

**WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD (WIB) DIRECTORS’
ONE-STOP OPERATORS’ MEETING**
November 20, 2008

MEETING SUMMARY

The meeting opened with introductions and a brief discussion by the Acting Executive Director on her recent appointment.

Financial Crisis Webinar

- Robin Widing introduced the idea of a Webinar to be held on December 11, 2008. The event will be hosted by Commissioner David Socolow and SETC Chairman, Dennis Bone. The webinar is being designed for Workforce Investment Board members and local Freeholders.
- Initial feedback from WIB Directors/One-Stop Operators included:
 - Need updated data on sectors that are “in demand.”
 - Freeholders are most concerned with budget/taxes and the loss of revenue associated with companies closing and/or relocating. Statistical data would be helpful to provide this anticipated loss.
 - Value in increasing relationships and coordination with neighboring states, i.e., Pennsylvania and New York.
 - Data needs to be current/ “just in time.”
 - Need to define clusters within regions and build upon.
- Yustina Saleh, Director of Labor Market & Demographic Research conducted a PowerPoint presentation of the slides anticipated to be included in the webinar. Feedback from WIB Directors/One-Stop Operators included:
 - The group commented that the unemployment rate was higher than what some areas are experiencing. The group asked for an explanation of the numbers.
 - A detailed discussion ensued on the sectors that will have the largest reduction in jobs and those sectors that will be increasing their employment levels.
 - WIBs requested LWD to provide more relevant local data and job openings.
- The group felt that the role of the LWD Rapid Response Team should be expanded to placing dislocated workers rather than just helping them apply for unemployment.
 - A request was made to decrease the amount of grant dollars spent on technical training and increase the funding levels for soft skills including communication and team building.

- WIB Directors and One-Stop Operators commented that training should be focused on skills not titles.
 - Many felt the webinar should have a heavy emphasis on strategies and solutions.
 - Participants explained the importance of sending a message to the local Freeholders that “in the future, workforce development programs will be required to provide a lot more services with a lot less money.”
 - A discussion was held on the success of the old Public Service Employment Program (PSE) and the hope that such a program will be reintroduced in the upcoming Presidential administration.
 - The group discussed how the “Call to Action” should empower WIB members and Freeholders to “act.” This is viewed as key to the success of the webinar.
- Maher & Maher (M&M) facilitated a discussion of the logistics of the webinar.
 - There are a total of 250 slots available for participation. The total list of WIB members and Freeholds is approximately 700.
 - M&M recommended establishing local sites for group participation/viewing, where possible.
 - M&M agreed to take registrations.
 - WIB Directors/One-Stop Managers recommended the letter of invite include a statement that the webinar will be available for viewing on the SETC website.
 - WIB Directors/One-Stop Mangers requested the County Executives also be invited to attend the webinar.

Report/Discussions: Labor & Workforce Development

- Deputy Commissioner Davis provided the group with an update on the Governor’s Conference on Economic Development and reemphasized the importance of their attendance and participation.
- An update was provided by Joe Gazzara of LWD on the Governor’s Public Safety Plan. He provided a brief explanation of the three pilot areas of the “Another Chance” program (Camden, Trenton and Newark). Mr. Gazzara spoke about the recently appointed Re-entry Coordinator in the Office of the Attorney General, Wanda Moore. He emphasized the importance of the One-Stop system to provide services to this population and indicated that every One-Stop has a Re-entry Specialist and further indicated a list is available upon request. He can be reached at 609-292-6542. Mr. Gazzara explained there are currently eight (8) Workforce Learning Links in correctional facilities.
- A Rapid Response Unit update was provided by Tamara Thomas.
 - The Business Services Representatives are being merged with the Rapid Response Team and cross-trained in an effort to better serve businesses.

- The unit is implementing Targeted Job Fairs to match companies downsizing to those companies expanding.
- WARN notices that indicate a layoff of five (5) or more workers are being served – due to high demand.
- The Business Services Representatives are being trained to have a focus on specific industries.
- The REDI grant will focus on sector training for frontline workers.
- WIB Directors/One-Stop Operators inquired as to how the Rapid Response Team, Business Services Representatives and Business Resource Representatives are currently communicating with locals. They indicated they aren't all receiving WARN notices for their local areas. Ms. Thomas indicated she would follow-up to ensure local areas are notified and receive copies of local WARN notices.

Literacy Plans

Lansing Davis held a discussion with the WIB Directors on the Literacy Plans.

- A recommendation was made that we hold back on assigning a specific due date since it is expected that several planning activities may occur in early 2009. The goal will be to include the existing literacy plan requirements into that planning process so that the WIBs will not have to submit multiple plans.
- In the meantime, WIBs are expected to continue to use the literacy planning instructions as a framework for discussion and planning during their Literacy Council meetings. The SETC is requesting copies of Literacy Council minutes be forwarded to the SETC.
- Also, the WIBs were asked to provide feedback on the guidelines for help in future planning.

Upcoming Activities

- The January 15, 2009 WIB Director'/One-Stop Operators' meeting will focus on meeting and having a discussion with the SETC Chair, Dennis Bone.
- Chairman Bone will be setting up three (3) regional meetings to meet with WIB Chairs. To prepare for that meeting each WIB Director has been requested to prepare a report, maximum 2 pages, to highlight issues and topics for their local WIB.

Next Meeting: December 18, 2008

- Post-TANF Dislocated Worker Grant update postponed to December meeting.
- NEG update postponed to December meeting.
- Update on Wired Projects postponed to December meeting.