – Conference Rooms A&B  
Wethersfield

### DRAFT Minutes

**Present:** Donald Shubert (Chair); Lt. Governor Wyman; Andrea Comer; John Harrity; James Ieronimo; Kathleen Marioni; Lawrence McHugh; Sharon Palmer; Lori Pelletier; Amy Porter; Stuart Rosenberg; JoAnn Ryan; Jeffrey Smith; Paul Timpanelli; Lyle Wray; Dianna Wentzell; Tracy Ariel (for G. Gray); Peter Palermino (for R. Bremby); Giana Gleeson.

#### **Minutes**

On a motion by Mr. McHugh, seconded by Mr. Timpanelli, the June 25, 2015 meeting minutes were approved unanimously.

#### **Correspondence**

CETC Chair Shubert reported that no significant items of correspondence had been sent or received since the June 25 CETC meeting. In response to a question, Ms. Marioni noted that meeting minutes, once adopted, are posted at the CETC page on the CTDOL website, as are all reports and documents referenced in the minutes.

#### **Public Comment**

Salvatore Luciano, Executive Director Council 4 AFSCME offered public comment, on behalf of AFSCME Council 4, regarding the likely negative impact on services of recently announced planned layoffs of CTDOL staff in the American Job Centers due to impending Federal UI revenue reductions. He noted that he and his members appreciated efforts by CTDOL to mitigate the situation, but that he had provided Commissioner Palmer a petition with more than 800 signatures formally protesting the decision to lay-off experienced staff who provide valuable services to individuals using the Centers to pursue employment opportunities. Several CETC members echoed Mr. Luciano's concerns about the impact of losing the services of experienced staff with the expertise to help jobseekers, incumbent workers and employer customers. Commissioner Palmer acknowledged the difficult challenges caused by the reduction in funding, due to the cyclical nature of employment rates in Connecticut. She reported on efforts underway to retain impacted CTDOL staff and provide essential services in the AJC/One-Stop system. Mr. Shubert noted that CETC would monitor the situation going forward as part of the Unified State Plan development process and anticipates a status update at the next CETC meeting.

#### **Lt. Governor's Report**

Lt. Governor Nancy Wyman remarked on efforts underway to mitigate the impact of Federal funding reductions in the UI account and the impact on CTDOL workers and services in the AJCs. She noted that the Governor is committed to working together with CTDOL and union leadership to resolve the situation as feasible. She cited several examples of the State's commitment to effective employment and training services, citing the STEP-UP initiative as a prime example.

#### **Presentation: CT Department of Social Services – Relevance to WIOA**

On behalf of DSS Commissioner Roderick Bremby, Peter Palermino (Program Manager, Division of Eligibility Policy and Economic Security, Economic Security Unit) and Willard Seedman (Public Assistance Consultant, SNAP E&T Program) gave a presentation addressing opportunities for alignment of DSS workforce-related programs with the State's broad WIOA transition/planning/implementation efforts. They provided an overview of DSS and addressed the Community Services Block Grant, TANF Block Grant, Child Support, and SNAP E&T programs, emphasizing partnership opportunities building on a strong foundation of collaboration between DDSS

and numerous key State and local stakeholders. Members inquired about the level of TANF Block Grant funding in recent years, how Connecticut's allocation of TANF funding to support employment and training efforts compares to other states nationally, and opportunities to strengthen the employment and training focus in impending TANF reauthorization.

### **Report of the Chair**

Mr. Shubert commended the hard work of participants on the various WIOA Transition work groups in developing an effective transition strategy and contributing to development of the Unified State Plan. He reported on efforts underway to address the need for skilled workers in Connecticut's construction industry, calling attention to: efforts in Massachusetts for creative use of transportation-related training funds to build a talent pool; outreach efforts to engage the CT Technical High School System in comparable initiatives in Connecticut; and opportunities to partner with the CT Department of Correction and the Second Chance initiative to develop valuable skills among prospective job candidates.

### **Office of Workforce Competitiveness Report**

OWC Executive Director Kathleen Marioni described the process required for initial designation of local workforce areas and certification of local workforce development boards under WIOA. She noted that, consistent with its administrative role and its charge from Governor Malloy, CTDOL had adopted administrative policies GP15-01 and GP15-02, respectively, to address these requirements. Following communication on these matters with the five Workforce Investment Boards (WIB) and their respective (local) Chief Elected Officials (CEO), and upon review of the formal responses/requests received – as previously discussed at the June 25 CETC meeting – Ms. Marioni reported that CTDOL supports initial local area designation and local board certification for the Eastern region (EWIB), Northwest Region (NRWIB), South Central Region (Workforce Alliance), and Southwest Region (The Workplace) for an initial two-year period, and interim designation/certification of the North Central region (Capital Workforce Partners) pending that region's completion and submission of required forms and documentation. On a motion by Dr. Wray, seconded by Mr. Rosenberg, the motion was approved unanimously.

OWC's Karen Quesnel reported on an upcoming Diverse Ability Career Fair scheduled for October 29 at the Courtyard by Marriott Downtown Waterbury, providing event information (CTJOBFAIRS.com) and encouraging members to pass the word to both employers and jobseekers.

### **Unified State Plan**

Rich Pearson discussed a draft outline for the Unified State Plan being developed under OWC's coordination to satisfy WIOA requirements. He noted that the plan requires analysis of key economic and workforce-related conditions and trends, plus an overarching vision, with related goals and strategies, and detailed review of integrated and aligned operational elements to be implemented by the partner agencies and stakeholders responsible for core WIOA programs and Connecticut's extended workforce system. In the ensuing discussion Mr. Shubert and Ms. Marioni discussed the general planning production schedule, indicating their expectation that the draft plan would be ready for CETC review at the December 17 meeting, followed by a public comment period and final endorsement by the February 2016 meeting, in time for the Governor to submit the plan to USDOL by the March 2016 deadline.

