

MINUTES
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD
February 13, 2001

Chairman Bill Fisher called to order a meeting of the Executive Committee, Arkansas Workforce Investment Board at 9:00 a.m. on Tuesday, February 13, at the Arkansas Activities Association building, North Little Rock. Members present included Joe Dillard, Robert Drechsler, Bill Fisher, Steve Franks, Gloria Lynn, Kathy Matlock, Karen McFarren, Helen Moore, Bill Sutton, Joe Warren, and Campbell Wilkerson. Members unable to attend included Larry Featherstone, Alan Hughes, and Jodie Mahony.

Chairman Fisher asked Dr. Beene about the significance of the table decorations. She stated that the staff wanted to represent that the Workforce Investment Act Partner Agencies were “survivors”, not “castaways” on a desert island as some may have originally thought. The palm trees, toy boats, and *Life Savers* were used as centerpieces at a meeting with WIA Partner Agencies and the staff of State and Local Program Partners on January 30 to thank them for the success of the implementation of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998. She said a more in depth report on the January 30 meeting would be given later in the agenda.

Chairman Fisher stated that Mrs. Florine Tousant Bingham was appointed to the Board of Trustees of Arkansas State University and has resigned her position on the Arkansas Workforce Investment Board. He said Mr. Joe Warren, member of the Board and Chair of the Local Plan Review Committee, has been faithful in his attendance of Board meetings, and has been an excellent Chair. Chairman Fisher said Mr. Warren had accepted the role of Vice-Chair of the Workforce Investment Board and would therefore become a member of the Executive Committee and vacate his role on the Program and Performance Evaluation Committee.

Chairman Fisher also mentioned the recent announcement of Ms. Barbara Pardue’s resignation as Director of the Arkansas Department of Economic Development. He said that he and Dr. Beene met with Mr. Jim Pickens, the Interim Director appointed by Governor Mike Huckabee, to discuss the relationship between the Department and the Board. Chairman Fisher said Mr. Pickens was very receptive and accepting of the Board and will work closely as a Board member. Chairman Fisher also welcomed Ms. Amie Busby, Program Coordinator for Career Opportunities in Northeast Arkansas, who would give a presentation on the Youth Conference that was held in Eureka Springs.

Minutes: The minutes of the January 9 Regular Quarterly meeting were approved on motion made by Mr. Bill Sutton, seconded by Mrs. Karen McFarren, and carried unanimously.

Report of Executive Director: Dr. Beene began her Director’s report by calling attention to a publication entitled *Career Watch* that was placed at each member’s table. She said the document was prepared by the Employment Security Department and had significant contributions from Arkansas Rehabilitative Services, the Department of Workforce Education, and others in the Career Opportunities Partnership Cabinet (COPC). She said the document was

in the communities already and a letter had been received from a person in Camden complimenting the book. She thanked the Executive Committee for their feedback on House Bill 1534 concerning Board member term limits. She said their feedback was forwarded to the Governor for consideration. She reviewed the follow-up items from the January Board meeting, including the information used in Ms. Angela Duran's presentation on the Arkansas Working Families Project. Dr. Beene said information was forwarded to the Program and Performance Evaluation Committee as requested by Dr. James Hendren. She said more Youth Council information was being collected and would be presented at the April Regular Quarterly Meeting. She also said that Mrs. Kay McVey, a member of the staff who focused on youth information, had retired since the last Board meeting and the staff was in the process of choosing another person for that position. She said the state team report for the Arkansas One-Stop Technical Assistance visits was being formatted and copied. It was contracted to be ready for distribution by the end of the month. Other Legislative information included the Appropriation Bill for the Workforce Investment Board, House Bill 1187 was signed into law as Act 27 of 2001. She said House Bill 1036 sponsored by Representative Minton was pulled down on Monday after having several meetings with Minton to explain the contradictions of the bill to the Federal Act. She also said the activity at the Capitol was just now moving to full swing.

