

MINUTES
REGULAR QUARTERLY MEETING
ARKANSAS WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD
April 10, 2001

Chairman Bill Fisher called to order a regular quarterly meeting of the Arkansas Workforce Investment Board at 9:00 a.m. on Tuesday, April 10, at the Embassy Suites Hotel, Little Rock. Members present included Marguerite Abowitz, Tom Anderson, Candis Collins, Chuck Cramer, Charles Cunningham, Larry Featherstone, Don Finley, Bill Fisher, Steve Franks, Mary Beth Green, Lu Hardin, James Hendren, Calvin Johnson, Steve Lux, Gloria Lynn, Kathy Matlock, Karen McFarren, Helen Moore, Trevor Myers, Mike Norton, Jim Pickens, Carl Bane for Ed Rolle, Frank Scroggins, Jim Smith, Jack Smurl, Joe Warren, Robert White, Campbell Wilkerson, Barbara Wood, John Wyvill, and about 50 public representatives. Members unable to attend included Joe Dillard, Robert Drechsler, Randy Hopper, Alan Hughes, Kurt Knickrehm, Jodie Mahony, Jim Putlak, Bill Sutton, and David Weick.

Chairman Fisher welcomed and introduced new members Tom Anderson, Representative Robert White (House of Representatives position appointed by the Speaker), Representative Mary Beth Green, Mike Norton, and Jim Pickens. Chairman Fisher expressed appreciation for the former Board members whose positions were being represented by the new members he introduced. He then introduced the special guests for the meeting, including two students with Representative Calvin Johnson, Mr. Jeff Hankins of *Arkansas Business*, Dan Cowling and others of the *Communications Group*, and several graduates of Adult Education programs in Arkansas.

Action Item 1 - Minutes: The minutes of the March 13 and 29 Executive Committee meetings were approved on motion made by Charles Cunningham, seconded by Karen McFarren, and carried unanimously.

Chairman Fisher stated that the agenda would be slightly rearranged to allow the special guests to give presentations at the beginning of the meeting for benefit of those Board members returning to the Capitol for legislative session meetings.

Presentation from Arkansas High School Graduates: Chairman Bill Fisher asked Campbell Wilkerson to introduce the graduates who were present to speak about their experiences. Mr. Wilkerson told the Board that he had been working with workforce education and development for over 15 years, and the people present today are the reason he continues to work with these programs. Mr. Wilkerson said he spoke to a group at the Adult Education conference and was touched by the graduates' stories and the difference workforce development and education made in their lives. Chairman Fisher asked each graduate to introduce herself and to share her experience with the Board.

Melba McGuire said she had been out of school for 42 years before she decided to return for her education. She said she went to the Adult Education Center and would not have continued the effort to receive her diploma had it not been for the supportive and caring people at the Center. She has since finished her first year of college toward a degree in criminal justice. She said the Adult Education program is very important to those people

who don't fit well in a traditional education setting. She thanked all those who helped with the program and especially those who helped her while she was there.

Betty Keysacker said the Adult Education program helped form the foundation for her current study. She has since received her Bachelor and Master's degree from Arkansas State University and teaches at Crowley's Ridge Technical Institute as a GED instructor. She said she loves what she is doing and truly believes in the difference made by Adult Education. She thanked the Board for the opportunity to speak and for the GED program.

Leah Callahan thanked the Board for inviting her to speak. She said she quit high school because she was pregnant and working two jobs. She then met Mike Huff and others at the Adult Education program and started attending GED classes. She received her GED and was also awarded a scholarship to attend East Arkansas Community College. She said it was an overwhelming experience to go from being a person who needed help to one who can give help. She thanked all the people who touched her life and made a difference for her. She said the Adult Education staff are teachers and counselors, not just instructors. If she had not experienced the GED program, she is not sure where she would be now.

