

MINUTES
REGULAR QUARTERLY MEETING
ARKANSAS WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD
JULY 11, 2000

A regular quarterly meeting of the Arkansas Workforce Investment Board was held on Tuesday, July 11, 2000, Embassy Suites Hotel, 11301 Financial Centre Parkway, Little Rock, with Chairman Bill Fisher presiding. The Chair called the meeting to order at 9:10 a.m. and welcomed 27 members and approximately 50 public representatives. Members present were Marguerite Abowitz, Al Ashcraft, Florine Bingham, Chuck Cramer, Joe Dillard, Robert Drechsler, Larry Featherstone, Lisa Ferrell, Don Finley, Bill Fisher, Steve Franks, Lu Hardin, Alan Hughes, Phillip Jackson, Calvin Johnson, Gloria Lynn, Jodie Mahony, Kathy Matlock, Karen McFarren, Helen Moore, Jim Blakely for Barbara Pardue, Ed Rolle, Jack Smurl, Jim Smith, Bill Sutton, Sharon Williams, and John Wyvil. Those unable to attend were Candis Collins, Charles Cunningham, James Hendren, Randy Hopper, Mike Huckabee, Kurt Knickrehm, Trevor Myers, Butch Pike, James Putlak, Joe Warren, Campbell Wilkerson, and Barbara Wood.

Chairman Fisher stated that this meeting was a special occasion, representing one year of operation for the Workforce Investment Board. He also referenced a letter received from the U.S. Department of Labor (placed at each member's seat) stating that Arkansas had been approved for full funding under the Workforce Investment Act. He said Arkansas was one of a handful of states approved for full funding.

Chairman Fisher expressed thanks to the staff of the Workforce Investment Board and introduced each member: Dr. Linda Beene, Paul Murray (who was at an out-of-state conference), Claudia Griffin, Kay McVey, Cindy Varner, Christina Miller, Alicia Evans, and Robert Metcalf (who was on loan from the Employment Security Department). Mr. Fisher stated that without this staff, the Board would not have achieved what it has. He also said Michelle Driscoll, Department of Labor-Dallas, had been very helpful to the Board. He apologized for the tight time constraints put on the Local Boards but reiterated that it was due to the need for compliance with the Federal Law to receive funding.

Chairman Fisher introduced Ainsley Lang, Attorney General's Office, who would be assisting the Board and Rebekah Lee, the Governor's Liaison.

Action Item 1 - Minutes: Mr. Rolle noted a needed change on June 13 Executive Committee Minutes page 5 under the Report on Eligible Training Provider (ETP) List. The fourth sentence would now read: If their applications are not in by July 1, they will not be guaranteed a listing on the initial ETP list. However, ESD would continue to receive applications after July 1, adding those at a later date. **The minutes of the Executive Committee were approved unanimously with this change on motion made by Florine Bingham and seconded by Helen Moore.**

Quarterly Report of Executive Director: Dr. Linda Beene, Executive Director, made a Power Point presentation about last quarter's activities. She covered the State Unified Plan, the State Youth Program, Local Boards, Public Relations, the WIA Tracking and Reporting System,

Governor Relations, Industry Relations, and the overall accomplishments of the Board and staff. She went into detail about the trip made to Wisconsin on May 1-3 with Phil Price, Elaine Black, Ruth Whitney, and Cindy Varner to see the One-Stop Centers. Dr. Beene stated that the Board participated in a Job Fair sponsored by the *Employment Register* and had a booth at the Small Business Opportunity Conference. She listed the meetings she had with the Local Officials of Southwest, Northwest, and West. She also gave presentations at the West, Southwest, and Little Rock local board meetings. Other speaking events included the Workforce Development Collaboration Workshop, Arkansas Association of Colleges and Employers, Arkansas Rehabilitation Conference, Two-Year College Presidents, and the Association of County Judges. Dr. Beene introduced Alicia Evans, working part time until August 7 when she will join the staff full time, and Robert Metcalf who was initially employed two years ago to implement the Department of Labor one-stop center grant and is now working directly with the staff. Dr. Beene described the events for next quarter, including getting the ten local plan approvals achieved, having guidelines for developing state required activities, getting the Blueprint document published, and having a series of meetings with the local boards, about which Lisa Ferrell requested board members to be notified.

Mr. Fisher said it was a very active quarter. He stated that every board member was also a member of one of three committees. He acknowledged the chairs of the committees: Dr. James Hendren, Program and Performance Evaluation Committee; Jim Smith, Strategic Planning Committee; and Joe Warren, Local Plan Review Committee.

