

MINUTES  
MEETING OF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE  
ARKANSAS WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD  
February 8, 2000

A regular meeting of the Executive Committee, Arkansas Workforce Investment Board, was held on February 8, 2000, beginning at 9:00 a.m. in the Board office, 320 Executive Court, Little Rock. Chairman Bill Fisher presided with the following members present: Florine Bingham, Joe Dillard, Robert Drechsler, Larry Featherstone, Lisa Ferrell, Bill Fisher, Gloria Lynn, Jodie Mahony, Kathy Matlock, Karen McFarren, Helen Moore, and Campbell Wilkerson. Members who were unable to attend were: Steve Franks, Alan Hughes, and Bill Sutton.

Chairman Fisher welcomed the group including Ms. Rebekah Lee, the Governor's Deputy Chief of Staff, Director Ed Rolle of the Employment Security Department, and twenty-one representatives of the public. Mr. Fisher expressed appreciation that Sharon Williams and Charles Cunningham of the full Board were present and that twelve of fifteen Executive Committee members were there.

Minutes: The Chairman called for action on minutes of a full Board meeting held on January 26. (Copies had been mailed previously and were at the places of members.) The minutes were approved on motion made by Ms. Helen Moore, seconded, and carried unanimously.

Executive Director's Report: Dr. Beene welcomed members of the group to the Board's new office space. She commented that furniture had become available after six months of staff work in temporary space and with borrowed furniture/equipment. She introduced Ms. Kay McVey who was employed recently in the third monitor position of the staff. She said that Ms. McVey has earned a Bachelor of Science in Education from the University of Houston and a Master of Education from the University of Arkansas, Little Rock. Dr. Beene said that past employment includes serving as Administrator of the GED Testing Program in the Department of Workforce Education and employment at Henderson State University and Quapaw Technical Institute as well as two Arkansas public school districts.

State Unified Plan: Chairman Fisher explained that the staff was authorized at the full Board meeting of January 26 to place a draft of the State Unified Plan on public review immediately following today's meeting of the Executive Committee. He mentioned that the Board had asked the staff to prepare an executive summary to be included also in the public review. He added that copies of the executive summary are at the place of each committee member. Members of the group were very complimentary of the executive summary. Mr. Drechsler asked if a timeline could accompany the plan draft and executive summary on review. The Chairman said that the staff has available a timeline of short range as well as one of longer range and that both can be displayed with the draft and summary. Mayor Joe Dillard asked if the word "official" could be changed to "officials" at the top of page 20. Chairman Fisher agreed.

Ms. Bingham offered a motion to authorize the staff to place the plan draft, executive summary, and timelines on public review immediately. The motion was seconded and carried unanimously. (Copies of the documents are on file in the office of the Executive Director and at web address [www.state.ar.us/workforce](http://www.state.ar.us/workforce).)

Allocation of Funds under Title I, WIA: Chairman Fisher recognized Director Ed Rolle of the Employment Security Department to present the funding information. Director Rolle disseminated copies of a sheet entitled “Estimated Availability and Expenditures, PY 2000 Workforce Investment Act (Estimated on 11/24/99).” He discussed information presented on the handout which provided for the availability of an estimated \$32,076,803 of which \$27,265,283 would be distributed by formula to local workforce investment areas and \$4,811,520 would be available as a state set-aside. (He emphasized that this 15% set-aside should not be confused with the Governor’s 15% set-aside from welfare-to-work funds, which are separate from WIA Title I funds.) The information included a breakdown of needs to be met from the WIA 15% funds totaling \$4,932,000, an excess of \$120,480 above the estimated availability. Director Rolle said that the Employment Security Department would assume responsibility for providing the amount needed, if any, to bring the total in support for Board operations to \$607,000 listed on his sheet.

Representative Ferrell expressed a desire to have more information on approximately \$400,000,000 that will come under the Board’s responsibility. This was discussed at length with special concern for impact on one-stop centers. Director Rolle said that his expectation for ESD is to be a tenant at each one-stop center. He was asked whether any one-stop centers have opened under WIA, and he said that those which have opened or will open soon include Little Rock, Harrison, Forrest City, Batesville, and West Memphis. He added that these are funded with early implementation grants. Ms. Helen Moore said she attended an open house for the Little Rock One-Stop Center recently and was very impressed by it. Chairman Fisher indicated that the Board might be able to meet at the Little Rock One-Stop Center for its next meeting. Dr. Beene reported that she visited the one-stop center at South Arkansas Community College, El Dorado, recently and was impressed with the services available to job seekers and employers. She said that Governor Huckabee will have breakfast at the El Dorado One-Stop Center on February 15, and she plans to attend.

After reviewing Director Rolle’s handout, members asked for a version that breaks down further the available funds (\$32,076,803) and projects an operating budget. Director Rolle told Chairman Fisher that he will expand/revise the statement for study at the next meeting of the Executive Committee. Chairman Fisher asked that the revised statement be made available to Dr. Beene within two weeks so that she can transmit it to members of the Executive Committee for study and discussion at the next meeting.

Director Rolle disseminated copies of a second handout, “Availability and Estimated Expenditures, PY 1999 Welfare-to-Work” under date of October 26, 1999. Discussion centered around \$450,000 that is available as a 15% set-aside for Governor’s projects to help long-term recipients of welfare assistance enter unsubsidized employment. He discussed the process through which approximately \$980,000 would be used for funding proposals. Director Rolle

said that he will assure that the handout will be prepared in a format easier to understand before the next meeting of the Executive Committee.

