

# Vermont State Workforce Development Board

## *Final Meeting Minutes*

September 27, 2016

### **I. Call to order**

Chair Frank Cioffi called to order the regular meeting of the Vermont State Workforce Development Board at 1:04 pm on September 27, 2016 at the Capitol Plaza Hotel & Conference Center, 100 State St, Montpelier, VT, 05601-0488.

### **II. Roll call**

The following members of the Board were present:

Members in person:

Lucy Leriche  
Ellen Kahler  
Lisa Menard  
Diane Dalmasse  
Carol Paquette  
Robert Bridges  
Lawrence Lampman  
Pixie Loomis  
Lynn Vera  
Greg Maguire  
Grant Spates  
Rep. Kathleen Keenan  
Cathleen Lamberton  
Sean Woodroffe  
Janette Bombardier  
Dick Marron  
Jeb Spaulding  
Senator Kevin Mullin  
Hal Cohen by proxy Paul Dragon  
Carol Paquette  
Paul Biebel  
Tom Torti  
Frank Cioffi  
Don George by proxy Connie Warren  
Melissa Hersh  
Rebecca Holcombe  
Jeff Wimette  
Eileen Illuzzi  
Tom Longstreth  
George Sabol  
Pat Elmer by proxy John Quinn

Scott Giles by proxy Sabina Haskell  
Joan Goldstein  
Joyce Judy  
Annie Noonan  
Rose Lucenti  
Andy Pallito

Members participating by phone:

Rep. Tristan Toleno  
Suzanne McDowell  
Amanda Beraldi  
Kent Eldridge  
Chris Loso  
Gerry Ghazi by proxy Steve Lutton

- a) The following staff from the Vermont Department of Labor were present: Rose Lucenti (also Board member), Michele Kupersmith, Abby Shepard, Danielle Kane, Suzanne Wagner, Maureen Tivnan, Judy Bourbeau, Jane Fortin, Caroline Keller, Mike McNally, Annie Noonan (also Board member).
- b) Others in in the room: Hugh Bradshaw, Tricia Coates, Rachel Jolly, Michelle Tarryk, Ian Davis, Heather Bouchey

### **III. New business**

**(a) Commissioner Noonan gave an overview of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), including implementation time-table.**

The Workforce Investment Act of 2014 (WIA) of 1998, overhauled by the U.S.Congress in 2014 is now the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). This new law determines Vermont's ability to keep federal funds coming to Vermont. The most significant part of the law is the requirement that Vermont institute a State Plan. Vermont chose to develop a Unified State Plan, the partners being the Vermont Department of Labor (VDOL), the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, and the Vermont Agency of Education, Adult Education. This Plan is over 300 pages long. The State Workforce Development Board is the only federally recognized Workforce Board in Vermont. The Board has authority in the use of these federal dollars, and makes recommendations to the Governor to ensure that Vermont has a well-trained workforce. The Board is large, due to both Federal and State requirements. Below is the timeline that the Commissioner presented to the members:

**Timeline**

**July 22, 2014:** Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act signed into law  
SWDB membership brought into compliance with WIOA

**April 16, 2015:** Notice of Proposed Rulemaking: USDOL & USDOE draft rules released

**August 2015:** Training Provider Eligibility Procedures updated  
Complaint Procedures updated (Workforce Development / Employment Services)

**December 9, 2015:** SWDB Governance Document approved  
SWDB – VDOL MOU signed, designating VDOL as:

- (1) One-Stop Operator;
- (2) Administrative support; and
- (3) Service provider.

