

SPECIAL OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE ON WORKFORCE EXPANSION AND DEVELOPMENT MINUTES

Meeting Date/Location: Monday, May 8th, 2023, 3:00 pm, virtually via Microsoft Teams

Members Present: Adam Grinold, Kendal Smith, Rep. Michael Marcotte, Sen. Alison Clarkson, Jay Ramsey

Guests Present: Ryan Laychak, Candace Phinney, Michael Lawrence, Nancy Snyder, Mel Arsenault, Alysia Ordway, Kate Gluckman, Cameron Wood, Victoria Biondolillo

Video Recording: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5xU27iux2Uk>

Minutes By: Abby Rhim

- Meeting called to order at 3:03 pm.
 - Introductions given from both committee members and guests.
- Review and approval of agenda.
 - Motion made to approve the agenda as drafted. Motion made by Adam, seconded by Senator Clarkson, and approved unanimously.
- Review and approval of minutes from the [April 10, 2023 meeting](#).
 - Motion made to approve the minutes as drafted. Motion made by Senator Clarkson, seconded by Kendal, and approved unanimously.
- Overview of Meeting
 - Alysia began by reviewing today's goals. This includes an update on the group's timeline, review of the Phase 1 report at a high level, discuss implications of a national review, and prepare for the in-person working session in June. She noted that for the Phase 1 review, she would like to follow up with folks individually to review. This will help prepare the group for the next phase, the development of recommendations. She noted that the deadlines for the project have shifted slightly, with the drafted recommendations on workforce pushed to June 30th and a final report on September 1st.
- High Level Phase 1 Report Review
 - Alysia then reviewed the key takeaways stated in the Phase 1 report. This includes noting high vacancy rates (1), needing 10,975 net new workers in Vermont as wage earners (2), recognizing the workforce system is a dynamic situation (3), realizing regions need an avenue and mechanisms to shape their economies (4), and acknowledging that the "new system" will need mechanisms to hold departments accountable (5). She also highlighted the new work of the State Workforce Development Board, including the marshalling of strategies and ideas to address some of these high-level takeaways. This work needs to be considered when thinking of recommendations for Vermont moving forward.
 - Adam asked if takeaway number five referred to money. Alysia clarified that it could mean money or other investments/services being carried out.
 - Jay highlighted that there are accountability measures that are tied to federal funds. This should be considered when addressing deficiencies and how to improve. He also added that the Governor has a strategic plan that includes many metrics. This should be incorporated in PCG's work.
 - Alysia noted that in the one-on-one SOCWED member Phase 1 report review meetings, comments and feedback will be important to assure that the "tone" within the report is accurate.

- Early Thoughts on Peer Region/State Comparisons.
 - Alysia shared that for peer region/state reviews, PCG would look at governance, alignment, service delivery, accountability, and infrastructure for comparison.
 - Nancy shared the “skills Cabinet” example from Massachusetts, used to develop a shared vision, strategy, and goals across the Cabinet in order to best coordinate efforts. This is a sort of model that PCG could review in other states.
 - Alysia noted the important of sustainability. For example, looking at regional needs and summits, how do we look at funding streams or other actionable steps that institutionalize something like the regional summits of the past? These efforts can be examined in other states.
 - Nancy added that a regional approach helps to identify assets in different regions.
 - Senator Clarkson noted that Vermont used to have a regional workforce system with regional boards. Does anyone know why they failed?
 - Nancy made the distinction between regional workforce boards and a regional workforce strategy.
 - Cameron noted that local workforce boards are not something VDOL would support, referring to a presentation given by Sarah Buxton, former Director of Workforce Development, to the committee months back.
 - Jay asked if all these individual structures need to exist (regional advisory boards, CTE centers, local and regional organizations, etc.)? The same people are attending the same meetings. Can we rethink some of these structures?
 - Alysia echoed Jay’s thoughts, saying that PCG can look to other states, like Idaho, that have blended portions of their system together.
 - Adam shared that the removal of funding to local boards was due to inactivity. Both the challenges of employers and employees must be prioritized in order to get folks to the table to be a productive space.
 - Alysia then shared a few of the states that PCG will review for best practices.
- Planning for Upcoming Working Session
 - Alysia shared that PCG will share a brief on model ideas prior to the June 5th meeting. In person, the group will then assess the pros and cons of some proposed changes.
 - Jay shared that in these discussions, the group must reflect on what it is realistically going to take to make “x” or “y” suggestion happen, including what we are able to influence versus not.
 - Senator Clarkson summarized that there is a need for a transition plan, otherwise, it won’t be impactful.
 - Alysia noted that PCG will frame out easier, low level next steps along with more ambitious elements for the future. This conversation will then be had at the in-person meeting to flush out details.
- Next Steps
 - Alysia will follow up with SOCWED members individually to refine and revise the Phase I report.
 - Rep. Marcotte summarized that the June 5th meeting will begin at 10 am, and possibly go until 3:00 or 4:00 pm, depending on progress.
- Meeting adjourned.

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