

MINUTES  
MEETING OF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE  
ARKANSAS WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD  
August 15, 2000

A meeting of the Executive Committee, Arkansas Workforce Investment Board, was called to order by Chairman Fisher at 9:05 a.m. at the Arkansas Activities Association building with approximately 35 public representatives. Members present included Joe Dillard, Robert Drechsler, Larry Featherstone, Lisa Ferrell, Bill Fisher, Steve Franks, Alan Hughes, Gloria Lynn, Karen McFarren, Helen Moore, and Campbell Wilkerson. Members unable to attend were Florine Bingham, Jodie Mahony, and Kathy Matlock. Chairman Fisher thanked Rebekah Lee, Governor's Deputy Chief of Staff, for coming and apologized for the change of the meeting date. He expressed his appreciation to the Arkansas Activities Association for the meeting location and stated that the Executive Committee meetings would be held there the rest of the year.

Minutes: Chairman Fisher told the Committee they had received several sets of minutes in their agenda packets, including the full Board meeting of July 11 and the Special Executive Committee teleconferences of July 31 and August 10. **All three sets of minutes were approved on motion made by Joe Dillard, seconded by Karen McFarren, and carried unanimously.**

Report of Executive Director: Dr. Beene, Executive Director, gave a report to the Committee on the staff's activities in the last month. Dr. Beene stated that the Workforce Investment Act's Final Regulations were published on August 11 and are available. She also mentioned the Resource Sharing Guidance for One-Stop Centers, which is the basis for the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). Dr. Beene described a series of professional development workshops that are planned for four separate dates to assist the implementation of WIA. She thanked Ed Rolle, Employment Security Department (ESD) for his assistance in getting those approved and implemented. The four topics would include Leadership Theory/Practice; Performance Management Skills; Improving Communication, Observation and Feedback; and Motivation and Win/Win Skills. Dr. Beene gave reports on such activities as the Blueprint Document, visits to One-Stop Centers out-of-state for Board members, Program of Work, which Florine Bingham will be leading, and a Hudson Institute meeting with the Little Rock Chamber of Commerce. Dr. Beene mentioned discussions on combining the Transitional Employment Board (TEB) into the Workforce Investment Board (WIB). Chairman Fisher and Dr. Beene met with Elaine Black, Director and Tim Sambrano, Chairman, to discuss that merger, which is in the talking stages now. Dr. Beene also said that Helen Moore would be the future representative for the Workforce Investment Board to the Transitional Employment Board. Dr. Beene discussed the content of the RFP's and said Ed Rolle would be helping issue those for the Statewide Required Activities. She said the staff exhibited at the Arkansas Human Resource Association conference in Hot Springs as well as attended the Association of Arkansas Counties meeting in Springdale. She said a youth council training session would be held August 29, which would be conducted by DOL and Sharon Shurr. Dr. Beene stated the staff had conducted meetings with the local areas on performance standards, but that report would be presented later in the agenda.

Report on Program and Performance Committee: Chairman Fisher asked Dr. Hendren to give the report for the Program and Performance Committee, which met on July 18 to discuss the

performance categories. Mr. Fisher explained that the negotiation of performance standards had been a serious and ongoing process, which proceeded through the May 1 initial submission and the June 22 staff response as well as the June 28 second submission by local boards. Dr. Hendren referred the Committee to a set of spreadsheets handed out at the meeting. He said the numbers on the spreadsheets reflected the changes in levels that occurred due to negotiations. The Program and Performance Evaluation Committee reviewed these numbers and now recommended to the Executive Committee numbers that would assure that the state level is achieved. He said the staff was directed to work with the local areas, which they did through meetings as well as telephone or email communication. Recommended changes included Eastern on standard nine and West Central and Southwest on standard eleven. Dr. Hendren moved that the Executive Committee accept the levels as negotiated and presented.

Chairman Fisher asked Dr. Beene to describe the process taken by the staff for the negotiations. Dr. Beene stated that five written or verbal rounds of discussion or negotiation with the local areas were conducted and a final level was reached for each standard as it applied to each area. She stated some areas accepted the last state-level proposal and some changes were made in other areas as a result of staff observations or local area justification. Again, the changes that occurred in the levels were reductions for Eastern on Standard #9, Older Youth Entered Employment Rate and for Southwest and West Central on Standard #11, Older Youth Earnings Change in Six Months. Campbell Wilkerson expressed concern that the numbers requested by the local boards were lower than the levels required by the state. Dr. Hendren said that was a valid concern, but the purpose of the program was to look for improvements and better performance. He said if there were problems with meeting the levels, the local boards could look for help; however, if the levels were made lower to meet the local boards' requests, the state would not meet its requirements. Dr. Beene said the Board was looking into devoting a staff position to focusing necessary resources on assisting local areas in meeting performance standards in an effort to assist the local boards in meeting their required levels. She also reminded the Committee that these are the levels for Title I programs only, standards for Adult and Rehabilitative Services also exist. Dr. Hendren pointed out that there was at least a 2% cushion for each category in case some areas failed to meet their levels. He also said some local areas included in their plans higher than required numbers for some categories, which helped. **After some more discussion, the proposed performance levels were accepted by the Committee on motion made by Lisa Ferrell, seconded by Robert Drechsler, and carried unanimously.**

