

SPECIAL OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE ON WORKFORCE EXPANSION AND DEVELOPMENT MINUTES

Meeting Date and Location: Thursday, September 29, 8:30 am – 12:30 pm, State House, Room 10 and virtually via Microsoft Teams

Members Present: Sarah Buxton, Kendal Smith, Rep. Michael Marcotte, Sen. Alison Clarkson, Adam Grinold

Guests in attendance: Cameron Wood, Ellen Kahler, Patricia Moulton

Guests in attendance virtually: Michael Harrington, Abby Rhim, Dustin Degree

Minutes By: Abby Rhim

- 8:40 am meeting called to order.
- Introductions
- Review and approval of August 30, 2022, meeting minutes.
- Sarah Buxton, Director of Workforce Development, Vermont Department of Labor
 - Stressed the idea that while the Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act (WIOA) is traditionally looked at as restrictive, the One-Stop system and state planning requirements do leave opportunity to embrace the federal structure while redesigning Vermont's governance structure to gain workforce alignment.
 - Noted that there is an option for federal waivers for certain requirements. She suggested the consultant investigate waiver options used by other states.
 - One-Stop American Job Center
 - Required partner network agreement described in Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), recently updated effective July 1, 2022.
 - Federally required, individually funded network of service partners, including workforce development, education and other human resource services.
 - The One-Stop system in Vermont includes one comprehensive center where all services are represented. It is in Burlington. There are also six affiliate sites (hub offices) and several places where satellite services are provided.
 - There is an opportunity within the MOU to edit the system to specifically fit Vermont's needs (ex. specialized service center where all refugees have their specific needs met through American Job Center via One-Stop Operator).
 - Current system is created and maintained by the State Workforce Development Board (SWDB), required One-Stop partners and Vermont Department of Labor (VDOL) on behalf of the Governor (no single leader).
 - Business services to local employers are provided as well (labor exchange activities, industry partnerships, customized business services).

- VDOL conducts these activities currently, although, others (ex. SWDB) could conduct activities to help come in compliance.
 - Rep. Marcotte suggested Sarah present the above information to the federal delegation at some point to address certain federal issues.
 - Sarah recommended the group have an expert review waivers prior to that meeting.
- Kendal Smith, Director of Policy and Legislative Affairs, Office of Governor Phil Scott
 - Update on RFP for workforce governance consultant
 - \$250,000.00 to Agency of Administration (AOA) to contract out for whatever support work the group might need. AOA will hold the contract.
 - The RFP is currently live and was posted on Friday, September 23rd, 2022.
 - Buildings and General Services (BGS) is currently pushing the contract out to various sources, to notify that the opportunity is live in order to maximize bidders.
 - Key highlights of the contract include the review of comparable states' workforce system governance structures and the suggestion of at least three organizational structure scenarios to consider for reorganizing Vermont's workforce system.
 - The consultant will *not* evaluate performance of specific programs.
 - Sarah Buxton noted that the group must agree on scope of work for the consultant. While the consultant will be conducting interviews with stakeholders, the group must identify boundaries so the process does not get too timely and costly.
 - Questions on the RFP are due Friday, October 7, 2022. The deadline for final proposals will be on Friday, October 21, 2022.
- For next steps, the committee will wait to see if questions are submitted regarding the RFP. If there are questions, the group will meet the week of October 10, 2022 to answer questions.
- Meeting adjourned by 12:37 pm.