

MINUTES
REGULAR QUARTERLY MEETING
ARKANSAS WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD
January 9, 2001

Chairman Bill Fisher called to order a regular quarterly meeting of the Arkansas Workforce Investment Board at 9:00 a.m. on Tuesday, January 9, at the Jacksonville Community Center, Jacksonville. Members present included Marguerite Abowitz, Florine Tousant Bingham, Candis Collins, Chuck Cramer, Charles Cunningham, Joe Dillard, Lisa Ferrell, Don Finley, Bill Fisher, Garland Hankins for Steve Franks, LeAnne Bird for Lu Hardin, James Hendren, Alan Hughes, Jim Hudson for Kurt Knickrehm, Gloria Lynn, Kathy Matlock, Karen McFarren, Helen Moore, Trevor Myers, Jim Blakley for Barbara Pardue, James Putlak, Carl Bane for Ed Rolle, Frank Scroggins, Jim Smith, Jack Smurl, Bill Sutton, Joe Warren, Campbell Wilkerson, Sharon Williams, Barbara Wood, John Wyvill, and about 50 public representatives. Members unable to attend included Robert Drechsler, Larry Featherstone, Randy Hopper, Calvin Johnson, Steve Lux, Jodie Mahony, Vicki Rampley, and David Weick.

Chairman Fisher complimented the Board members for the excellent attendance at the past Board meetings. He then welcomed and introduced several guests, including Ms. Angela Duran, Director of Policy Development for the Good Faith Fund; Mr. Clarence Durand, Director of Engineering at the Department of Information Systems (DIS); and Ms. Anne Cole, representative from the U.S. Department of Labor-Dallas.

Chairman Fisher focused the Board on a news article from the *Associated Press* that announced the award of a federal bonus of \$2.8 million for putting welfare recipients into jobs. He recognized Ms. Ruth Whitney, Director of County Operations at the Department of Human Services and Ms. Melissa Dean, Manager of the Office of Transitional Employment Assistance (TEA) Support as well as Ms. Elaine Black, Director of the Transitional Employment Board for their work in this accomplishment.

Chairman Fisher made reference to a newsletter from the National Governors' Association which highlighted the funding levels for next year's federal programs. He mentioned that page two of the article detailed the funding appropriated for "Federal Workforce Development Programs in period from July 1, 2001 through June 30, 2002 by HR 4577 passed by U.S. Congress."

Chairman Fisher stated that the convening of the legislative session was a bittersweet event for the Board in regard to one member. Because of term limits, Representative Lisa Ferrell did not seek re-election and must leave the membership of the Board in her current capacity appointed by the Women's Caucus of the Arkansas House of Representatives. He said she was the principal author of the bill which created the state board and assigned to it general oversight of the State's workforce training programs. Chairman Fisher presented Ms. Ferrell with a gift of appreciation from the Board. Ms. Ferrell thanked the Board and staff for the work and accomplishments within the last year.

Action Item 1 - Minutes: The minutes of the December 12 Executive Committee meeting were approved on motion made by Ms. Florine Bingham, seconded by Mr. Bill Sutton, and carried unanimously.

Quarterly Report: Dr. Beene gave a Power Point presentation which covered the events of the last quarter. She stated that each Committee held a meeting within the last quarter and mentioned relations with the U.S. Department of Labor, the Agency Partners, the Governor, the Legislature, the Public, as well as business and industry. Some of the major topics included the initiation of a grant with the U.S. Department of Labor for assistance to workers dislocated by the ice storm. She discussed the WIA Tracking and Reporting System briefly and stated that Mr. Durand would give an update later in the agenda. Dr. Beene discussed the process of meetings with the Transitional Employment Board (TEB), Career Opportunities Partnership Council (COPC), and Legislators concerning the possible merger of the TEB into the WIB. Dr. Beene recognized Ms. Cindy Varner for her role in receiving "no comments" from the Board's recent legislative audit. Dr. Beene stated that the postponed Out-of-State One-Stop tour to South Carolina and Georgia will be rescheduled for April. She mentioned the optional model agreement that was created with *Beverly Enterprises* for local areas. Dr. Beene listed speaking events and meetings with local officials and boards. She introduced Rebecca Trammell and Angela Diehl who recently joined the staff. She also described the events for the next quarter, including the Biennial Legislative Session, a Statewide One-Stop Conference, a National Workforce Board Conference of State Chairs and Directors, and a presentation to the Association for Continuing and Adult Education Conference.

