

MINUTES
MEETING OF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
ARKANSAS WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD
December 14, 1999

A regular meeting of the Executive Committee, Arkansas Workforce Investment Board, was held on December 14, 1999, beginning at 9:00 a.m., at the Cooperative Extension Service Building, Little Rock. Chairman Bill Fisher presided with the following members present:

Florine Bingham	Joe Dillard	Larry Featherstone
Bill Fisher	Alan Hughes	Gloria Lynn
Jodie Mahony	Karen McFerran	Helen Moore
Campbell Wilkerson		

Members who were unable to attend were: Robert Drechsler, Lisa Ferrell, and Kathy Matlock.

As the Chairman called the meeting to order, he expressed special thanks for the presence of Ms. Rebekah Lee, Deputy Chief of Staff to Governor Huckabee, Ms. Michelle Driscoll of Dallas Regional Office, United States Department of Labor; Mr. Tim Sambrano, Chairman, and Ms. Elaine Black, Executive Director, Transitional Employment Board (TEB). He welcomed also approximately thirty additional visitors which included two agency directors and six members of the Workforce Investment Board who are members of committees other than the Executive Committee.

Minutes: Unofficial copies of the minutes of the Executive Committee meeting of November 9 were mailed to members on November 15, and copies with one staff edit change were at the places of member attendees. Chairman Fisher explained that the staff made one change from the original draft--amending the ending effective date of the Director's report, page 1, paragraph 3, line 5, from October **3** to October **30**. The minutes were then approved unanimously on motion offered by Mr. Campbell Wilkerson and seconded by Mayor Joe Dillard.

Report of Related Boards and Activities: Chairman Fisher expressed appreciation to Vice-Chair Florine Bingham for having represented the Board at three major activities recently and asked her to report on each. Ms. Bingham reported that:

- She agreed to represent the Board on the Agency Advisory Council to the Transitional Employment Board; however, she could not attend a work session on December 9 involving both the Board and the Advisory Council. She expressed appreciation to Deputy Director Paul Murray for attending the meeting at which the enabling legislation, goals, and beginning accomplishments were explained.

- She also attended a one-day workshop as part of the Governor's Technology Initiative devoted to developing a strategy for solving technology challenges in Arkansas. She said that, in addition to the solutions workshop, Nortel of Richardson, Texas, will conduct two additional workshops--one to validate areas such as values and technology issues and one on utilization of alternative technology methods.
- She participated also in activities related to a recent visit to the Delta by President Bill Clinton. She reported that he outlined details of five major projects he has planned for Eastern Arkansas. These include health initiatives, the circuit rider project, renewal activities, job creation in the Gosnell/Blytheville area, and a commerce office at the Mid-South Community College in West Memphis.

Director's Report: Dr. Linda Beene, the Board's Executive Director, covered the following items:

- Referenced the naming of the Workforce Investment Board as one of three "communities of interest" in the Governor's Technology Initiative, indicating that this honor reflects the collaboration of entities already present as constituencies of the Board.
- Reported that, in the past month, WIB staff members have been deeply involved in development of a youth plan and unified plan and in facilitating review of nominations submitted for local workforce investment boards.
- Introduced a new staff member--Ms. Cindy Varner, the Board's financial officer, with a degree in accounting from University of Central Arkansas and experience with Wal-Mart and the University of Central Arkansas.
- Described permanent office space that has been leased for the WIB staff at 320 Executive Court, near Markham and Shackelford and easily accessible from I-430 and I-630. She said that the staff should be re-located very soon and that all committee meetings will be held there in the future.
- Reported that much has been accomplished in acquiring office equipment and furniture.
- Disseminated copies of and commented on an agency financial report cumulative through November 30, 1999. The report reflected a breakdown of expenditures totaling \$81,091.61 of a budgeted \$600,000 for 1999-2000 because so much of the agency expense has been provided by other agencies.

