



**State Workforce Development Board Meeting Minutes**  
**Nashville, TN**  
**December 12, 2014**  
**8:30 am – 12:00 pm**

**Board Members Present:**

Rogers Anderson  
Martha Axford  
Jerry Bush  
Walter Butler  
Trudy Carson  
Arthur Cate  
Bruce Dotson  
Echell Eady  
Andre Fowlkes  
David Hayes  
Betty Johnson  
Mary Jones  
Warren Logan  
Susan MacArthur  
Chris Mason  
Mark Norris  
Greg Persinger  
Burns Phillips  
Stuart Price  
Bob Ravener  
Lottie Ryans  
Yolanda Shields

**Continued Board Members Present:**

Jan Williams  
Jimmy Williamson  
Sandra Woods

**Board Members Present by Proxy:**

Timothy Burchfield  
Bill Hagerty (Ted Townsend)  
Raquel Hatter (Cherrell Campell-Street)  
Kevin Huffman (Nick Hansen)

**Members Absent:**

Nicole Austin  
Ann Hatcher  
Mayra Zimmer  
Susan Lynn  
Ventrus Norfolk  
Richard Manahan

**Staff Present:**

Briana Johnson  
Christy Montgomery  
Ryan Allen  
James Roberson  
Sterling van der Spuy  
Teresa Broome  
Regina King  
Melinda Kelsey  
Deniece Thomas

Mark Chandler  
Pat Bleecker  
Dan Holton  
Jason Beard  
Nicholas Bishop  
Nina Webster  
Lane Marks

**Welcome:**

Chairman Bob Ravener welcomed the board members, state staff, LWIA staff, and guests. He announced that the meeting will cover some of the innovative and database practices taking place in Tennessee's workforce system, presentations from local board and state staff. He also stated that the meeting would be honoring Tennesseans getting back to work and their dedication over the past year.

Chairman Ravener provided an update on the unemployment rate which was 8.1% last year and is currently 7.1%, a notable decrease this year. Over the year, non-farm employment has increased by adding 59,800 jobs. The largest increase occurred in professional/business services, leisure/hospitality, trade/transportation/utilities and manufacturing. For Mr. Ravener this year marks the one (1) year term as the Board Chair. He stated that it has been an honor to serve and work with the other dedicated and committed board members and the state employees that show such great leadership and passion for Workforce Development. Mr. Ravener specifically thanked the key leadership within the board: David Hayes; Operations Committee Chair, Lottie Ryans; Strategic Planning Committee-Vice Chair, Greg Persinger; Continuous Improvement-Vice Chair, Stuart Price; Policy Committee-Vice Chair.

**Roll Call/Conflict of Interest Statement:**

Christy Montgomery conducted the roll call and established the presence of a quorum. Ms. Montgomery notified board members that Conflict of Interest, Acknowledgement/Disclosure, and Code of Ethics forms were on-site for review and updates.

**Approval of Minutes:**

Mr. Ravener asked for the minutes to be approved as written. Sandra Woods made a motion to approve the minutes from the full board meeting on December 12, 2014. Lottie Ryans seconded the motion. **Motion Passed.**

## **Opening Remarks:**

Burns Phillips, Commissioner of the Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development, gave opening remarks and welcomed the new and existing board members and thanked them and the workforce partners for their attendance. He acknowledged the focus the State is getting more on the work of the workforce development system, what it does, on its successes, on its potential and on the enthusiasm and excitement around the system. He thanked everyone for being present and their contribution to the system.

## **Workforce Services Updates:**

Sterling van der Spuy, Administrator of Workforce Development, discussed the implementation of the One Stop VOS System that was launched on December 4, 2014, four days ahead of schedule. He recognized the leadership of the State Workforce Board in pushing to get this system implemented. The VOS system is a comprehensive workforce development tool that will allow the state to continue to integrate service in connecting participants coming into workforce system with labor market information. He acknowledged the leadership team and Career Center Managers in helping with the implementation.

Mr. van der Spuy, recognized Senator Norris and his leadership with the LEAP Grants for which the Governor has announced the grantees who will be receiving funding. Mr. van der Spuy recognized partners and labor staff who reviewed the applications and provided the Commissioner with information needed to make informed decisions and recommendations. In addition, the team has been actively participating in identifying and providing information to the Federal Government to transition to the new law. In closing, we are framing a date sometime in May for a Workforce Summit. This will be a follow-up to what TDLWD is working on with our ECD partners through Workforce 360, where we work to identify challenges in addressing workforce needs.