Dr. Hendren stated there was still one more action item involving performance levels. Another document was disseminated to the Committee, which included performance levels for years 2001 and 2002. Dr. Hendren recommended the Committee accept these levels as presented. Mr. Drechsler asked if these numbers would be subject to renegotiation before 2001 and 2002 and Dr. Beene stated they would not. These numbers had already been specified in the Five Year Plan to the Department of Labor and these numbers would be final unless something occurred which would call for an amendment to the Plan. After much discussion, Dr. Beene suggested that the staff negotiate with the local areas on the levels for 2001 and 2002 and have the Executive Committee approve these levels at a teleconference at a later date. She asked the local areas to have their concerns to the staff by Friday, August 18 because the local plans cannot be approved until these levels are approved. (A copy of the report of the Program and Performance

Evaluation Committee is carried as Attachment A to the permanent copy of these minutes. A copy of the proposal of performance standard levels for 2001 and 2002 is carried as Attachment B to the permanent copy of these minutes.)

Report of Local Plan Review Committee: Chairman Fisher stated the Local Plan Review Committee had met on July 24 and 31 by teleconference where they discussed the local plans in general and the three areas that had been approved for thirty-day funding. He said the Committee decided to move all three areas into the ninety-day funding category with the other seven areas. Dr. Beene updated the report, stating that out of the five areas that did not request waivers, all had received their final letter from the staff concerning plan quality. The areas were not given a deadline for their response but were encouraged to work as quickly as possible. Of the five areas that did not require restructuring, the final edited version of their plans would be submitted for four areas by September 1. No time line was available for the fifth area. Out of the five areas that did request waivers and required governance restructuring, the staff has issued responses to all five areas. Chairman Fisher asked the completed plans received by September 1 to be added to the agenda for September 12 for approval. (A copy of the report of the Local Plan Review Committee is carried as Attachment C to the permanent copy of these minutes.)

Method of Administration (MOA) for Nondiscrimination in WIA Programs: Chairman Fisher asked Dr. Beene to give the report on the MOA. She told the Committee this was an item that would be discussed at a later time but the Board was going to begin the process of reviewing the MOA. She said the State of Arkansas has administered in the past several elements in the MOA. The first draft is complete and the staff is working with Albessie Thompson, Employment Security Department, and Michael Brustein, Attorney, on it. She said the staff would be posting on the website memoranda to the local areas for review. She said the staff wanted to bring the Board's awareness of this document and define the MOA for them, but 180 days from July 1 were allowed for approval. Dr. Beene said the final MOA would be in draft form by the September meeting and the Committee could review it and then act on it in November.

Job Spectacular: Dr. Beene added a note about the Job Spectacular event in Little Rock on August 12. She introduced Jana Greenbaum, Owner of *Employment Register*, to the Committee and complimented her on the success. She said Jana was one of the most enthusiastic and committed persons she has met. Dr. Beene said the Little Rock Career Development Center was at the Job Spectacular to offer services and a "testing center" for job-seekers as well as 40 organizations. There was a total of ten to twelve thousand job-seekers who participated that day. Dr. Beene said this program had tremendous potential and plans were being made to work with the local areas to take it to nine other locations this year.

Board Evaluation of Act 1125: Chairman Fisher stated it was required that the Board perform an evaluation of the State Act 1125 of 1999. Dr. Beene stated that the Committee may wish to review the Act and consider any official changes that they may wish to propose at the September meeting. She asked that those proposals be given to the staff as soon as possible.

Biennial Budget for Agency: Chairman Fisher said the proposed biennial budget for fiscal years 2002 and 2003 was included in the agenda packet. He said it included a 2.6% salary and benefits increase as well as a 4% increase in Maintenance and Operation. Dr. Beene stated the 2.6%

increase for salaries could change depending on legislative action. She stated the Agency did not request additional positions in order to remain efficient and the ready availability of help from other agencies. **The biennial budget for fiscal years 2002 and 2003 was approved on motion made by Joe Dillard, seconded by Karen McFarren, and carried unanimously.** (A copy of the biennial budget for the agency is carried as Attachment D to the permanent copy of these minutes.)

