

**Vermont State Workforce Development Board**

Meeting Minutes

March 9, 2022

12:00 pm – 1:00 pm

Virtual

**Board/Committee members in attendance:** Commissioner Harrington, Nathan Piper, Patrick Leduc, Joe Lemnah, Chris Loso, Chair Adam Grinold, Steven Lutton, Hannah Goldman, David Lynn, Joyce Judy, Matt Mckenney, Brian Carpenter, Diane Dalmasse, Tiffany Walker, Kiersten Bourgeois, Steven Dellinger-Pate, Margaret Pinello-White, Kevin Chu, Sophie Zdatny, Linda Schadler, Monica Greene, Brian Kerns, Gregory Maguire, Jill Olson, Joan Goldstein, Ellen Kahler, Rebecca Kapsalis, Mike Brosky, Grant Spates, Pat Elmer, Tim Smith, Frank Cioffi

**Guests in attendance:** Victoria Biondolillo, Abigail Rhim

Chair Adam Grinold called the meeting to order at 12:02 pm.

**Old Business**

Chair Adam Grinold filed a motion to approve the February 10th meeting minutes and hearing no corrections, moved to accept the minutes as written. Motion was unanimously approved.

**New Business**

Executive Director Victoria Biondolillo discussed today’s goal to approve of the MOU and State Plan, both for federal compliance purposes. For the MOU, she highlighted the approval of the document that shows all members of the WIOA system understand that they will be coordinating services, emphasizing alignment and coordination. For the State Plan, she stressed that this is a revision of the current State Plan, not a total reconstruction, which will occur next year. She then went on to stress that we want to focus our goals and strategies to be all encompassing with what we are looking for in the workforce system. She also stressed that the common sections regarding goals and strategies are things that we will be asking the Board to continue evaluating moving forward. She then opened the floor to comments.

**MOU Review**

Sophie Zdatny flagged the MOU's verbiage surrounding Community College of Vermont (CCV) and Vermont Technical College (VTC), stating that the document serves through June of 2025 and VTC will not exist as of next summer. She was wondering if we could change the references to the CCV and VTC to just Vermont State Colleges in order to cover both institutions currently and moving forward.

Executive Director Victoria Biondolillo agreed with this amendment and reminded participants that we are able to revise the MOU on a quarterly basis so if anything changes in the future, we can make small revisions.

Ellen Kahler then stated that subject matter related to rules and responsibilities amongst partners regarding marketing and outreach of services does not seem to exist in the document. She also highlighted the use of technology and asked if there is any expectation that there is some level of technology available at all sites?

Executive Director Victoria Biondolillo shared that marketing and outreach will fall under the responsibility of the one-stop operator. She also stated that we can make an amendment to the document at a quarterly meeting in the future laying out this responsibility. Regarding the second question, she highlighted the shared cost of physical space and the potential for partners to offer up in-kind contributions if using internet or phone to promote coordination of services virtually.

Linda Schadler then commented regarding the role of Vermont State Colleges and the University of Vermont (UVM), wondering if UVM should have been playing a role in the negotiations of the MOU.

Executive Director Victoria Biondolillo said that it does not encompass anyone who does not receive WIOA funding, including UVM. She then added that it falls on the Board to ensure that non-WIOA folks, those who do not receive WIOA dollars, to still be involved in the coordination of services.

Chair Adam Grinold filed a motion to approve the MOU agreement.

Motion moved by Brian Kerns.

Motion seconded by Chris Loso.

Hearing no corrections, Chair Adam Grinold moved to approve the document unanimously.

**State Plan Review**

Executive Director Victoria Biondolillo then shared her screen in order to review the State Plan, section by section, starting with the economic analysis, put together by Mathew Barewicz from the Vermont Department of Labor, highlighting the edition of existing demand of industry sectors. She then moved to workforce analysis, discussing aging demographics, employment trends and pandemic changes.

Ellen Kahler then asked if there are any forward-looking projections for changes of demographics? This would include suggestions for changing trends including climate change, immigration, refugees, etc.

Commissioner Harrington stated that he would defer to Mat but that regularly, projections are difficult, especially during the pandemic.

Executive Director Victoria Biondolillo stated we could touch base with Mat to see if it would be possible to add a section regarding projections in a future quarterly meeting.

Chris Loso then highlighted the short-term impact of inflation.

Executive Director Victoria Biondolillo said for purposes of the State Plan, it is not best to add. She then moved forward through various sections of the State Plan.

Ellen Kahler raised a question regarding the strengths and weakness of the workforce, asking if this was referring to solely the WIOA funded population or the workforce in general.

Executive Director Victoria Biondolillo answered that it was a little bit of both. She then began reviewing the goals of the State Plan, explaining how each individual program section that follows, tries to address the goals in each section. She read through the overall vision, stating that the SWDB is tasked with making sure that the goals are being met and the system wide coordination is fulfilling the Plan’s vision. Goals 1 through 5 are the same, Goals 6-8 have been edited.

Linda Schadler then mentioned the idea of remote work where she sees folks applying for remote work in Vermont but living in states where cost of living is cheaper. She asked if this is something noted in the State Plan and if we are paying attention to tax law.

Executive Director Victoria Biondolillo highlighted how Goal 7 and 8 address workforce realities and the additional elements that impact Vermont’s workforce system, encompassing this aspect of remote work.

Chair Adam Grinold then highlighted that we need to recognize that workers no longer need to be employed in Vermont but working in Vermont. He stressed we need to find ways to support people who are living in Vermont but working outside of the borders.

Linda Schadler highlighted tax relationships with some states and if they need to be broadened.

Executive Director Victoria Biondolillo then responded saying we could incorporate this into Goal 7. She then asked for any other general questions or actions folks would like moving forward as she moved through the rest of the document.

Monica Greene raised the question regarding diversity, equity and inclusion. She asked that going forward, when we update the State Plan, that we use the opportunity to broaden communication across the current and future population supporting diversity, equity and inclusion.

Executive Director Victoria Biondolillo agreed that it should be an ongoing conversation, baked into everything we do.

Chair Adam Grinold filed a motion to approve the State Plan.

Motion moved by Gregory Maguire.

Motion seconded by Chris Loso.

Chair Adam Grinold then clarified what specific edits need to be made.

Executive Director Victoria Biondolillo summarized the edit to Goal 7 regarding remote workers.

Sophie Zdatny then reminded the group surrounding the language in the MOU and State Plan regarding changing the wording to Vermont State Colleges to incorporate both CCV and VTC moving forward. She also highlighted that her name is spelled Sophie with an “e”.

Chair Adam Grinold then moved to approve the State Plan, incorporating those edits, hearing no corrections, moved to approve the document unanimously. He then left the floor open for public comment. No concerns were voiced.

Meeting adjourned at 12:52 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Abby Rhim

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Abby Rhim, Executive Assistant, Vermont State Workforce Development Board