Mr. van der Spuy also mentioned the retirement of Mr. Vaughn Smith, LWIA 3 Executive Director, with Windie Wilson the best as his successor. Also, Mr. van der Spuy shared the announcement of Mr. Kevin Woods being appointed the Executive Director of LWIA 13.

## **Paychecks for Patriots:**

Bob Ravener and Melinda Kelsey (Administrator, Communications, Constituent & Government Relations) discussed the Paychecks for Patriots updates. The 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Paychecks for Patriots was held in October 2014. This event included 295 Tennessee hiring employers, representing 195 different corporations, all committed with jobs. All jobs were posted on our Jobs4TN.gov and individuals that did not have full time employment were immediately contacted from our Tennessee Career Centers and offered services through our Tennessee Centers. Paycheck for Patriots and TDLWD, have received three (3) Parthenon Awards. This award is given by the Public Relations Society of America and recognizes organizations for going above and beyond in bringing the private and public sector together. This event has also been recognized as a National Best Practice, resulting in the Governor declaring a hiring day for Paychecks for Patriots.

### **Best Practice: Data-based Decision Making to Assess Training Readiness:**

Margaret Prater, LWIA 12 Executive Director spoke about a data-based, decision making access to training readiness within the 11 counties in LWIA 12. The area has the highest unemployment rate in the state. To combat some of the unemployment issues, LWIA 12 has developed a system to engage individuals as they enter the career center. Each customer is greeted by partner staff, which share Welcome Function responsibilities, and provided with an initial assessment of service needs. They provide training readiness, initial and in-depth assessments, understand the service needs, narrow the scope of service, identify the individual's skills, qualify customers for services and update the plan from the results of the information collected. Once a customer reaches this point, a plan is executed for goal attainment and participant success.

### **Adult Education Integrated Models:**

Marla Rye, LWIA 8 Executive Director, and Jan McKeel, LWIA 10 Executive Director gave a presentation overview of the Adult Education Integrated Models and how it fits into the Workforce System. The advantage of having the Adult Education Services in the LWIAs is in helping the individuals that are a little uncomfortable with re-entering the higher education system. The Career Centers provide a safe and encouraging system for these participants to come into. They provide testing for the student in the centers and financial services as well. The co-location of these services assures the customer can satisfy all necessary requirements as well remain encourage about their return to work and/or training. Since 2005 in Maury County, 1,000 participants have received their High School Equivalency (formerly known as GED). In Robertson County in LWIA 8 (since 2008) and Cheatham County (since 2013), 655 GED diplomas have been received in those two counties. The project in LWIAs 8 and 10, has increased the passing rate, reduced the cost of the school, and allowed leveraging of funding for the respective career centers. William Savage was named LWIA 8's Adult Education Student of the year. Although he took the GED test 16 times, he successfully passed on his last try! Much like Mr. Savage, there are almost one million other Tennesseans who do not have their GED, however, program like the Adult Education Integrated Model can help overcome this state-wide issue.

### **Presentation of Regional Workforce Services Employee of the Year:**

David Hayes, Operations Committee Chair presented the Workforce Services Employee of the Year awards. One recipient from each of the three divisions of the state were given the 2013-14 workforce service employee of the year awards. This award is presented to an American Job Center Partner for their outstanding service, attitude, initiative, exceptional work ethic, his or her relationship with customers and fellow employees. On June 19, 2014 the Operations Committee met and reviewed the 2013-2014 nominations and selected Travis Mathes, for the East Tennessee, Shannon Stoner, Middle Tennessee, and Gail Taylor, West Tennessee award.

### **Economic Outlook for 2015:**

Dr. John Gnuschke gave a presentation/discussion on the Economic Environment to the board. He showed a Real Annualized GCP, percent Change for 1973-2013. Dr. Gnuschke stated that

Tennessee will grow as long as the nation continues to grow. Growth will not lead the nation but may lead similar states, employment gains will be across all industrial sectors in 2015 and will result in higher incomes and lower unemployment rates in the state. Manufacturing output will grow but manufacturing employment will not keep pace. Leapfrogging other states will depend on exceptional economic growth, a difficult feat in a highly competitive world economy. The global transformation of the economy means new opportunities for Tennessee. Tennessee is going to continue to grow. Oil prices have generated a pay raise in Tennessee for many families. Sales tax will be better in 2015 as people will be spending. Dr. Jeff Wallace provided a PY 2011-2012 summary of the Workforce Investment Act's Return on Investment.