Chairman Fisher thanked the GED graduates for their presentations and also thanked the Director of the Adult Education Program, Dr. Sharon Ellis, for coordinating the speakers for the meeting. He said these were just a few of the many stories which could be heard and reminded the board that Adult Education is one of the over 50 workforce development and training programs in Arkansas. He said the names and addresses of the speakers would be distributed to the Board for their information. The Board gave the speakers a standing ovation.

Presentation on Outreach and Marketing for One-Stop Centers and all Workforce Development Programs: Chairman Fisher told the Board that the *Communications Group* of Little Rock was chosen by the Proposal Evaluation Committee, and the Executive Committee authorized Dr. Beene to continue work with Mr. Dan Cowling from the *Communications Group* to finalize a proposal and contract. He said Mr. Cowling and other representatives from the *Communications Group* were present to explain their proposal for the marketing campaign.

Dan Cowling thanked the Board for the opportunity to present their ideas. He introduced the other representatives from the *Group*, including Leigh Grant, Lisa Block, and Chastity Seliga. He said the *Communications Group* would package the value of the Workforce Investment Board and One-Stop Centers and communicate that value to the right people. He listed some of the previous campaigns they had managed, including Easter Seals, ARKids First, and Healthier Babies. Mr. Cowling said the marketing approach would be aimed at employers and job seekers. He displayed the new logo and theme, which stated "One-Stop Career Centers: Your First Stop for a New Start". He said the campaign is to sell hope and discussed the television and radio spots they have created, as well as some logos, including "Take this Job and Love It". Mr. Cowling said a brochure would be developed along with posters. Accessibility to these products is very critical, the phone number and website address will be the same, "ARWORKS".

The *Communications Group* will provide a layered approach to the media campaign, including television, cable, radio, and printed advertisements. Mr. Cowling also mentioned that everything will be printed and available in Spanish and aimed at special populations. Ten community events are also a part of the contract, which is the heart of the campaign. He thanked the Board for the opportunity to be especially creative on this proposal. He distributed a printed booklet of the proposal to each of the Board members.

Chairman Fisher thanked the *Communications Group* for the presentation and asked for reports from some of the members of the Proposal Evaluation Committee concerning the proposals. Cindy Varner, Staff Contract Officer, presented Sharon Williams' comments in her absence. Cindy reported that Sharon Williams believed the *Communications Group's* proposal was very creative, especially the logo. Ms. Williams said the *Group* had a good use of out-sourcing and representing minorities. Elroy Willoughby, Staff of the Board, said the *Communications Group* had vast experience in statewide campaigns and for selling more than a product, they were selling a service. He said the creativity presented was impressive, including eleven different website choices. The minority and disabled services were specifically mentioned in their proposal. He felt the *Communications Group* was overall the best choice out of the three proposals. Marie Bruno, Department of Workforce Education, said the three proposals were good, but the *Communications Group* had three things that made them stand out. They had the most experience in social marketing; they included a concise timeline with reports on accountability; and they had the best price for television and radio buys spanning over an 18-month period instead of a 12-month period.

Dr. Beene thanked the eight people on the RFP Committee and said she was very pleased with Dan Cowling and the staff of the *Communications Group*. She said he had already spent a lot of time with her preparing for this presentation as well as learning more about the Board and the One-Stop Centers. She also expressed her appreciation to Cindy Varner for her help with the RFP as well as Sharon Robinette, Marie Bruno, and Joe Quinn. Dr. Beene reminded the Board that this was only the first step, as the contract still needs to be finalized and presented to the Legislative Committee on May 2. She said the local board staffs would be involved to get ideas for the campaign as soon as the contract is finalized.

Chairman Fisher said the Executive Committee would review the final contract and make a decision soon. He asked the Board to give any input on the campaign to Dr. Beene and the Executive Committee saying this would be an excellent opportunity for the business members to give some input as well. He thanked the business members for their attendance and dedication to the Board.