Dr. Beene mentioned her trip to Paragould on January 17 in which she spoke to the Rotary Club and visited the One-Stop Centers in Paragould and Jonesboro. She said several staff members of state agencies were attending the leadership workshops; the third was held on January 10-12 and the last workshop would be held February 14-16. A One-Stop Conference is in the planning stage with a Committee working on its development. The dates for the Conference are May 1 and 2, 2001. The Strategic Planning Committee held a meeting on February 1, and a report of the meeting was the next agenda item. A meeting was held to discuss cost allocation and resource sharing with other agencies to create an agreement. She said this was one of Jodie Mahony's major concerns. More information on the AWIS system would be given later in the agenda. Dr. Beene said she planned to attend the National Governor's Association Board Directors and Chairs meeting in Washington, D.C. the last weekend in February, although it depended on the activity at the Capitol. The Out-of-State One-Stop visits were rescheduled and included Missouri on March 7-9, South Carolina and Georgia on April 11-13, and a special trip to Racine with Arkansas Presidents and Chancellors on April 2-4. Dr. Beene thanked Dr. Matlock for her leadership with the Racine trip.

Dr. Beene said she would be giving a presentation for the Association for Continuing and Adult Education statewide conference on March 2. She also said that the Board continues to be concerned with performance standards, and the Program and Performance Committee was going to look at other states for information as well as information received from local areas and at the National Association of Workforce Boards meeting. Dr. Beene concluded her report by discussing the Department of Higher Education's Y.O.U. contract that the staff was asked to review. Dr. Beene stated that the funding for the program came from the youth funding stream for Title I Activities and the contracting was currently in progress.

Report of Strategic Planning Committee: Chairman Fisher said the Strategic Planning Committee met on February 1 for a second meeting to study the state's workforce development and training resources, including the issue of potential duplication of programs or services. He

said Dr. Beene would give the report of the Committee. Dr. Beene referred the Executive Committee to the printed report that was included in the agenda materials. She said the Committee was using the supplement to "Creating a Vision for the Arkansas Workforce in the New Millennium" which includes all workforce training and development resources as the basis for the deliberation. She said the staff had just contracted with UALR and Arkansas Rehabilitative Services to have 200 more copies printed for distribution. Dr. Beene explained that the Committee identified about 40 questions to ask each of the Agency Directors in order to learn more about all of the programs. The Committee was very surprised to see how many programs there were in Arkansas and concluded that the public is not aware of the many programs that are available. The research and work done by the Strategic Planning Committee is going to be very significant because they will learn about all of these programs and bring that knowledge to the level of the full Board. Dr. Steve Franks, Director of the Department of Workforce Education was the first Agency Director scheduled to meet with the Committee on March 1, and Mr. Ed Rolle of the Employment Security Department will be invited to meet with the Committee at a later meeting.

Mayor Joe Dillard asked if the seven state agencies listed in the report were the only agencies where there was a potential for duplication. Dr. Beene stated that the Committee chose those seven out of the twelve agencies listed as WIA partners because they were determined to be the top priority and included the most programs. She said the Committee would address the other five agencies later. Dr. Beene reminded the Executive Committee that the Strategic Planning Committee is trying to get an understanding of all the resources to determine how to market them, as well as for consideration of potential duplication.

Dr. Beene said the Committee was going to meet with about four Agency Directors on March 1 and the other five on March 15. A report on the process would be presented at the April Regular Quarterly meeting. Dr. Steve Franks added that this was obviously an area the Governor was concerned with and was a charge given at the Board's first meeting. The Executive Committee asked that a list of the mandatory One-Stop partners be listed on the Board's website, and for a copy of the questions that the Agency Directors were going to be asked by the Committee. Chairman Fisher then asked the Executive Committee to review those questions and give any suggestions or comments to Dr. Beene in a couple of days after receiving them in order to pass the information along to Mr. Smith before the Strategic Planning Committee meetings. (A copy of the Strategic Planning Committee report for the February 1 meeting is carried as Attachment A to the permanent copy of these minutes.)

U.S. Department of Labor One-Stop System Report: Chairman Fisher focused the Committee on a letter and report on Arkansas' One-Stop system from Joseph Juarez of the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) that was included in their agenda materials. Chairman Fisher said the staff had already reviewed the report and Mr. Paul Murray, Deputy Director, would give a brief summary of the report and answer any questions. Mr. Murray explained that the staff and the U.S. DOL coordinated the Jonesboro and Little Rock visits after the State Technical Assistance Visits; and therefore, the state staff was able to anticipate a lot of what the U.S. DOL discovered. He said the staff supplied some information that was used in DOL's report and DOL was aware of Arkansas' need for technical assistance. Mr. Murray said the Little Rock and Jonesboro One-Stop Centers volunteered for the visits and more comments were made about the Jonesboro

Center since it was just getting started. He also said there was still a struggle with cost-sharing issues as is the area nationwide. Dr. Beene interjected that Mr. Murray has requested this information from DOL and learned that other states have had the same problems, but a model from DOL has yet to be received. Mr. Murray said he did receive a copy of Pennsylvania's resource-sharing document, but it is hard to convert the wording and information suitable for Arkansas.