### **Innovative Approaches to Return Unemployed to Work:**

Mr. Nicholas Bishop, RESA Director, Darlene Ely, Tennessee American Job Centers Center Area Manager, and Donna Stansberry, Director of WIA Services (LWIA 2) discussed the Re-Employment Services Assessment (REA). REA identifies unemployment insurance claimants via a statistical computer model to identify individuals that are most likely to exhaust their claim based on education, location, occupation. Each week of REA participation, UI eligibility reviews are conducted on each participant to spot any qualifying issues. REA has an intake process that includes orientation, followed by three subsequent returns on weekly basis. The Employment Development Plan varies by individual. Our staff also works with participants using the Re-Employment Workbook to help with determining obstacles or barriers to employment as well as assisting with setting goals and networking activities. Career Centers host networking and job fair type events geared towards REA participants. REA operates 100% on a federal U.S. DOL Grant and in program year 2013 29,370 UI Claimants were selected for REA participation, with 22,000 completing the program. Federal reports indicate that on average claimants receiving REA services return to work about 4-7 weeks sooner than those not receiving REA services. Darlene Ely – Manager Talbott American Tennessee Job Career Centers and Donna Stansberry-Walters State Community College provided examples of partnering on service delivery and success stories.

### **Skills Gap: The Conversation Continues:**

Lottie Ryans, Vice-Chair Strategic Planning Committee/Johnson City Board of Education made a presentation regarding skills gap study in the Johnson City School System. The study talked with students about their transition to school or work and highlighted the difficulty many have with soft skills training and feedback received from employers. Recent involvement with the Chamber of Commerce, the Economic and Community Development Council and new employers have raised the same areas of concern. Almost every high school sent students to participate in a meeting to discuss what contributes to Workforce readiness and college readiness. The first step is mentoring since 800 students are homeless in the Johnson City School System and are more concerned about shelter than they are about their academic success. Some past programs need to be backer-introduced and altered for high schools and colleges for future decisions. Additional topics of importance were social skills training, dealing with social media, and proper etiquette on cell phones. The use of WorkKeys is used as a measuring tool to determine if the proper math is being offered. Additional topics have been explored for career planning and follow up with counselors, chambers and school boards to present information.

### Committee Reports:

- Operations Committee, David Hayes, Statewide Contracts:  
Met with the members of the committee and reviewed the Workforce Services Employee award programs and as well as the Jim Alford award. The next meeting will be reviewing presentations from the Memphis of University and the AFL-CIO for our consideration about extending their existing services and contracts. Lane Marks gave information on our process in the Workforce Services.
- Policy & Strategic Planning, Rogers Anderson Chair, (Lottie Ryans-Vice Chair)  
Ms. Ryans discussed strategic planning issues. The Committee had two policies for vote. Stuart Price updated to the Policy Committee for the state to adopt the policy specific to the One Stop chartering. This information was included in the state plan at the June 2014 meeting. The region is requiring a separate policy. This policy does not require additional action from the local areas as they have all met the requirements and approved by the state board. The policy was voted and **motion passed**. The second policy, Incumbent Worker policy was to be revised to include information contained within procedures and memorandums. This policy does not required additional action from the local areas and is consistent with normal business operations. The policy was voted on and **motion passed**.
- Continuous Improvement, Yolanda Shields, Chair  
An overview of the Annual Report for 2013-2014 was presented. High targets are to be renegotiated with the Federal government.

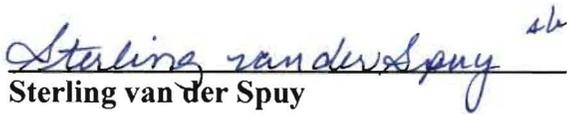
### Closing Remarks:

Chairman Ravener thanked the board for its time and energy. With no further business, the meeting was adjourned by Chairman Ravener.

Meeting adjourned at 12:00pm.

### Future Dates:

June 4-5, 2015 (this will replace the April 30-May 1 meeting)  
September 10-11, 2015  
December 10-11, 2015

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Sterling van der Spuy  
Administrator