Report on Status of AWIS: Chairman Fisher called on Mr. Clarence Durand, DIS, for an update on the AWIS system. Mr. Durand stated that Phase I of the system was complete and Phase II was on track with 27% completed. He thanked Ms. Anne Thrash, Ms. Judy Hollowell, Ms. Lynne Taylor, and Mr. Paul Murray for their leadership with this system. He also complimented the Board and the Employment Security Department for the vision of this system. Sharon Williams, Director of the East Arkansas Workforce Investment Board, commented that the system seemed to go up and down, which Mr. Durand expected until the system moves into its operational stage. He gave a goal of the middle of February for the completion of Phase I and August as the completion of Phase II. Chairman Fisher called upon Mr. Paul Murray, Deputy Director, for any comments relating to the survey of the local areas concerning the friendliness of the system. Mr. Murray referred the Board to the memorandum that included the results of the survey. He concluded that the expectations of the local areas for the system were very high, while this is an ongoing process. Mr. Murray agreed to organize monitoring the satisfaction of the local areas and present the results at the next quarterly meeting. After a question arose from Carl Bane, Employment Security Department, Dr. Beene agreed to meet with him and the staff to re-visit the double-entry situation and the requirements document. Chairman Fisher reminded the Board that the contract with DIS stated that money would be paid upon completion of the two phases. Phase I was contracted for \$1 million and Phase II for \$900,000. **Motion was made by Mr. Campbell Wilkerson, seconded by Mayor Joe Dillard, and carried unanimously to release \$1 million to DIS for the completion of Phase I of the AWIS system.** (A copy of the AWIS status report is carried as Attachment A to the permanent copy of these minutes.)

Report of Strategic Planning Committee: Chairman Fisher stated that the Strategic Planning Committee met the day before to discuss potential duplication of workforce development and training programs using the supplementary book "Creating a Vision for the Arkansas Workforce in the New Millennium." Chairman Fisher called upon Mr. Jim Smith, Chair of the Committee, to give a report on the meeting. Mr. Smith stated that the Committee reviewed and became acquainted with the charge given to them by the Executive Committee. He referred the Board to pages 2 and 3 of the booklet which describes the elimination of duplication of services. He said the Committee developed a plan and outlined the criteria needed for this process. Mr. Smith said the Committee will reconvene on February 1 to discuss what was discovered through the Committee's initial review of the documents. He invited the input of the Board and asked that their comments be channeled through Dr. Beene. Mr. Smith stated that the other agenda items were mainly information and future items, including the funding formula and the hold harmless provision. Chairman Fisher thanked Mr. Smith for the report.

Report of Program and Performance Evaluation Committee: Chairman Fisher stated that the Program and Performance Evaluation Committee met on December 19 to discuss the impact of plant closures on performance standards and incentive funding for previous year local performance under JTPA. Chairman Fisher reminded the Board that this meeting was requested by the Executive Committee at their December meeting and called on Dr. James Hendren, Chair of the Program and Performance Evaluation Committee, for the report. Dr. Hendren focused the Board on the written report of the Committee, which was included in the agenda packet. He said the Committee found that a number of programs were designed to deal with the impact of plant closures and encouraged the local areas to look into these programs. He said even with these programs, however, there is still a concern that the local areas will not be able to meet their performance standards. Dr. Hendren encouraged the local areas to serve all people, including those dislocated from plant closings. He expressed appreciation for Ms. Anne Cole, U.S. Department of Labor-Dallas, in the re-negotiation process and said the Committee will have to see how things progress.

Action Item 2 – Incentive Funding for Local Performance Under JTPA: Dr. James Hendren stated that a letter was received from the U.S. Department of Labor stating that the local areas exceeded the performance for Program Year 1999. The Program and Performance Evaluation Committee recommended that the State Board approve the award of the existing budgeted amount of \$250,000 as a reward to the local areas for exemplary PY 1999 performance. These awards will be prorated for distribution using the previous JTPA formula, and be expended upon WIA program-related allowable activities. The guidelines for how these funds can be spent should be developed and considered for such awards. **This recommendation was approved on motion made by Mr. Bill Sutton, seconded by Mr. Don Finley, and carried unanimously.** (A copy of the Program and Performance Evaluation Committee report and Recommendation are carried as Attachment B to the permanent copy of these minutes.)