Chairman Fisher reminded the Committee that \$1.9 million was allocated for the AWIS system that will not be needed next year and could possibly be used for the One-Stop Centers. Dr. Beene also mentioned that there was \$500,000 set aside this year for assisting the One-Stop Centers in getting established and for operations that will need to be disseminated now that the local plans had been approved. Chairman Fisher asked the staff to collect information about the \$500,000 to be distributed to local areas and come back to the Committee in March with a recommendation. Mr. Murray said he would ask the local areas to supply a list of each of the One-Stop partners and a summary of the contribution the partner makes to the One-Stop system or to a particular One-Stop center. Mr. Randy Parker, Arkansas Rehabilitative Services and a couple other public representatives stated that they believe it was agreed that there would be no cost-allocation during the first fiscal year. Mr. Murray said he would check into whether or not there was a written record of that agreement. Mr. Ron Stone agreed to look into whether or not the money available for the local areas would have a two- or three-year life span.

Quarterly Report due to U.S. Department of Labor: Chairman Fisher said a quarterly report was required by the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL), and Mr. Murray would give a description of the report that would be submitted. Mr. Murray asked the Committee to look at his memorandum addressed to Dr. Beene which had a sample of the quarterly report attached. He also disseminated a copy of an updated quarterly report for the Committee. He stated that the report was required to be submitted on February 14 and was being developed as part of AWIS. The report was designed according to DOL's regulations; and since the original design, DOL has asked for some slightly different information. Mr. Murray determined the extra cost of redesigning the report to comply with DOL requirements to be approximately \$27,500 which would likely be reimbursed by DOL. Mr. Murray walked the Committee through the report page by page and described the categories and numbers. He stated the numbers included were through December 31, 2000. He said the data was rapidly entered by the local areas, but he believed that not all of it had been entered. He said the gray areas on the report were placeholders, and no data would ever be included in those areas.

The Quarter being reported was represented by a "Q" and therefore "Q-1" represented the quarter proceeding the current quarter. He said the performance measured was based on "exitors" of programs, and two quarters must lapse before any data could be collected. As of this quarter, no participants have exited early enough to be included in the report. Mr. Murray explained that the major goal was to have a system able to give a quarterly report in time to submit to DOL, and that was accomplished. It will be possible to generate other reports from the information entered, with time to be developed. He said the entire process was web-based and anyone with the password could generate as many reports as needed. The reports are each updated at different intervals.

Mr. Murray then focused the Committee to a salmon-colored report, which was beyond the required quarterly report and included demographic performance information for the local areas. He said this reporting process was still being developed and included all the information that had been entered by local area from July 1, 2000 to February 11, 2001. He said the report was a good tool to use in comparing the local areas to each other; but he reminded the Committee that the local areas had been asked to focus on getting the Title I information entered first in order to meet the DOL quarterly report requirements so other data still needed to be entered. Some of the local areas agreed they would need to take a look at why their numbers were distorted compared to the other areas. Chairman Fisher asked the staff to contact the local areas when they notice a discrepancy in the reports in order to identify the cause. Mayor Dillard said some areas have better access to technology and the Internet than other areas. Dr. Matlock stated that Southwest Arkansas was having a lot of problems with connectivity. (A copy of the memo and draft quarterly report as well as demographic performance data are carried as Attachment B to the permanent copy of these minutes.)