Action Item 2 - Report of Local Plan Review Committee: Mr. Joe Warren was unable to attend the board meeting so Dr. Beene gave the Local Plan Review Committee's report of the June 28 meeting. She stated that it was a teleconference called because the Executive Committee wanted to keep the Local Plan Review Committee involved in the process of the local plans. The seven essential elements and the process for reaching the performance levels was described to the Committee. Dr. Beene reminded the board that it is the entire state rather than each area that has to achieve the performance levels, so the levels have to be what works for everyone. Dr. Beene explained that three areas were granted only 30 days of funding by the Committee due to problems. Two of those areas had resolved their problems and one area was scheduled to resolve the problem. **Motion was made by Karen McFarren, seconded by Bill Sutton, and carried unanimously to grant only 30 days beginning July 1 of funding to Southwest, Northeast, and West.** (A copy of the June 28 Local Plan Review Committee Report is carried as Attachment A to the permanent copy of these minutes.)

Action Item 3 – Adjustment of Local Area Funding Formula: Dr. Beene explained the adjustment of the Local Area Funding Formula and referred to the action item sheet and the two allocation sheets that were mailed earlier. She stated that no area would suffer a loss from the adjustment because funding from a carryover category which may be used for either administrative or program funds was made available to avoid such losses. **Motion was made by Florine Bingham, seconded by Bill Sutton, and carried unanimously to accept the adjustment of the Local Area Funding Formula as presented.** (A copy of the Adjustment of Local Area Funding Formula is carried as Attachment B to the permanent copy of these minutes.)

Ratification Item 4 – Approval of Activity Responsibilities Under Workforce Investment Act: Chairman Fisher said this item was included in the agenda packet and discussed at the May 9 Executive Committee meeting. On May 9, Lisa Ferrell made a motion to change lines 21 and 25 by adding an “x” in the first column of both lines. **The Statewide Responsibilities were ratified on motion made by Helen Moore, seconded by Joe Dillard, and carried unanimously.**

Ratification Item 5 – Clarification of Roles of Two-Year Colleges on Local Workforce Investment Boards: This item was described in the minutes of the May 9 Executive Committee meeting. **The clarification was ratified on motion made by Bill Sutton, seconded by Helen Moore, and carried unanimously.**

Ratification Item 6 – WIA Data Collection and Reporting System: This item was included in the Executive Committee meeting minutes of May 9, where \$1.9 Million was approved to be spent on the system. Dr. Beene referred the Board to the report that was included in their agenda materials and explained that this system is operational for relational databases and anyone who has authorization can access the database. Dr. Beene stated that the system is a very important piece of the larger system and in moving toward e-commerce. **The system was ratified on motion made by Don Finley, seconded by Gloria Lynn, and carried unanimously.**

Ratification Item 7 –Waiver Requests: Chairman Fisher referred the Board to page four of the June 13 Executive Committee minutes as well as the April 11 minutes. At the April 11 meeting, the Full Board gave the Executive Committee the power to act on requests for Southwest, West Central, Western, Northwest, and Central to provide core and/or intensive services and/or to be a one-stop operator. The requests were reviewed by the Local Plan Review Committee and acted upon at the June 13 Executive Committee meeting. All five of the requested waivers were denied by the Executive Committee, but all ten areas were funded for either 90 or 30 days. **The denial of the five waiver requests were ratified on motion made by Helen Moore, seconded by Bill Sutton, and carried unanimously.**

Ratification Item 8 – Process for Approval of Local Plans: Chairman Fisher stated that the information for this item was in the June 13 Executive Committee meeting minutes and that two deadlines must be met for continued funding. These two deadlines would be monitored in two teleconference meetings of the Local Plan Review Committee on July 24 and July 31. The first meeting would deal with the fulfilling requirements for three areas receiving 30 day funding, and the second would provide an opportunity for report on governance restructuring in five areas initially requesting waivers as well as plan quality overall.

Sharon Williams expressed concern of Local Boards, stating that they need to be aware of the deficiencies because they can't contract for a year when they are only guaranteed funding for 90 days. Dr. Beene agreed that there was no reason the Board couldn't move faster than 90 days because performance shouldn't suffer. She said each of the local boards should focus on the seven essential elements. The reason funding was only granted for 90 days was because there were no local plans that could have been approved for full funding in mid June. The Board decided to grant 90 days of funding instead of no funding. The three areas that received only 30

days of funding were in a different situation and were asked to get issues resolved. Two areas had resolved their issues and one is scheduled to soon.

Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) were discussed by Dr. Beene and Jodie Mahony. Dr. Beene stated that MOUs are a big challenge because it is a complicated process. Chairman Fisher asked Ed Rolle to present to the Board how ESD is supporting the One-Stop Centers. Jodie Mahony said the State Board should require the local boards to specify how they are going to fund the One-Stops. **The process for approval of local plans was ratified on motion made by Jim Smith, seconded by Calvin Johnson, and carried unanimously.**

Ratification Item 9 – Revision of State Performance Measures: This item was included in the June 13 Executive Committee meeting minutes and included changes in lines 7 and 9, which were reduced through negotiations with the Department of Labor (DOL). A memo was sent to the local boards with definitions of the measures. The definition of “credential” was broadened through these negotiations with DOL. Dr. Beene stated this was a difficult process, much like buying a house.

Lisa Ferrell asked how the results would be evaluated a year from now. Dr. Beene said there was data to compare to JTPA; it is a different program than WIA, but comparisons to most of the measures can be made. Chairman Fisher stated the results will be based on what the Board sets as performance levels; the measuring will be based on this criteria. Jim Smith requested another column be added to the document that would include the performance for 1999. Dr. Beene said the Board members could be granted access to the Reporting and Tracking System to see the results. There will be quarterly reports on the system which will be available after October 1, 2000. It was also confirmed that those persons who enter the system but don't become employed will be reported.

Dr. Beene and Chairman Fisher reminded the Board that the performance levels were statewide. There could be a loss of funding if the levels are not reached, but also an awarding of additional incentive funding if the levels are surpassed. Dr. Beene used unemployment rates, skills levels, and the economy as examples of criteria for these levels. The 17 measures listed by the state are minimum requirements for the local boards.

Claudia Griffin, staff of the Board, defined Earnings Change in Six Months for Dr. Kathy Matlock as changing from one job to another or changing from unemployment to a job. Dr. Steve Franks reminded the Committee that in order for the state to receive an incentive grant, negotiated performance levels must be reached not only for WIA Title I, but also for Adult Education and Literacy programs (WIA Title II) as well as for Perkins III programs. Jim Smith requested that each measure be defined in simple terms for the Board members. Lu Hardin requested that the staff work on some type of accountability measure to be included. Dr. Beene mentioned she had talked with Dr. Hamilton, UALR, about the Blueprint document and asked that systems already in place be utilized for that purpose. Don Finley expressed his appreciation for the WAGE Program in his area and Mr. Fisher apologized for running out of time for the WAGE presentation at the April 11 meeting. He said if anyone would like to hear a presentation to let the staff know. **The levels were ratified on motion by Lisa Ferrell, seconded by Jodie Mahony, and carried unanimously.**

Ratification Item 10 – State Required Activities and Budget: This item was included in the June 13 Executive Committee meeting minutes. Dr. Beene explained each line and stated that the amounts in columns I and J will change according to the Board's previous vote on adjusted local funding. Dr. Beene stated that the numbers listed were for this year and next year she hopes there will be money for statewide needs because the full \$1.9 Million for the data system will not be spent again. She proudly stated that line 31, Innovative Incumbent Worker Training, including an Employer Loan Program, was the only optional activity. **The budget was ratified on motion made by John Wyvil, seconded by Joe Dillard, and carried unanimously.**

Ratification Item 11 – Criteria for Reappointment of Veterans to Local Boards: The information for this item was included in the minutes from the June 13 Executive Committee meeting. **The criteria was ratified on motion made by Ed Rolle, seconded by Helen Moore, and carried unanimously.**

Report on Youth Programs: Chairman Fisher explained that five of the local areas submitted information on their summer youth programs and a summary of those was sent to the Board in their agenda materials. Three of those area's Youth Chairs were present to provide more information and answer questions.

- Vincent Bailey of the Little Rock Local Board: Mr. Bailey stated their board was very excited about Little Rock's summer youth program. They have hired 81 youth and had their orientation last week. He expressed his thanks to Dorothy Nayles and her staff. He said real emphasis had been placed on small businesses in the community and 17 have agreed to participate. They have issued an RFP for year-round services. He explained there is a combination of small and large businesses participating in their program. Last summer there were 150 youth registered, but due to budget constraints they could only hire 80 this summer. He thanked the Board for the opportunity to speak.
- Raymond Chambers of the West Central Local Board: Mr. Chambers stated that West Central had issued RFPs and awarded three contracts for the summer. The Youth Opportunities Unlimited (Y.O.U.) will have nine youth, the Malvern Beta School's "Project Achievement Program" will have 50, and the South Conway County will have 75. Each of these programs was explained in the summary.
- Tom Pittman of the Western Local Board: Mr. Pittman explained that there is a need for other skills for employees and that was what Western's emphasis was on for their youth programs. They wanted to emphasize the basic work habits and remediation. They have 40-50 youth registered which represent all six counties. They also have about 15-25 businesses involved in the program.