Report on AWIS Tracking and Reporting System: Chairman Fisher said the Committee was told the data collection component would be complete by July 1 and the reporting component by September 30. He said a report was in the agenda packet, but Bill Searles, Department of Information Services (DIS), was here to bring the report up to date. Mr. Searles explained that the system was in two phases. The first phase was to be delivered on July 1 and was subcontracted out. When the system was returned it was not acceptable and had to be reworked. The phase was in testing and should be fully deployed by August 28. The second phase was still being developed and the reporting modules were coming along nicely. Mr. Searles explained that the errors found in Phase I were being corrected and improved throughout Phase II, resulting in a much friendlier and efficient Phase II. He said Phase II should still be on schedule and complete by September 30. Dr. Beene asked Mr. Searles how DIS could help the local areas input their written, manually-collected data into this system. He explained the data could be entered into Excel Spreadsheets now and manipulated at a later date; however, since it is on paper it will have to be entered manually somewhere. Dr. Hendren requested more detailed reports on the system and Chairman Fisher asked him to let Dr. Beene know what he needed. Mr. Drechsler said he has never seen a system like this come through on time and a Plan B would be very important. Chairman Fisher agreed this should be the Board's main objective. Mr. Eugene Jones agreed that the main problem would be conversion of data from JTPA to WIA and the manual input of this data. Mr. Searles said he would work on an Excel program created now to start entering this data. Mr. Steve Lease volunteered resources for data entry to assist the local boards. Dr. Beene asked who the main contact person was for this project and Mr. Searles said the daily contact and Project Manager is Judy Hollowell and he works side by side with her. He also said he has several projects he oversees, but this was his main priority. Dr. Beene reiterated the fact that the contract was between WIB and DIS and that she understood the Board to direct payment not be made until the system was complete. She also confirmed that the system was being developed in accordance with the Requirements Document which was part of the contract. (A copy of the report of the AWIS Tracking and Reporting System is carried as Attachment E to the permanent copy of these minutes.)

Analysis of Budget of Employment Security Department: Chairman Fisher stated Ed Rolle, Director of ESD, was present to give a report on his agency's budget for the Committee after their stated interest of learning more about the agencies working with the Board. Mr. Rolle briefly described ESD's purpose and how it is funded. He said all but a small amount of money for new-hire functions is from federal dollars. He asked for questions and Mr. Wilkerson inquired about duplication of efforts. Mr. Rolle explained there limits of duplication and the agencies share what they are doing each month at a Career Opportunities Partnered Cabinet (COPC) meeting with the Governor. He explained the difference between Welfare-to-Work and Transitional Employment Assistance as being controlled by different sets of rules. Lisa Ferrell requested that the staff of the Board be represented at each of the COPC meetings and she would

make that request to the Governor. Dr. Hendren asked about the One-Stop delivery procedures and Mr. Rolle explained there were many procedures of payments and eligibility criteria. Dr. Steve Franks stated that the appearance of duplication of services comes from money spent on the same client for different services, not the same money for the same service. Chairman Fisher asked how much duplication existed between the agencies, and Mr. Rolle stated it was not as much as it appears. It was agreed that it would be better to track one client to see what services they receive and from where they receive them. Mr. Rolle agreed he would present this at the next meeting.

Report on SkillsNet: Dr. Beene explained that SkillsNet was brought to the Board's attention by Jim Blakley, Department of Economic Development, when he asked for a co-sponsor for a workshop about the system. These two agencies along with Department of Workforce Education and the Association of Two-Year Colleges sponsored the workshop for a this potentially valuable resource. Dr. Beene stated a report on SkillsNet was provided in the Committee's agenda packet and referred to the five platforms it would cover. She said a group came together after the workshop to see how to "pilot" the program and decided to approach representatives of the manufacturers on the Board about it. Dr. Franks stated his agency, Department of Workforce Education, would implement the program as well, and he was excited to talk with the manufacturers about implementing it in their companies. He agreed with Dr. Beene that it was very exciting and would offer an electronic infrastructure. Dr. Beene stated it was a great opportunity to have the Board pilot the program because the Board represents multiple constituencies. (A copy of the report on SkillsNet is carried as Attachment F to the permanent copy of these minutes.)

Announcements: Chairman Fisher announced that next month's meeting would be September 12 at the same location. The next Quarterly meeting would be October 12 at the Jacksonville Community Center and directions would be sent at a later date. He asked everyone to sign their TR-1s and leave their nametags. Dr. Beene asked the local areas' representatives to meet with Claudia Griffin, staff of Board, to discuss the performance standards and express reactions. She also asked them to share their ideas and concerns about the Tracking and Reporting System. Chairman Fisher asked the Committee to let the staff know at least ten days prior to a meeting of anything they would like to have on the agenda.

Adjournment: **Chairman Fisher thanked everyone for coming and the meeting was adjourned at 11:05 a.m. on motion made by Helen Moore, seconded by Joe Dillard, and carried unanimously.**

Bill Fisher, Chair

Linda Beene, Executive Director

Minutes recorded by Christina Miller  
Staff of Workforce Investment Board