Report on Meetings with State and Local Program Partners: Chairman Fisher asked Dr. Beene to give a report on the meetings the staff held with the Agency Directors as well as State and Local staff members of the WIA Program Partners. She focused them on the information item sheet in their agenda materials and said the staff wanted to express their thanks to those working closely with them in the early stages of implementation. It was a chance to congratulate each other for the progress and achievements that had been made as well as plan for the future. She said a lunch meeting was held with the Agency Directors, an afternoon meeting was held with the local and state staff members, and a dinner meeting was held with the Local Administrators and Program Providers. She said the agenda was basically the same but the people and interaction varied among the different groups. It was a good way to see who each other was and how everyone fit into the big picture. She added that it was a great opportunity and everyone who participated seemed to feel it was a worthwhile event. (A copy of the report and agenda of the January 30 meetings are carried as Attachment C to the permanent copy of these minutes.)

Report on Issue of Combined Performance Standards and Incentive Funding Awards: Chairman Fisher stated that an issue that had been heavily discussed by the Board and which would receive additional attention in the spring was the issue of performance standards. He said the Board had focused on Title I performance issues; however, there is also a relationship with other programs funded by other Titles of WIA. Dr. Beene stated the Program and Performance Evaluation Committee was looking at the performance standard and measurement issues, and Mr. Ron Stone had been in touch with other states to see how they operated. She focused the Committee on the three bulleted items on the information sheet and stated that the U.S. Department of Labor monitored Title I while the U.S. Department of Education monitored all the other programs. Mr. Garland Hankins, Department of Workforce Education, stated that the levels for adult education are negotiated with the local programs and the state level is negotiated with the U.S. Department of Education consistent with a selected range of other Southern states. He said the Department of Workforce Education was working with DIS on a system to give results of the standards and those numbers would most likely be available on April 1, which he would share with the staff. Mr. Ron Stone reported on the incentive awards distribution saying the Program and Performance Evaluation Committee directed use of the JTPA formula for distribution, and the Board approved the distribution at their last meeting. On February 1 a letter from Dr. Beene was

transmitted to the Local Administrators as well as Mr. Ed Rolle, Director of the Arkansas Employment Security Department, authorizing the release of the incentive awards in the amounts indicated on the spreadsheet that was included in the agenda materials. (A copy of the information item sheets for the Issue of Combined Performance Standards and Incentive Funding Distribution are carried as Attachment D to the permanent copy of these minutes.)

Report on American Customer Satisfaction Index (ACSI): Chairman Fisher explained to the Committee that the Final Rules for the Workforce Investment Act provide that the states must use a single customer satisfaction measure across the three funding streams for measuring customer satisfaction of employers and participants. He said Mr. Ron Stone would discuss the information included in the agenda materials regarding the American Customer Satisfaction Index (ACSI). Mr. Stone explained that the U.S. Department of Labor required that indicators be applied to the local areas but did not mandate that the ACSI should be used. However, they did require that the state use the ACSI for reporting and the licensing fee for the state was covered by the U.S. Department of Labor. Mr. Stone described the advantages and disadvantages of the Index and a description of the survey. He said three questions were required to be included in a telephone survey but other questions could be added. The licensing fee for the local areas would be \$1,000 per area per year and would include use of the instrument as well as the process. Dr. Beene explained that Mr. Stone had already contacted two universities to see how much it would cost to contract the service of making the phone calls and entering the data. It was estimated to be more than \$10,000 per year. Mr. Stone also added that a minimum of 500 surveys must be completed for participants as well as employers. Mr. Wilkerson asked why the state should pay the money for rights to those three questions when they could make up their own. Dr. Beene and Mrs. McFarren answered that the money would also purchase the instrument as well as the statistical norms that could be compared to other states and local areas. Mr. Stone reminded the Committee that the U.S. DOL required a survey for local areas, but did not require this particular one; however, they did require the state to use the American Customer Satisfaction Index for their reports. Dr. Beene said the staff would do some more research and get information on how much it would cost for an outside source to conduct a survey with three questions or more than three questions. The staff would also determine if the local areas will have to decide on the same additional questions to be asked or if each area can make up its own. **A motion was made by Mrs. Helen Moore, seconded by Dr. Kathy Matlock, and carried unanimously that the local areas use the American Customer Satisfaction Survey Index and the State WIB will pay the licensing fee for each of the ten local areas each year, a total cost of \$10,000 per year for all ten areas.** (A copy of the information item sheet for the American Customer Satisfaction Index is carried as Attachment E to the permanent copy of these minutes.)

