

**Vermont State Workforce Development Board**

**Minutes**

**Meeting Date/Location:** Thursday, October 6, 2022, 9:00 – 11:00 am, virtually via Microsoft Teams

**Video Record of the Meeting:** [Vermont State Workforce Development Board Quarterly Meeting - 10/6/22 - YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kYlotIaXyAg)

**Members Present:** Michael Stack, Adam Grinold, Kiersten Bourgeois, Corey Mathieu, Sophie Zdatny, Lindsay Kurrle, Kelly Putnam, Joan Goldstein, Alison Clarkson, Michael Harrington, Daniel French, Kevin Chu, Steven Dellinger-Pate, Brian Carpenter, Michael Posternak, David Lynn, Tom Longstreth, Pat Elmer, Rebecca Kapsalis, Tim Smith, Brian Carpenter, Ellen Kahler, Scott Giles, Diane Dalmasse, Matt McKenney

**Guests in Attendance:** Len Schmidt, Michael Keogh, Emily Wagner, Rebecca Hollister, Mathew Barewicz, Lida Lutton, Maureen Hebert, John Young, Nathan Piper, Rick Bugbee, Beth Demers, Kendal Smith, Cameron Wood, Jack Porter, Sophia Yager, Dustin Degree, Heather Bouchey, Hayley Turner-Lawyer, Patrick Leduc, Tom Cheney, Sarah Buxton, Kristin Kellett, Richard Tulikangas

**Minutes By:** Abby Rhim

* 9:03 am meeting called to order.
* Welcoming remarks given by Chair Adam Grinold. He highlighted that it has been a busy summer for the Board with sector-based committee meetings and strategic planning. He also noted that the Special Oversight Committee on Workforce Expansion and Development, created from S.11 (Act 183) has begun meeting. He noted that the workforce system needs to modernize and adapt in order to support both employers and employees. He is optimistic that the ongoing work of the Board and the Special Committee will help support these efforts.
* Mathew Barewicz, Economic and Labor Market Information Director, Vermont Department of Labor
	+ The 2020 Census is not completely digestible yet, down to the state level.
	+ Although only three Vermont counties showed population decline, there are no counties in Vermont that are growing as quickly as the US population overall.
	+ Our unemployment rate is at a historic low and our unemployment insurance claimant population is also at a historic low.
	+ While Vermont has seen an increase in population, there are fewer people in the labor force. This relates to demographics and our aging population.
	+ Pre-pandemic, Vermont had 1 unemployed person for every 1.8 job openings. As of July 2022, Vermont has 1 unemployed person for every 3.3 job openings.
	+ Wages have increased due to decrease in labor supply and expanded regional competition for labor due to technology (remote work).
* Kendal Smith, Director of Policy Development and Legislative Affairs, Office of Governor Phil Scott
	+ The acute labor force shortage is visible through school closings, condensed business hours and longer wait times for service.
	+ The Governor’s state strategic plan focuses on growing the economy, making Vermont more affordable, building the safest and healthiest communities and improving efficiency and accessibility of government. This includes workforce initiatives that the Board can consider when creating their strategic plan.
	+ There are several workforce strategies, actions and performance measures that have been identified by various agencies and departments that will contribute to workforce growth and expansion. This includes strategies from the Agency of Commerce and Community Development, Vermont Department of Labor, Agency of Agriculture, Agency of Human Services, Agency of Education, etc.
* Senator Alison Clarkson and SWDB Chair Adam Grinold, Special Oversight Committee on Workforce and Expansion Development (SOCWED) members
	+ There is a need to better coordinate the Vermont workforce system.
	+ Embedded in the S.11 (Act 183) workforce development bill, where $84 million dollars will be invested in workforce training and supports, the SOCWED was created and charged with identifying the optimal structure for the Vermont workforce development system.
	+ The five committee members include Kendal Smith, Sen. Clarkson, Rep. Marcotte, Adam Grinold and Sarah Buxton.
		- More information on the committee can be found [here](https://aoa.vermont.gov/content/special-oversight-committee-workforce-expansion-and-development).
	+ The SOCWED has an RFP that is currently live, looking to contract with a consultant or entity that will compare other states’ workforce structures and provide at least three scenarios that are demographically and geographically similar to Vermont to consider for reorganization of Vermont’s workforce system.
		- The RFP can be found [here](http://www.bgs.state.vt.us/pca/bids/pdf/Special%20Oversight%20Committee%20on%20Workforce%20Expansion%20and%20Development%2009.23.2022.pdf).
* Approval of the May 26, 2022 meeting minutes.
* Abby Rhim, Acting Executive Director, Vermont State Workforce Development Board
	+ The Board is governed by state statute, federal charge and Board bylaws. This includes the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act required State Plan. While these documents mention the role of the Board and general goals, there are no specifics as to *how* the Board will go about accomplishing given tasks.
	+ An updated timeline for the completed strategic plan will be March of 2023.
	+ The distributed strategies and benchmarks document for review is a draft of potential actionable items that the Board could focus on in the next one to two years. It is only one section of the strategic plan.
* Strategic Plan Breakout Sessions
	+ Attendees split into five breakout groups, consisting of 11 to 12 participants each to discuss the Board’s scope and specific priorities within the plan.
		- The draft document of the strategic plan can be found [here](https://view.officeapps.live.com/op/view.aspx?src=https%3A%2F%2Fvwdb.vermont.gov%2Fsites%2Fvwdb%2Ffiles%2FStrategies%2520and%2520Benchmarks_DRAFT.docx&wdOrigin=BROWSELINK).
		- All questions can be found [here](https://view.officeapps.live.com/op/view.aspx?src=https%3A%2F%2Fvwdb.vermont.gov%2Fsites%2Fvwdb%2Ffiles%2FBreakout%2520Session%2520Questions.docx&wdOrigin=BROWSELINK).
* Report Out
	+ Michael Harrington and Kendal Smith’s groups noted the need to trim down the Board’s goals. With a one or two staff member team and a volunteer board, the group needs to be realistic about what it can accomplish.
	+ Michael Keogh noted that we must think about how we can thoughtfully engage with employers.
	+ Adam Grinold noted that the group must identify what the difference is between a function of the Board, a function of the Board staff and a function of external organization.
	+ Michael Harrington asked for clarification of whether this work is for the Board specifically or meant to guide the work of state agencies and individuals.
	+ Kendal Smith noted that regional approaches could be considered within the strategic plan.
* Next Steps
	+ A reflection survey will be sent to all participants regarding today’s meeting.
	+ Individual meetings will be offered to participants to further discuss the strategic plan.
* Meeting adjourned by 10:55 am.