

**WORKFORCE FLORIDA
WORKFORCE READINESS & PERFORMANCE COUNCIL**

**WORKFORCE READINESS COMMITTEE
Teleconference Meeting, February 9, 2009: 3:00 P.M.**

Meeting Summary

The Workforce Readiness Committee, of the Workforce Readiness & Performance Council, met via telephone and web conference on February 9, 2009. The committee members in attendance included: The Chairman, Eric Kennedy, J. B. Black, Mary Lou Brunell, Everett Kelly, and Don Winstead. Randy Johnson, Chairman of the Workforce Readiness and Performance Council was also in attendance.

The summary of the January 6, 2009 committee meeting was presented for approval. A motion was made by Everett Kelly and seconded by Mary Lou Brunell to approve the summary as the official minutes of the meeting. The motion was approved.

The committee considered an action item related to the distribution of Reed Act Funds for performance improvement. At the direction of the Workforce Florida Board a portion of the Reed Act funding to be distributed this program year to the state's regional workforce boards (RWBs) is to be based on performance improvement as set forth in a state implementation plan. Accordingly, the implementation plan provides for 3 periodic fund distributions based on approved award categories. Under one of the award categories, awards of up to \$50,000 are made for each RWB that meets the federal TANF program participation rates. In making the awards in this category thus far in the program year, \$200,000 was left uncommitted due to the number of RWBs who

qualified. As the approved implementation plan makes no provision for the distribution of unearned monies, it became necessary to consider policy for the distribution of the \$200,000 balance from the first round of performance improvement awards that can also be applied to the any unearned balance that might occur in next round. Staff presented a recommendation that any unearned balance remaining from the distribution funds under this award category be awarded to all RWBs using the TANF allocation formula as long as the state as a whole meets the participation rate targets as required by the implementation plan. A motion was made by Everett Kelly and seconded by Mary Lou Brunell to approve the staff recommendation. The motion was approved. The action item as presented to the committee is attached.

The committee next received a brief report by Eric Kennedy and staff regarding the action January 28, 2009 of the Workforce Florida Executive Committee to make \$6,000,000 in redirected state-level funding available for the Employ Florida Healthcare Workforce Initiative. This initiative will be rolled out first as pilot involving a memorandum of understanding between WFI, the South Florida Workforce Board, and the Healthcare Corporation of America (HCA) and will provide both incumbent worker training and training for unemployed individuals in the area. Subsequent roll outs of the pilot are anticipated in Central and North Florida as soon regional boards with available local funding are identified. The model can also easily be modified and expanded as part of the rapid deployment of additional funds that will become available under the proposed federal economic stimulus plan. The Chairman acknowledged the key role

Mary Lou Brunell played in developing the model and he cited this model and the recent memorandum of understanding among WFI, Gulf Coast Community College, Gulf Power and the St. Joe Company as excellent examples of ways the workforce system can work with the private sector to meet the challenges of the current economy. The committee also discussed some questions related to the pilot as raised by local workforce representatives that were participating in the call.

Steve Urquhart and staff from WFI and AWI presented a status report on the progress to date to improve the Employ Florida Marketplace (EFM) link to better serve unemployment compensation (UC) claimants. Geographic Solutions, the state's vendor responsible for EFM, has submitted a formal quote to implement the proposed change order previously shared with members of the committee. Their quote is for \$13,750 to make the programming changes necessary to record additional employment history information now being provided via the interface with UC, to accommodate additional elements to be added by UC, and to utilize the claimants' email addresses once they become available to send automated messages to claimants to notify them of job opportunities and to encourage them to use EFM. On the UC side the project is also progressing. AWI staff is in the process of finalizing a project plan and costing out the programming necessary on their part to provide the claimant email address and additional information via the interface.

Don Winstead reported on Florida's opportunity to participate in a federal study co-sponsored by Health and Human Services and the Social Security administration. The

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)/Supplemental Security Income (SSI) Disability Transition Project is designed to examine the overlap in the TANF and SSI populations, document current approaches for identifying and working with individuals with a disability, and to identify approaches to work more effectively with individuals who may be eligible for SSI. The federal agencies are very interested in identifying one or two sites in Florida to participate in the project. Each state and local project participant would receive approximately \$100,000 to participate. The committee recognized this as a good opportunity for the state system to remain in the forefront of program innovation. Don Winstead will meet soon with those operating the project to express the state's interest and get further information. WFI staff will also work with Mr. Winstead to develop a process for interested RWBs to apply to participate. Eric Kennedy asked Randy Johnson to place the issue on the agenda for the upcoming meeting of the Workforce Readiness and Performance Council scheduled for February 18, 2009. Mr. Johnson agreed. See the attached project description.

The committee briefly discussed the federal stimulus plan legislation that has passed House and that is being discussed in modified version in the Senate. The members took note of the flow of information regarding the various proposals and acknowledged the need to continue to review the issue due to its importance to the state and the nation and the need the workforce system will soon have to implement whatever becomes final.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.