Report of Strategic Planning Committee: Chairman Fisher recognized Committee Chairman Jim Smith to make the report, explaining that former Committee Chairman Randy Hopper and former Vice-Chair Jim Smith have exchanged positions. Mr. Smith reported that his committee, meeting last Tuesday, agreed to recommend the adoption of a **Mission Statement** a copy of which was at the place of each member. The recommended Mission Statement was accepted without opposing vote on motion made by Ms. Helen Moore and seconded by Ms. Karen McFerran. (The statement is carried, along with the Vision Statement that was adopted by the Executive Committee on November 9, 1999, as Appendix A to the permanent copy of these minutes.)

Chairman Smith indicated that the Strategic Planning Committee recommended also that, in development of the unified plan, the Board use the standard formula used in the youth plan and that a "Hold Harmless" provision be adopted for one year, as was done for the youth plan. The recommendation was accepted unanimously on motion made by Ms. Florine Bingham and seconded by Ms. Gloria Lynn.

Report of Program and Performance Evaluation Committee: Dr. James Hendren, Committee Chair, reported on the work of his committee that met yesterday. He said that they worked on both short- and long-range goals. He added that the short-range goal is to recommend a set of performance criteria to be used in the plan. He reported the long-range goal is adding additional criteria to ensure that the State complies with its Mission Statement. He reviewed performance indicators that are set forth in the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 and reported that performance indicators should be included in the unified and youth plans. The recommendation was approved without opposing vote on motion made by Mayor Joe Dillard and seconded by Ms. Helen Moore.

Dr. Hendren said also that the Committee agreed to adopt a list of five performance measures in addition to those required by the Workforce Investment Act of 1998. He disseminated copies of the list. (The list is carried as Appendix B to the permanent copy of these minutes.) Dr. Hendren commented on each of the five measures recommended, and they were accepted unanimously on motion made by Mrs. Florine Bingham and seconded by Ms. Karen McFerran.

Strategic Five-Year Plan for Title I Youth Activities - Public Hearing: Chairman Fisher stated that the plan has been on public review since December 1, and the Board staff will continue to receive public comments through December 30. He said that the public was informed through an advertisement in the Arkansas Democrat Gazette as well as several internet web pages of the public comment period; that a public hearing would be held as a part of this Executive Committee meeting today; but that nobody responded to the invitation to speak. Chairman Fisher said that some written comments have been received

and addressed in a second draft of the plan which will be mailed to Board members soon after this meeting. Emphasizing that development of the plan is a continuing process, he stated that a conference call will be held on December 30 for final consideration of the plan (anticipated to be a third draft) before it is sent to Governor Huckabee for transmittal to the Department of Labor, Dallas. He said that comments that are received between now and December 30 would be considered for incorporation into the third draft.

Dr. Beene described briefly the provisions of the youth plan, which had been sent in advance to members of the Executive Committee. She shared with the group some concepts derived from a meeting that she and Sharon Robinette of Employment Security Department attended last week regarding statutory requirements for a youth program which emphasizes enhancing basic skills and academic levels of youth as compared to previous statutory programs allowing limited short-term employment programs. (The National Governors' Association sponsored the meeting.)

Senator Jodie Mahony commented that he would like to see more specificity in forthcoming drafts, then asked if the Board is "better off including more rather than less." He spoke of a publication (A Plan for the Future, a report of the Workforce Development Commission, which was developed and published pursuant to Act 803 of 1997) that he believes can be of significant help in future drafts. He said he believes the draft of the youth plan does not delineate clearly the anticipated relationship between one-stop partners and local boards. He and other members of the group emphasized the need for providing in the plan for youth to receive basic academic skills that are vital to their success in job training and job placement. He expressed concern that the youth plan must be ready by December 30. Mr. Campbell Wilkerson asked what will happen if the plan is not submitted on time or if it is not approved right away, and Ms. Michelle Driscoll of DOL commented on the review/approval process. She emphasized that DOL will work with states in every possible way through a negotiating process between January 1 and April 1 to see that funds become available "for the kids."