Sharon Williams apologized for their Chairman not being able to participate, but disseminated a report to the Board on East's youth programs. She said they have about 60 youth involved and it was possible due to TEA funds that she leveraged. Lu Hardin gave Ms. Williams credit for her creativity in leveraging the TEA money and allowing more youth to participate in the Y.O.U. program. Chairman Fisher commented on the East Local Board's newsletter that it was an excellent newsletter. Sharon Williams said each board member was on the mailing list. (A copy of the Youth Program summaries are carried as Attachment C to the permanent copy of these minutes.)

Report on Dislocated Worker (DLW) Task Force: Chairman Fisher called on Alan Hughes, Board Member and President of the Arkansas AFL-CIO, to introduce the report on the Dislocated Worker Task Force. Mr. Hughes gave a brief background of the program and introduced DeLaine Russell of ESD. Ms. Russell stated that the Task Force was established in 1983 to meet the needs of workers in communities dealing with closures and lay-offs. Three state agencies (DWE, ESD, and ADED) as well as AFL-CIO are participants. Under WIA unexpected events such as plant closings fall under the responsibility of the Dislocated Worker Task Force. Their goal is to have a staff person in each one-stop center to counsel individuals and workers who have been laid off.

Sonny Scott of Department of Workforce Education (DWE) explained that the funds for the program come directly from WIA but other programs can be used to contribute funds as well. For dealing with disaster, the Task Force has partnered with American Red Cross and Emergency Services. Jim Blakely of the Department of Economic Development (ADED) described their role after a plant closes. ADED tries to market the closed building and location to other businesses and organizations in order to bring more business to the community. Ben Davis of AFL-CIO stated that Arkansas has one of the best programs for dislocated workers in the country. They coordinate with the agencies and hold workshops in the communities to help those who lost their job to find another one and to survive while not having one. He handed out the annual report of the Dislocated Worker Task Force and thanked the Board for the opportunity to present their program.

Lisa Ferrell encouraged Board members to go to a DLW workshop in their area. She stated it was an education to see what the needs of the people are as well as what kinds of valuable resources were out there. Ed Rolle stated that the reason the program works is because there is no question about money, all the agencies and universities work together as a team.

Report on Negotiation of Local Performance Standards: Dr. Beene reiterated that the performance standards were calculated under WIA for the entire state. She also stated that the MOUs are somewhat difficult to complete and asked the agency directors to do whatever it takes to get their local representatives to complete the MOUs. Dr. Beene stated that the report on the Performance Standards was sent to the Board and went over some open items that need to be resolved in developing MOUs within the local areas. They included: a difficulty in acquiring all the signatures, cost allocations and resource sharing plans will have to be clarified for quality, and lack of communication among some of the partners as to services that they would and should be providing in the area.

Jodie Mahony stated that the Board needs to reach a decision on funding the One-Stops for a recommendation to the Legislature. He asked that the agencies turning in their requests for next year indicate how much of their budget is required for the One-Stops. He said the Board needs to be in a good position to make the request to the Governor and the Legislature. It was agreed that there would be follow up on this before the next meeting.

Report on Tracking and Reporting System: The Board was also sent a report on the Tracking and Reporting System. Dr. Beene stated the Board should have the first quarterly report by

October 1, 2000. She had not been notified of any savings from the \$1.9 Million, but would let the Board know if there was. The system had not been marketed to other states, but it should be in the future. Dr. Beene said it was not yet known if or how much the local areas would be obligated to contribute to the system, but would let them know.

Announcements: Chairman Fisher announced a recent publication of the *Benchmarks for Mature and Older Workers*, which addresses the assessment of the Workforce Investment Act System, particularly with regard to planning for provisions of services to older workers through One-Stop career centers. Chairman Fisher encouraged the Board to review it and to get information about it from the Board staff. He announced that the two standing committees would meet in the upcoming month, as well as the two teleconferences of the Local Plan Review Committee. The next Executive Committee Meeting would be August 8 at 9:00 a.m. The location would be announced later. The next full board meeting would be October 10.

Adjournment: **Chairman Fisher thanked everyone for coming and the meeting was adjourned at 11:14 a.m. on motion from Bill Sutton, seconded by Helen Moore, and carried unanimously.**

Bill Fisher, Chair

Linda Beene, Executive Director

Minutes recorded by Christina Miller
Staff of Workforce Investment Board