

**Vermont State Workforce Development Board**

Operating Committee - Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, January 17th, 2023

12:30 – 1:30 pm

**Committee Members in Attendance**: Chris Loso, Ellen Kahler, Michael Harrington, Adam Grinold, Lindsay Kurrle, Joyce Judy, Kristin Kellett, Heather Bouchey

**Guests in Attendance**: Victoria Biondolillo, Abigail Rhim

Introductions/Board Updates

State Workforce Development Board Executive Director Victoria Biondolillo noted her return to the Board. She shared that she has also joined the senior policy team, which will complement the work of the Board. She reminded the group that the strategic plan discussed today is to address the role of the Board, *not* a strategic plan to address the workforce system.

Review Strategies/Benchmarks Document

*Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)*

-Commissioner Harrington suggested that all phrasing be written in “action” form.

-Chris advised that a group be formed and charged to oversee the collection, reporting and evaluation of performance measures.

-Joyce asked if there can be any form of accountability baked into the plan. Victoria noted that while the Board can’t penalize anyone directly, memos can be produced and sent to the Governor’s office for corrective measure. For the work of the One-Stop Operator, the contract can be terminated.

*Align Workforce System*

-Adam stressed the need to go beyond a “warm handoff system” to help clients. He shared that with his experience with refugee resettlement, if there isn’t one person or entity that knows everyone within the workforce space, people fall through the cracks.

-Commissioner Harrington stressed the importance of clearly articulating if this is a strategic plan for the Board or the workforce system. This is so readers understand who is doing what work and what role the Board plays in that work.

-Adam added that the phrasing “align the workforce system” needs to be adjusted so it doesn’t appear that the Board is solely charged with fixing the alignment of the system. Additionally, he noted that if one goal is to engage with employers, it must be done in an effective way that does not waste employer time or promote burnout. The Commissioner agreed with this comment. He stressed the need to know our purpose for meeting with business owners.

*Coordinate Workforce Education and Training*

-Ellen stressed that we must define *what* is a crucial career pathway. For example, we might not need many plumbers, however, they are critical to our everyday function. She pushed the group on how we should define “essential.”

-Adam added that what might be critical today, might not be in the future. Certain careers could be obsolete in 15 years.

-Deputy Secretary Bouchey expressed her excitement for the role of the Career Pathways committee outlined in the plan.

-Adam asked if the Training and Credentialing committee work is still a charge of the Board. Victoria noted that she would follow up on this potential change in compliance.

*Increase and Enhance Workforce Supports*

-No comments.

*Facilitate Relocation and Recruitment*

-Adam shared that relocation and recruitment might be a stretch within the Board’s purview. He noted the Board’s request of use of funding for relocation efforts, but not in other sections. Victoria noted that while the Board isn’t in the business of providing relocation services, the Board can provide Vermont marketing in an effort to generate awareness.

-Secretary Kurrle shared that she sees the Board as a convenor to ensure that the needs of employers align with the Agency of Commerce and Community Development’s recruitment efforts and the Department of Labor’s job engagement efforts.

Review One-Pagers

To address questions regarding who will complete which strategy, Victoria reviewed the sample one-pagers distributed to the group. These pages include sections that address current problems, what needs to be done, timelines and who is involved. These one-pagers serve as examples of how each strategy will be achieved in detail. Each strategy will be given a one-pager, however, only two have been made and distributed so far.

Closing Thoughts

-Commissioner Harrington suggested the Board identify decisions that need to be made that don’t belong to any one agency or department. For example, what occupations or sectors are in demand. This identification would help guide agencies and departments’ strategic work, aligning the entire system.

-Chris Loso suggested a set of criteria to help identify out state’s biggest needs.

-Victoria shared that she will make edits, circulate the document again and schedule a short meeting to have the group vote to approve the listed strategies.

-Meeting adjourned.