Deputy Director Paul Murray described many other entities that are continuously involved in development of the youth plan. Chairman Fisher said that, as the third draft is developed, the staff would continue to seek help from Ms. Driscoll and Attorney Michael Brustein.

Ms. Driscoll said that the Arkansas WIB is doing a fine job--that she mentions their dedication and vision to other state staffs and boards. She said that John Smith of DOL would be in charge of youth programs in the Dallas Region. She added that there are numerous requests for WIA funds to be made available for JTPA programs for youth this summer but she does not know what the outcome will be.

In response to Mr. Featherstone's question about work on two plans--the youth plan and unified plan--Dr. Beene said that a draft of the unified plan will be in the hands of Board members at their retreat on January 11 for an indepth review prior to Board action on January 26 but it will not be possible to provide copies in advance.

Formation of Local Boards: Chairman Fisher reiterated that Governor Huckabee must certify by January 15 names of local board members in the ten WIB areas and that he will have authority/responsibility to appoint persons needed, if any, to assure that each area is in legal compliance. He called attention to a list of comments the staff received from state board members concerning local workforce investment board nominations. (A copy of the list had been laid at the place of each Executive Committee member.)

Mr. Fisher reported that the WIB staff have studied state board members' comments and measured the nomination lists against state and federal laws and that a chart reflecting the result of such study will be available for review immediately following this meeting.

Mr. Campbell Wilkerson suggested that the deficiencies should be faxed to appropriate CEOs today. Several members of the group asked questions about eligibilities.

Dr. Beene said that the staff would negotiate with CEOs if there were cases that are not clearly determined by Board criteria. Mr. Ron Russell, Director of the State Chamber of Commerce and Associated Industries of Arkansas, commented from the audience that he hears from many local chambers and business people concern that business is not adequately represented on local boards and that many of the concerns he has referred to Dr. Beene have been resolved.

At the climax of many stated concerns about local board nominations, the following motion was made by Ms. Bingham, seconded by Senator Mahony, and carried unanimously: To fully meet the federal, state, and local requirements of a local board, I move that at least one school superintendent be appointed to each local board.

Chairman Fisher suggested the following time schedule for dealing with deficiencies:

By **December 30** the local CEOs will mail or fax their revised nominations to the staff; until **January 7** the staff will work with local CEOs on final revisions; and on **January 11** the lists will be considered by the Board, and an approved list will be made available to Governor Huckabee; Governor Huckabee will then appoint members for those positions which have not been approved by the Board. This time schedule was adopted by the Executive Committee on motion offered by Ms. Helen Moore, seconded by Mr. Campbell Wilkerson, and carried unanimously.

Appointment of Nominating Committee for Permanent Executive Committee: The Chairman reminded the group that current members of the interim Executive Committee were appointed last July in compliance with Board bylaws. He said that it was understood that the Board would elect a permanent Executive Committee in January. To implement this activity, Chairman Fisher appointed the following Nominating Committee: Mr. Bill Sutton, Rogers, Chairman; Mrs. Diana Hueter, Little Rock; and Dr. Calvin Johnson, Pine Bluff. The Chairman indicated that the Nominating Committee will report to the full Board on January 26 and that nominations will be invited from the floor.

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Planning Retreat/January 11, 2000: Chairman Fisher mentioned that the Board would work a full day in dealing with the unified plan. He said that the Board would consider the Plan for approval at its regular quarterly meeting to be held on January 26.

Announcements: Director Beene announced that the staff will be working at its new location by next Monday and that a fax will be sent to members of the Executive Committee, giving new phone and fax numbers and e-mail addresses if available.

Adjournment: With the completion of the agenda, Chairman Fisher adjourned the meeting at 11:25 a.m.

Bill Fisher, Chair

Linda Beene
Executive Director

Appendixes A and B added to permanent copy of minutes

Minutes recorded by Geneva Guthrie
Staff of Workforce Investment Board