Presentation on *Arkansas Business Advertising*: Chairman Fisher said it was a pleasure to introduce Mr. Jeff Hankins of *Arkansas Business* who would unveil the plan for a centerfold advertisement to be placed in a magazine aimed at college graduates and adults who may be job seekers. Mr. Hankins thanked the Board for the opportunity to speak about an effort to stop losing students to other states for job opportunities. His effort is "Arkansas Quest", which aims at college students and adults in Arkansas patterned after "Arkansas Next", which aims at the after high school audience. "Arkansas Quest" will provide information on career and job opportunities as well as ongoing training and will be distributed through colleges, at job fairs,

and at the One-Stop Centers free of charge. Mr. Hankins said he looked forward to working with the Board and the *Communications Group* to bring all the workforce resources together. He said the Board will have the center spread in the "Arkansas Quest" magazine to advertise the programs and One-Stop Centers in Arkansas. Also included will be a database of responses to the ad, which will show performance for the investment. Chairman Fisher thanked Mr. Hankins for the presentation and said Dr. Beene was still designing the layout for the advertisement.

Quarterly Report: Dr. Beene gave a presentation that covered the events of the last quarter. She stated that she was very involved in the legislature during the last quarter, including daily 7:30 a.m. meetings. She introduced two new staff members, Elroy Willoughby and Robin Pelton. Elroy would be taking the position Kay McVey formerly held and will be focusing on the youth programs while Robin Pelton will be focusing on enhancing the "Vision" document. Dr. Beene mentioned the State Board meetings held during the last quarter, including the Strategic Planning Committee. She discussed the U.S. Department of Labor activities, including a regional conference to be held in both New Orleans and Dallas. She said Paul Murray would attend the conference in Dallas on cost sharing and Elroy would attend the conference in New Orleans on youth policies. She said Mr. Bill Sutton of the Board would also attend the board development conference in Dallas. Dr. Beene said a visit to the Southwest area was scheduled for April 23–25 by U.S. Department of Labor staff as an information gathering visit for youth programs. Dr. Beene briefly touched on the status of AWIS, stating that the distribution of the one million for payment on the completion of Phase I was procedurally held up for three months but will be made very soon. She described some of the coordinated activities among the agency partners, including regular COPC and Cabinet meetings, a meeting with new Agency Director and Board Member Jim Pickens, and the all-day meeting with the agency partner directors and staff in January. Dr. Beene touched on the relations with the Governor and Legislature during the past quarter, including a meeting with Representative Minton concerning House Bill 1036 which he pulled down, the President George W. Bush visit, and meetings with the new Legislative Board Members. Dr. Beene then described some of the public relations activities accomplished by the Board staff in the past quarter. These included her speech to the Paragould Rotary Club, a meeting with Ron Russell of the State Chamber/AIA, and the work with Jeff Hankins and the RFP for Marketing and Outreach. She described the Out-of-State One-Stop visit to Missouri and the upcoming trip to South Carolina and Georgia. Dr. Beene mentioned that she was present at three local board meetings in the past quarter and promised to do even better in the next quarter. She showed some pictures from the Association for Continuing and Adult Education conference at which she spoke and described some upcoming events for the next quarter. These events included the One-Stop Conference on May 1-2, the U.S. DOL Regional Conference, Governor's Community Forums, and a presentation at the Association for Rehabilitation and Education of Blind and Visually Impaired AER Conference.

Report of Strategic Planning Committee: Chairman Fisher stated that the Strategic Planning Committee met on March 1 and March 15 and thanked the Committee for its hard work and effort. He called on Jim Smith, Chair of the Strategic Planning Committee, for a report of the meetings. Mr. Smith stated that the Committee met on both of these dates to review the workforce systems. He said the Committee set a target for January, 2002 to bring a recommendation to the Board concerning any changes needed in the system or programs. The goal of the Committee was to make sure the system was seamless with a better coordination of

programs and to find any potential duplication of programs. He described the method taken by the Committee, including study of the "Vision" Supplement, developing questions about the programs, and finally meetings with the Agency Directors. The results included a great deal of learning about the system, the conclusion that it was a big task requiring a lot of time, and the determination that extra staff was needed. Mr. Smith said the Committee met by teleconference on March 15 to discuss the application of a hold harmless policy. He said the report of that meeting was included in the agenda materials and an action item sheet with the recommendation of the Committee included behind the report. (A copy of the Strategic Planning Report is carried as Attachment A to the permanent copy of these minutes.)