Presentation on Youth Council Meeting: Chairman Fisher asked Ms. Amie Busby to give a presentation on the Youth Council meeting that was held in Eureka Springs by the Northwest Local Workforce Investment Board. He said Ms. Busby was the Program Coordinator for Career Opportunities for Northeast Arkansas. Ms. Busby thanked the board for the opportunity to speak and said the youth conference was most informative. She said the Fiscal Officer for her employer was also the Youth Council Chair for the Northeast local Workforce Investment Board and attended the conference as well, finding it highly beneficial. She said some of the focus was on the 16-20 year-old youth who were very low-skilled and fighting for the low-skilled jobs that

are available. She said the speakers said it would be very important to focus on this youth group, especially now with the economic turndown. She said other topics of the conference included how the Youth Councils could meet their goals in providing complete services to youth. Marketing was another important topic discussed. The youth councils already know the problems that exist, but other people need to know as well. She said there were different representatives from different state agencies that spoke and there was a session on developing an RFP, which she personally found very beneficial. Ms. Busby said she really enjoyed Mr. Ed deJesus' presentation on the social challenges the youth are facing in today's society. She said the local areas should consider having him speak because he was very motivated and energized about serving the youth of America. Ms. Busby said the Youth Councils and the Career Opportunities staffs should develop a link and help youth by working together. Dr. Matlock asked for a copy of the agenda for the conference and Ms. Busby agreed to leave her materials with the staff so copies could be distributed to the Board. Chairman Fisher thanked Ms. Busby for her presentation.

Update on AWIS: Chairman Fisher told the Committee that two meetings had been recently held with the Department of Information Systems (DIS) concerning the AWIS system and Mr. Murray would give an update on its status. Mr. Murray disseminated a memorandum to the Committee that described the AWIS status. He said that at the meetings with DIS the requirements document was reviewed and it was discovered that the Phase I elements that were supposed to be developed had been completed, with the exception of a few minor elements listed on the memo. He said DIS had also developed a few elements of Phase II that were listed on the memo. He stated that the AWIS Committee, including staff of the Department of Information Systems, the Employment Security Department, and the Workforce Investment Board concluded that Phase I of the AWIS system was substantively developed. He said Phase II was expected to be completed by August 8, 2001. Phase II consists of 21 cells and the status of those cells as of February 12 was listed on the memo. (A copy of the memorandum concerning the status of AWIS is carried as Attachment F to the permanent copy of these minutes.)

Announcements: Chairman Fisher announced that the Little Rock Local Workforce Investment Board was launching into a billboard campaign with cooperation from the Pulaski TEA Coalition. Five billboards in the City of Little Rock would read "Need Employment Assistance?" and have a phone number listed. The phone number would be answered by one individual who would transfer the caller to the proper agency or service they needed. The Local Board would also be given free airtime for public service announcements. Chairman Fisher also said Dr. James Hendren, Chair of the Program and Performance Committee, had an article published in the *Arkansas Business* newspaper about his new web-based company.

Chairman Fisher said the next Executive Committee would be held March 13 at the same location and asked how the Committee members felt about a teleconferenced meeting when the agenda is short. They agreed it would be beneficial at times. Chairman Fisher said the staff would look into having one teleconferenced meeting each quarter. Dr. Beene distributed a copy of an email received from Ann Cole, U.S. Department of Labor representative, commending the staff for the way the Board meetings in Arkansas are organized and run. She also distributed a copy of an article out of the Southwest Arkansas local newspaper about the Local Workforce Investment Board.

Mr. Wilkerson asked about marketing and said he would like to see the Board influence marketing in the local areas. Chairman Fisher asked Dr. Beene for an update on the status of the RFP. Dr. Beene said there were still concerns regarding the language explaining that several marketing representatives from other agencies had reviewed it and given their comments and suggestions. She said Joe Quinn of the Department of Human Services had offered to rewrite it and did that, creating a 25-page document. Dr. Beene said she told the Board in January it was ready but was not aware of the difficulty they would have with the boilerplate language. Chairman Fisher asked Dr. Beene to distribute the RFP to the Executive Committee for review and comments before the March Executive Committee meeting. She agreed that would be done.

Adjourn: Motion was made by Mr. Campbell Wilkerson, seconded by Mr. Bob Drechsler, and carried unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 11:50 a.m.

Bill Fisher, Chairman

Dr. Linda Beene, Executive Director

**Minutes recorded by Christina Miller
Staff of Workforce Investment Board**