**April 1, 2016:** Vermont Unified State Plan submitted

**June 2, 2016:** Act 157 (Miscellaneous Economic Development bill) signed into law amending 10 V.S.A. § 541a to align SWDB provisions with WIOA

**June 29, 2016:** Vermont Unified State Plan Deficiencies released; Final Rules made public (but not officially published)

**June 2016-present:** WIOA subgroups meeting regularly

- Cross-training
- Colocation & common intake
- Fiscal Issues/Cost sharing
- Data sharing
- Common Performance
- Business Outreach

**August 10, 2016:** SWDB Youth Committee meeting

**August 19, 2016:** Final Rules published in Federal Register

**September 1, 2016:** Vermont Unified State Plan deficiency remedies submitted

- All common deficiencies addressed and approved
- Only 2 VDOL deficiencies subject to an “Action Plan”:

  - Selection of Youth service providers; and
  - Outreach Strategy for Migrant Seasonal Farm Workers (MSFWs)

**September 15, 2016:** SWDB Operating Committee meeting

**September 21, 2016:** RFP for One-Stop Operator and WIOA Title I Adult & DW services released

**October 24, 2016:** RFP bid opening

**(b) Abby Shepard gave a full overview of the One-Stop procurement process.**

**TO:** MEMBERS, VERMONT STATE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD  
**FROM:** ABBY SHEPARD, WIOA IMPLEMENTATION GRANT STAFF, ON BEHALF OF FRANK CIOFFI, SWDB CHAIR

DATE: SEPTEMBER 23, 2016  
RE: WIOA ONE-STOP PROCUREMENT UPDATE

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As you are aware, the implementation of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act is on-going. There is greater certainty to implementation now that the final regulations have been released by USDOL, and were officially published in the Federal Register on August 19, 2016.

A key challenge to WIOA implementation is the requirement that the One-Stop Operator be put out to bid. Vermont's One-Stop System has always been operated by the Vermont Department of Labor, which was officially designated as the One-Stop Operator by the SWDB through a memorandum of understanding signed in February 2016 [should read December 2015]. However, WIOA and the final regulations require the SWDB, with final approval of the Governor, to select the One-Stop Operator either through a competitive process, or through sole source procurement. Designation is no longer an option as it was under the WIA of 1998.

Additionally, sole source selection is a very high bar to meet in Vermont. Under the newly revised Bulletin 3.5 procurement guidelines, the SWDB would have to show that the sole source contractor is "the only one capable" of meeting the requirements, and that there is no available alternative. Given the difficulty in meeting this test, the SWDB Operating Committee met on 9/15/16 to discuss and review this and other issues, and has decided to release a Request for Proposals (RFP) for the procurement of a One-Stop Operator and statewide Adult and Dislocated Worker services, which are integral to the services provided by a One-Stop Center. Public notice of this RFP has been placed in newspapers throughout Vermont starting today, 9/23/16, and an electronic copy of the RFP is available on the State's website: <http://bgs.vermont.gov/purchasing/bids>. The Operating Committee will begin reviewing and selecting bids shortly after the bid submission deadline on October 24, 2016, for a contract term starting on July 1, 2017. The total funds available are estimated at \$850,000, depending on the availability of federal funding.

- (c) **Chair Cioffi explained the role of the Operating Committee:** The Committee was formed by the board so that the full board could focus on the big-picture, and not get bogged down in the bureaucratic matters. But the board still has to take certain actions.
- (d) **Minutes:** Chair Cioffi asked the members to vote on whether to accept the Minutes of the past two SWDB meetings: February 10, 2016; March 24, 2016. Motion was made by Tom Torti and seconded by Eileen Illuzzi. The motion was voted on and approved unanimously.

(e) **Youth Committee Report:** Eileen Illuzzi, Chair of the Youth Committee, reported on the Youth Committee meeting held August 10, 2016 to determine who would provide the statewide youth services, currently administered by VDOL. There were three options for the committee to choose from:

- 1) Direct provision of some or all of the youth services by VDOL
- 2) Competitive selection of the services; or
- 3) Sole source selection

The Committee discussed the pros and cons of the three choices. They discussed the disruption of services that would result from some options. They determined there was no other entity in the State that had the ability to be the sole source provider. They further determined that if another entity were to deliver the services, VDOL would still remain as the fiscal agent. This would result in double administrative costs. The Committee instructed Eileen Illuzzi to bring the recommendation to go with option 1) to the Operating Committee. The Operating Committee voted to have Eileen present option one to the full Board for approval.