Action Item 3 – Resolution for 2001-1 for Travel Reimbursement Per Diem: Chairman Fisher focused the Board on the recommendation to approve the resolution for per diem payments to Workforce Investment Board members during the entire year of 2001 for all scheduled meetings attended. **The Resolution was approved on motion made by Dr. James Hendren, seconded**

by Ms. Barbara Wood, and carried unanimously. (A copy of Resolution 2001-1 is carried as Attachment C to the permanent copy of these minutes.)

Ratification Item 4 – Meetings Outside Little Rock: This item was included in the November 14 Executive Committee minutes. Chairman Fisher explained that the locations for the two meetings would be recommended by the staff. **Holding two Executive Committee meetings outside Little Rock was ratified on motion made by Ms. Marguerite Abowitz, seconded by Mrs. Karen McFarren, and carried unanimously.**

Ratification Item 5 – “Creating a Vision for the Arkansas Workforce in the New Millennium”: This item was included in the November 14 Executive Committee minutes. Dr. Beene explained that this document would be continually revised. She also thanked the University of Arkansas at Little Rock for their help in the publication of the documents. She said the local areas would be receiving copies as soon as they are printed. Dr. Beene stated that the targeted audience of these books was the members of the Board and the Legislature to see what can be accomplished as a state. **Moving forward with “Creating a Vision for the Arkansas Workforce in the New Millennium” was ratified on motion made by Mrs. Helen Moore, seconded by Ms. Gloria Lynn, and carried unanimously.**

Ratification Item 6 – Review of Workforce Development Programs for Duplication: This item was included in the November 14 Executive Committee minutes. **The review of programs for potential duplication by the Strategic Planning Committee was ratified on motion made by Mayor Joe Dillard, seconded by Dr. James Hendren, and carried unanimously.**

Ratification Item 7 – Proposal for Outreach Provider: This item was included in the November 14 Executive Committee minutes. **The proposal for an outreach provider was ratified on motion made by Mrs. Helen Moore, seconded by Dr. James Hendren, and carried unanimously.**

Ratification Item 8 – Performance Accountability and Customer Information Agency (PACIA): This item was included in the November 14 Executive Committee minutes and Dr. Beene stated that the letter was mailed to the U.S. Department of Labor. **The PACIA letter was ratified on motion made by Mr. Trevor Myers, seconded by Mrs. Karen McFarren, and carried unanimously.**

Ratification Item 9 – Five Year Local Plans and Funding for Five Local Areas: This item was included in the December 12 Executive Committee minutes. Chairman Fisher stated that all ten local area plans and funding had been approved by the Executive Committee. This item would ratify the approval of the five local area plans and funding for Northwest, Central, West Central, Southwest, and Western. Chairman Fisher complimented all the areas on their work. Dr. Beene recognized the representatives present from each local area. **The Five Year Local Plans and Funding for Five Local Areas was ratified on motion made by Mayor Joe Dillard, seconded by Mr. Trevor Myers, and carried unanimously.**

Ratification Item 10 – Methods of Administration (MOA) Under the WIA of 1998: This item was included in the December 12 Executive Committee minutes. **The MOA was ratified on**

motion made by Mrs. Helen Moore, seconded by Ms. Marguerite Abowitz, and carried unanimously.

Ratification Item 11 – Model Agreement with a Beverly Enterprises Facility by any Local Workforce Investment Board: This item was included in the December 12 Executive Committee minutes. Dr. Beene explained that the agreement would be sent to the local workforce investment boards for consideration and it could be changed to fit any situation. She also stated that the agreement should be used as a model for what local areas or the State Board could do for other industries. **The Model Agreement was ratified on motion made by Mrs. Helen Moore, seconded by Ms. Marguerite Abowitz, and carried unanimously.**

Ratification Item 12 – Approval of Mrs. Helen Moore as Chair of a Transitional Employment Board Committee: This item was included in the December 12 Executive Committee minutes. **Approval of Mrs. Helen Moore as Chair of the State Agency Committee of the Transitional Employment Board was ratified on motion made by Mr. Don Finley, seconded by Mrs. Karen McFarren, and carried with Mrs. Helen Moore abstaining.**