Action Item 2 – Hold Harmless Provision for PY 2001: **Motion was made by Jim Smith, seconded by Dr. James Hendren, and carried unanimously to accept the recommendation of the Strategic Planning Committee to continue application of the hold harmless policy to the standard formula allocation as it applies to the adult and youth funding streams for the second fiscal year of the Workforce Investment Act beginning July 1, 2001 – June 30, 2002.** (A copy of the Hold Harmless action item sheet is carried as Attachment B to the permanent copy of these minutes.)

Ratification Items by Consent: Chairman Fisher directed the Board to page 13 of the agenda packet to review the two ratification items. He said the Executive Committee took action on two items last quarter, including the American Customer Satisfaction Index and the distribution of \$500,000 to the local areas. **The two items were ratified on motion made by Judge Frank Scroggins, seconded by Campbell Wilkerson, and carried unanimously.**

Report on Resource Sharing / Cost Allocation Plan: Chairman Fisher focused the Board on the draft cost allocation guidelines included in their agenda materials. He said the document was carried on pages 15 through 38 and Paul Murray, Deputy Director, would present a report on the information. Mr. Murray explained that these guidelines would enable state agencies to work with the local staff in providing funding for the One-Stop Centers. He said the draft included in the agenda materials was an improvement of the first draft sent to the local areas and Executive Committee last month. He also mentioned that the members of the state workgroup and representatives of the local areas would attend a two-day conference in Dallas sponsored by the U.S. Department of Labor about cost allocation. The staff will take this draft to the conference and make any necessary changes based on what they learn at the conference. That final draft will then be presented to the Career Opportunities Partnership Cabinet for review and to the Workforce Investment Board for approval. Mr. Murray told the Board that the local areas have seen this draft and were invited to provide comments to the staff by April 24. He stated that the cost allocation guidelines would be an attachment to a State-Level One-Stop Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), which is being developed concurrently with the cost allocation guidelines. The State-Level MOU will describe how the state agencies will provide services in and through the Arkansas One-Stop Centers, including funding that each agency will provide to the One-Stop Centers in each local workforce investment area. He said the process was very long and complicated and thanked all the state agency staff members for their help.

Dr. Beene asked the Board to stay involved in this document, as it is a very important agreement on participation of One-Stop partners. Chairman Fisher asked the Board to review the draft and

give any comments to the staff for incorporation. Dr. James Hendren complimented the staff on the document, saying it was very impressive and would save a lot of heartache down the line.

Report on Performance Standards: Chairman Fisher referred the Board to pages 39-42 of the agenda packet for this item. He said an information item summary report was included in the packet (page 39) on performance standards for all Titles of WIA (II, III, and IV) to explain performance requirements more fully and a detailed description of performance standards and measures was also included in the mailing as a supplement. Chairman Fisher explained that Garland Hankins, of the Department of Workforce Education, mentioned at the February Executive Committee meeting that Arkansas negotiates the state performance levels for adult education programs with the U.S. Department of Education and offered to distribute the negotiated levels for the upcoming year to the Board. Chairman Fisher said that a letter from Mr. Hankins along with those levels was included in the supplement and Ron Stone, Board Staff, would give a brief explanation of the information included in the agenda packet.