Mr. Campbell Wilkerson asked when/how the Board studies eliminating duplication of programs and services. The Chairman said that it is the responsibility of the Board staff to work along with other agencies to clarify training offered in the 48 programs which have been identified as operating in the State. He said the process for accomplishing this will be developed as soon as possible while continuing to work on WIA implementation. Director Rolle agreed that there is much to understand and said that he will be glad to make a lawyer from ESD available to work with Dr. Beene. Representative Ferrell said that Phil Price of the Bureau of Legislative Research would be available.

Clarification of Chief Elected Official Responsibility for Funds: Chairman Fisher called attention to a sheet at the place of each member that offered two statements: (1) a statement carried in a 20-page document entitled “Major Improvements to the 1/14/2000 Preliminary Draft of the Unified State Plan” which was discussed at the full Board meeting of January 26, 2000, and (2) a Revised Draft as of February 7, 2000. Following is a statement of the revised draft: “In a case in which a local workforce investment area includes more than one unit of general local government, the chief elected officials of such units will execute an agreement that specifies the respective roles of the individual chief elected officials, including responsibility for maintaining the integrity of the allocated funds. If, after a reasonable effort, the chief elected officials are unable to reach agreement about this responsibility, the Governor makes the determination. The local plan must include the agreement concerning this responsibility.” Chairman Fisher stated that the statement from the Major Improvements Packet is legally acceptable; however, he said the revised draft is likewise legally acceptable and may be more appropriate for allowing **groups** of chief elected officials to share fiscal responsibility.

The Executive Committee accepted the revised draft on motion made by Mayor Joe Dillard, seconded by Ms. Helen Moore, and carried unanimously.

Discussion of Role of Two-Year Colleges: The Chair stated that this subject is included on the agenda as a result of discussion about a motion adopted by the full Board on January 26, 2000. (The motion read, “That at least one member of each local board will represent a two-year institution—community college, technical institute, or technical college.”) Several points were made that related to the subject: (1) that all partners are members of the local boards (2) that the Board could direct that all three institution types should be members of each local board (3) that many other states require that community college representatives serve on each local board. Mr. Fisher asked committee members to review lists of local board members in their respective areas to determine how many already have representation from the three types of institutions identified in the January 26 motion and be ready to clarify the meaning of the motion at the next meeting.

Discussion of Role of State and Local Workforce Investment Boards: Mr. Fisher called attention to a list of six questions which a local workforce investment board administrators’ committee presented to Dr. Linda Beene recently for Board consideration. (Copies of the list of questions were laid at the place of each member.) The main discussion centered on Question 3, “Define

role between the State WIB and the Local WIB,” and Question 2, “Define administrative versus program cost, considering the administrative cost limitations.” Dr. Beene pointed out that three local administrators were present (Sammy McGuire of Northeast District, Sharon Williams of Eastern District, and Mike Norton of Northwest). All three of the administrators who were present commented on their need for guidance. Mr. Dreschler mentioned that he could understand more fully decisions to be made if provided with both sides of each question and examples of problems involved. It was agreed by general consent that Dr. Beene and the ten local administrators will communicate further and that administrators will be given an opportunity to send a representative to present their concerns at the next Executive Committee meeting.

Report on Plan for Public Hearings: Dr. Beene reported that tentative plans have been made for at least one public hearing—one to be held on February 18 at 2:00 p.m. in the classroom of the State Education Building. She said that the hearing could be videoconferenced to all educational cooperatives in the State that can schedule it. She indicated also that, in addition to advertising the public hearing as a legal procedure in the Arkansas Democrat Gazette, thought has been given to advertising in the business section of four other dailies and in Arkansas Business.

It was agreed that broader advertising would increase the possibility of receiving significant comments, not only on the unified plan, but also on general subjects related to needs of job seekers and employers. Dr. Beene mentioned again that it would be very helpful to have at least one State Board member at each electronic site. Mr. Drechsler expressed enthusiasm for videoconferencing the hearing but suggested that the date should be moved later on the calendar—at least half way through the comment period. Mr. Wilkerson encouraged the staff to include wording other than legal terms in the ads. Others suggested that public service announcements might be secured. The following were suggested as sources from which comments might be sought: AFL-CIO, Arkansas Manufacturers Association, State Chamber of Commerce/AIA, one-stop centers, civic organizations, Arkansas Municipal League, Arkansas Association of County Judges.

Dr. Beene agreed to attempt to schedule the videoconference on the hearing at a date later than February 18 and to notify members of the group as to which educational cooperatives will schedule it.

Mr. Drechsler said he has concerns that the plan is placed on public review but changes are constantly evolving. After discussion, Chairman Fisher said that the public review copy of the plan would remain as it is and that Board members will be provided a summary of the comments attached to the final draft.

Senator Mahoney mentioned that he regrets that the Arkansas Department of Education is not represented on the State Board. Representative Ferrell said that legislation did not provide for such representation.

Next Meeting: Chairman Fisher said that the next regular meeting date for the Executive Committee is March 14 and asked if the group would be willing to meet instead on March 21. He mentioned that this would afford more time for comments to be summarized on the plan.

Dr. Beene said that a final plan document will be in the hands of members one week before the next meeting. It was agreed by general consent that the meeting date would be changed to March 21.

Suggestion on Visitation to Other State WIB Programs: Senator Mahony suggested that members of the Board should visit other states—those that are more advanced than Arkansas in implementation of WIA. Chairman Fisher said that he and Dr. Beene would investigate this possibility.

Announcements: Chairman Fisher asked members to submit TR-1s to a staff member. Dr. Beene announced that IRS Form 1099 would be sent to each member, if any, who received as much as \$600 in per diem for Board attendance in 1999. She asked members to check copy that has been prepared for a Board directory.

Adjournment: Chairman Fisher adjourned the meeting at approximately 11:25 a.m.

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Bill Fisher, Chairman

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Linda Beene, Executive Director

Minutes recorded by Geneva Guthrie  
Staff of Workforce Investment Board