Presentation of Arkansas Working Families Project: Chairman Fisher called on Ms. Angela Duran, Director of Policy Development for the Good Faith Fund to present information on the *Working Families Project*. Ms. Duran called attention to the Executive Summary of the report entitled “Working Families and the New Economy: How are Arkansas Families Really Faring in Today’s Economy?” for the basis of her presentation. Ms. Duran explained that the Good Faith Fund was a nonprofit organization based in Pine Bluff with a goal to help people obtain employment at a living wage. She stated that the purpose of the report was to shine a spotlight on what is happening to the working families in Arkansas. She explained several charts and graphs from the report, including percentages of families below the Family Income Standard. Dr. James Hendren requested that the Program and Performance Evaluation Committee receive copies of the 1998 statistics to review. He also reminded the Board that Arkansas has the lowest number of Bachelors degrees per capita for the country. Mrs. Moore explained that the state needed to work from the bottom-up. If a person receives one certificate, they may advance to receive another and so on. She said this is where the TEB and WIB will work closely together. Ms. Duran was thanked for her presentation.

Presentation on Creating a State Youth Council: Chairman Fisher explained that Ms. Sharon Shurr, U.S. Department of Labor, was working closely with Ms. Kay McVey of the staff to understand what is required for creating a State Youth Council. Ms. McVey and Mr. Ron Stone gave a presentation including the background information for creating a State Youth Council. Mr. Stone stated in the presentation that the Workforce Investment Act did not require, encourage, or prohibit the State from creating the equivalent of a local youth council at the State Workforce Investment Board level. Mrs. McVey’s slide presentation included statistics on the concentration of WIA eligible youth and school drop-outs. The presentation also discussed what the functions of the State Youth Council would be and who could be a member. Mrs. McVey stated that several other states have requested information regarding creating a State Youth Council and it would be up to the Youth Councils to determine how they would coordinate with each other. Bringing the Youth Council Chairs and youth on board as State Youth Council members was suggested. Mrs. McVey said the State Youth Council membership would mirror

that of the State Board. Mr. Wilkerson asked for information on what is available now for youth. Chairman Fisher reminded the Board that this was an informational item and no action was intended for this meeting. More information would be presented at the next quarterly meeting.

Report on State One-Stop Center Technical Assistance Visits and Out-of-State Visits: Chairman Fisher asked Dr. Beene to give a report on the recent in-and out-of-state One-Stop Center trips. Dr. Beene stated that in general the staff was very pleased with the start made by the One-Stop Centers. She stated that a copy of the report by the staff of the U.S. Department of Labor will be sent to each State Board member. She also mentioned that a State One-Stop Conference is being planned for late spring. The conference will work with state agencies and also include information brought back from the out-of-state one-stop visits. Dr. Beene mentioned that a written report of the Technical Assistance visits to the Arkansas One-Stop Centers was included in the agenda packet along with information from the November Executive Committee minutes concerning the report on the out-of-state visits. She said the staff was still working with the agency partners in completing the State team reports and would send the report as soon as it is completed. Mr. Murray stated that a major training session for One-Stop Centers is being scheduled for March by the U.S. Department of Labor. He thanked the One-Stop Centers for their hospitality and reassured the Board that the report on the visits would be sent out shortly. (A copy of the Technical Assistance Visits to the Arkansas One-Stop Centers is carried as Attachment D to the permanent copy of these minutes.)

Announcements: Chairman Fisher announced that the staff just received word that the Burlington plant buyout plan had fallen through and none of the workers would be retained. Mr. Alan Hughes stated that the Dislocated Worker Task Force was currently working on ten separate plant closures. Chairman Fisher reassured the Board that the performance standards would be revisited due to these closures. Ms. Anita Freer, Area Supervisor, Office of Career Opportunities, Tech Prep, and Special Projects for the Department of Workforce Education distributed a flyer and spoke briefly about the Groundhog Job Shadow Day. Chairman Fisher announced that the next Executive Committee meeting would be February 13 at the Arkansas Activities Association and the next regular quarterly meeting would be April 10. He asked the Board to sign their TR-1s and to give any suggestions for agenda items to Dr. Beene.

Adjournment: **The meeting was adjourned at 11:40 a.m. on motion made by Dr. Kathy Matlock, seconded by Mr. Bill Sutton, and carried unanimously.**

Bill Fisher, Chair

Dr. Linda Beene, Executive Director