Mr. Stone explained that over the past several months, the Board had focused on Title I performance issues, but Arkansas' overall WIA performance (and the performance that will determine Arkansas' eligibility for incentive awards) will depend on the performance under all Titles of WIA. He explained that the Executive Committee was recently presented information about the eligibility policy for applying for incentive grants under Title I of WIA and asked for additional information about the specific performance standards and measures. That information was included on pages 40-42 of the agenda packet and the supplemental packet. Dr. James Hendren asked why Arkansas had lower standards than other states in the U.S. Department of Education negotiated levels. Mr. Hankins responded that there was no advancement reflected in the computer literacy numbers and therefore a zero was registered under that category. He said the problem will be corrected with the new data system that will be ready in a year. Dr. Hendren asked for the performance measures without the computer literacy category and Mr. Hankins said he would work on getting those for Dr. Hendren and his Committee although it would take some time to calculate by hand. Dr. Beene went through the contents of the supplemental material with the Board to describe what each section included.

Analysis of Title I Performance Measures Compared with Other States: Mr. Stone continued his report by focusing the Board on page 43 of their agenda packets. He said that beginning on page 44 there were tables comparing Arkansas' negotiated performance goals for WIA Title I with the goals of other states in the U.S. DOL Region IV plus selected border states. He stated that recent data indicates that the national and state economies may be slowing. Major plant closures across Arkansas continue to cause misgivings about achieving the state and local Title I performance goals in certain categories, especially wage replacement and earnings increase. He said the Local Board Administrators were invited to submit specific empirical information on their concerns about performance goals and requests for reducing the performance goals to the State Board in writing. Mr. Stone said the Board has received only three specific reduction requests so far and does not anticipate receiving requests for revisions from the other local boards in the near future. He said all performance-related correspondence from the local areas has been compiled into one separate memo and is available to the Board.

Dr. Beene explained that the states listed in regular font were the U.S. DOL Region IV states, the states listed in italics (Kentucky, Tennessee, and Mississippi) were the three border states added by her request, and Arkansas was listed in bold font. Dr. James Hendren said the problems from layoffs affect mostly standard numbers five and seven, which deal with Dislocated Workers. He also said that standard number six is not as much of a concern. Chairman Fisher asked Chairman Hendren and his Committee to continue to look into the discussion of the performance standards and keep the Board informed of the progress.

Presentation on Missouri One-Stop Visit: Chairman Fisher stated that a group of people just returned from the Missouri One-Stop visit and Rebecca Trammell of the Board Staff would give a presentation about the trip. Ms. Trammell said the trip was very educational for everyone who participated. She said they visited a total of six One-Stop Centers throughout the state of Missouri and it was a very fast trip with a variety of locations observed. She stated that Missouri was about four years into the process and the group came back to Arkansas with an attitude of confidence. She said at each stop they met the manager, had an orientation session, took a tour of the facility, and asked questions. She said the group determined that the major contribution factor to success was the flow of services. The One-Stop Centers also provided the group with documents and information that was very helpful to Arkansas. It was a very successful area to visit and helped the group see that Arkansas was on the right track. Ms. Trammell also displayed some pictures taken of the Missouri One-Stop Centers.

Dr. Beene reminded the Board that seven people would depart the next day for South Carolina and Georgia to tour those One-Stop Centers. This was the last trip scheduled but she asked the Board to let her know if they would like to participate in another trip. She thanked the Adult Education program for the GED Graduate presentation and Christina Miller, Board Staff, for her help in arranging the Out-of-State One-Stop visits.

Announcements: Chairman Fisher announced that the list of local board meetings was included in the agenda materials. He announced that the next Executive Committee meeting would be May 8 at the University of Arkansas at Monticello and the next regular quarterly meeting would be July 10 at the Embassy Suites Hotel. He asked the Board to sign their TR-1s and reminded the Strategic Planning Committee that they would be meeting across the hall after the full board meeting.

Adjournment: **The meeting was adjourned at 11:00 a.m. on motion made by Helen Moore, seconded by Steve Lux, and carried unanimously.**

Bill Fisher, Chair

Dr. Linda Beene, Executive Director

Minutes Recorded by Christina Miller
Staff of Workforce Investment Board