### **WIOA Transition Work Group Updates**

Mr. Shubert introduced the Co-Leaders of each of the three WIOA Transition Work Groups to update their efforts and map out upcoming activity.

### **Technology, Data, Outcomes Work Group**

The update was provided by Co-Leaders Lois Campanelli (Manager for Performance and Accountability, CT Department of Labor) and Julie Watson (Director of Program Operations, Capital Workforce Partners – North Central Region Workforce Investment Board). They noted that the Work Group comprises approximately 25

members representing each of the key State agencies responsible for core WIOA programs – CTDOL, Department of Rehabilitation Services (Bureau of Rehabilitation Services and Board of Education Services for the Blind), and Department of Education (Bureau of Health/Nutrition, Family Services and Adult Education), plus the Department of Social Services and each of the five WIBs. The major focus is to ensure that systems and capacity are in place to collect data and report on outcomes, using common measures that cut across core programs, to meet WIOA performance accountability requirements. They noted that the Work Group met on July 29, has reviewed technical systems within core agencies, and subsequently established sub-committees to propose practical steps across agencies to a) collect and report the required information, and b) assure efficient data sharing across programs, with appropriate legal protection for confidentiality.

Meetings have been well attended, members are actively engaged. The next Work Group meeting will be scheduled for early October (date TBD) to review the status of efforts to date and consider specific proposals from the sub-committees. They noted their expectation of reaching consensus on key items, to provide direction and content for assigned sections of the draft Unified State Plan. They expect each organization represented on the Work Group to contribute meaningfully, quickly provide required information, and actively assist in developing the Unified State Plan document as requested. They concluded by asserting the expectation that the Work Group would remain in existence throughout the next year, during transition to the comprehensive WIOA performance reporting system that becomes fully operational in July 2016, and that they expect to continue working closely with and report to CETC.

#### **Service Design and Delivery Work Group**

Co-Leaders Linda Ladas (Employment Services Operational Support Manager, CT Department of Labor) and Adrienne Parkmond (Chief Operating Officer, The WorkPlace – Southwest Region Workforce Investment Board) provided the update, noting that their Work Group includes approximately 30 members. As with the Technology, Data and Outcomes Work Group, members represent the State agencies responsible for core WIOA programs – CTDOL, DORS, and CSDE, plus DSS and the WIBs. They noted that the Work Group met July 23, August 6, August 20, and September 9. Their objective is to develop a strategy for efficient collaboration to deliver effective workforce services to jobseeker and business customers through the One-Stop system, focusing on: practical vision for services through comprehensive One-Stop centers; guiding principles for customer-centered service delivery; effective alignment and coordination of program services across agencies/programs; efficient common intake, enrollment, assessment and service referral; MOUs among State agency partners and between WIBs and partners at the local level; staff development and cross-training; and, integration of UI staff and services into One-Stop operations. They reported that Work Group members take seriously the charge of proposing practical actions that can be implemented promptly, across multiple agencies and programs, to ensure the full range of services are available and delivered to customers to achieve desired outcomes.

The next Work Group meeting will be scheduled for early-mid October (date TBD). The group is working to reach consensus, to provide direction and content for assigned sections of the draft Unified State Plan. As with the other Work Groups, the Co-Leaders expect participating organizations to contribute, provide required information, and assist in developing the Unified State Plan document, and anticipate that the Work Group will remain in business during the upcoming transitional year, monitoring activity across the One-Stop system, reporting regularly to CETC on progress.

#### **Business Engagement Work Group**

Co-Leaders Ram Aberasturia (Director of Labor Operations, Employment Services, CTDOL) and Virginia Sampietro (Director of System Development, Eastern CT Workforce Investment Board) provided the update. They reported that the Work Group has about 25 members, including the three State agencies responsible for core WIOA programs – CTDOL, DORS and CSDE – joined by representatives of the Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD), Board of Regents for Higher Education (BOR/CSCU), each of the WIBs, and three CETC members: JoAnn Ryan (NW CT Chamber of Commerce), Andrea Comer (CBIA Education Foundation) and Elliot Ginsberg (CT Center for Advanced Technology). The Work Group has met three times and

meetings have been well attended. Participation has been lively and members have provided information when asked.

The major focus is on effective partnerships with businesses to help meet employers' current and projected workforce needs. The emphasis is on developing industry partnerships, sector strategies, and career pathways to help existing employees improve skills and bring younger workers into growing industries. Efforts are underway to: identify targeted industry sectors and effective industry partnerships/sector strategies/career pathways initiatives in CT; identify best practices; develop common definitions; develop strategies to increase the numbers attaining industry recognized credentials, and promote apprenticeships; propose State actions to enhance industry partnerships; coordinate delivery of effective services via Business Service Teams through a "single point of contact" model. The group is focused on developing core concepts that are consistent statewide but allow regional flexibility to meet the needs of the businesses and ensure that workers have viable career opportunities. They indicated their intention to keep CETC updated on progress, seek input, and welcomed any CETC members – particularly business representatives – to join the Work Group and contribute insights.

Mr. Shubert noted that he hoped to convene CETC business members to review the ideas and proposals being developed by this Business Engagement Work Group through a business/employer filter. On behalf of CETC, he again thanked all of the Co-Leaders and Work Group participants for their efforts. He noted that CETC members should expect to see interim drafts of the Unified State Plan in upcoming weeks, with ample time for review prior to the December 17 CETC meeting.

**Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 10:40 a.m.