Eileen Illuzzi moved and Greg Maguire seconded the motion to accept the recommendation of the Youth Committee to accept option 1, for VDOL to continue to provide youth services. The vote passed with no opposition. There were four abstentions: Cathy Lamberton, Rebecca Holcombe, Annie Noonan, and Rose Lucenti.

(f) **Labor Market Presentation:** Kevin Stapleton, Economic & Labor Market Information Assistant Chief Vermont Department of Labor presented information including: educational attainment of Vermont's labor force; employment situation of Vermonters 16+; and occupational projections 2014-2024. *See handout attached.*

(g) **Discussion Among Board Members:** Chair Cioffi opened the discussion among the Board members – asking for members' priorities for SWDB attention. Many ideas were offered. These were compiled into the following bulleted list:

Education:

- Immediately implement Career and Technical Education for 9 – 12 grades so that there is not a financial disincentive for the sending school (fund CTE independently from the education fund).
- Develop and adopt a funding mechanism for universal early child care, learning and education for ages 0-5.
- Create a Higher Education internship model required for public funding of all colleges and Universities (Champlain College internship model) to introduce all students to Vermont employers in the hope that they will stay and work in Vermont after earning their degree(s).

- Partner students from all publicly funded schools with employers for career introduction and internships.
- Mandate career introduction beginning in middle school.
- Require Algebra 1, Algebra 2, and Geometry for all students.
- Require programming classes starting in middle school.
- Technology investments and classes need to be available in all elementary, middle and high schools.
- Create partnerships between Agency of Human Services and high school guidance counselors to focus guidance time on education decisions not AHS issues.
- Mandate that all teachers in publicly funded schools need to be tech accredited.
- Schools that receive public dollars must be providing education paths that match business needs of the state or stop receiving tax dollars. Education success linked to career success.

Workforce:

- Develop an employer driven Talent Pipeline Management program to inform workforce investment decisions and skills development in our education system. (The Vermont Business Roundtable is taking the lead on initiating this opportunity.)
- Develop state driven strategies and initiatives that encourage students (Vermonters and out-of-state students attending Vermont schools) to stay in Vermont after graduation.
- Capitalize on the opportunities presented by the older workforce needing and choosing to stay in or re-enter the workforce.
- Promote two-year college degrees, apprenticeships, certificates and work-based-learning opportunities and training programs. Build more of these programs as supported by labor market data.
- Target training fund programs to the 19-24 age cohort who are currently unemployed or underemployed.
- Build and maintain a clearinghouse for training programs.
- Address the benefits cliff for those receiving government-supported benefits.
- Build boot camps for students so they get to see the hard work that's involved in employment.
- Professionalize jobs that do not require an education beyond high school. This will be accomplished by facilitating collaboration between employers and high school educators so that we can successfully give our non-college bound

students the professional skills they need to be successful, while at the same time improving and elevating the quality of our service sector jobs.

- Develop formalized relationships between benefits providers and employers.
- Develop State structured relationship between Agency of Human Services and ACCD.

#### Economic Incentives & Programs:

- Full-time, universal early childcare and early learning for 1 year olds through 5 year olds that would also include full-time pre-K for all 3 to 5 year olds.
- Simplify current incentives, or develop new programs, to focus on simple metrics (net new payroll) so that employers can make decisions quickly and with clarity.
- Reconstitute the funding for the STEM Incentive program.
- Build better performance measurement systems to collect, make available, and use data to make decisions regarding programs and allocation of resources.
- Regulations on employers should be enforced as a partnership between the regulator and the employer. Create a flexible model that allows for compliance (Project Work Safe model).
- Create incentives to provide educational opportunities while working (GED on the job).
- Provide incentives to businesses willing to work with employment-challenged individuals.

#### (h) **Adjournment**

The meeting of the Vermont State Workforce Development Board adjourned at 3:20 pm.

Link to the recording of the meeting:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eH1iQ7jF7Ug&list=PLYV6NGVqglqierr45lygmmwbkijBwh9OI>

Respectfully submitted,

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Michele Kupersmith, Liaison,  
Vermont State Workforce Development Board