



New Jersey State Employment and Training Commission

Dennis M. Bone, Chairman

Philip D. Murphy, Governor

State Employment and Training Commission

Wednesday, December 18th, 2024

10am – 12pm

TEAMS Platform

I. Welcome & Introductions

Chairman Dennis Bone called the meeting to order at 10:07 am and welcomed members and guests. Chairman Bone announced that, in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act of 1978, notice of this meeting was submitted to the Trenton Times and Star Ledger, shared with the Secretary of State's office, and was posted on the SETC website. Introductions were conducted. A vote of motion were approved to the minutes by Sally Nadler and Bob Wise.

II. Chairman's Report

Chairman Bone opened the meeting welcoming our presenters and thanking all for their hard work in the SETC. Chairman Bone announced that he will be retiring March 31st, 2025, and his last SETC Commission meeting will be Wednesday, March 19th, 2025.

III. James Manning, Director of the Office of Apprenticeship & Business Services, NJDOL Howard Miller, Assistant Director of Business Engagement & Sector Strategies, NJDOL

Mr. Manning discussed several areas of focus during the presentation. Talent Acquisition Services, Training Needs Assessments and Skills Gaps, Labor Market Information, Grant Opportunities, and Registered Apprenticeships. Each of these areas plays a critical role with our business acquisition services. Under NJDOL Business Services we have a team to assist and help with a wide array within each of these services which are: job orders, job matches, and job fairs which help job seekers. Business Services also focusses on occupational assessment, individual assessment, training needs of an organization, in-demand occupations, industry data, and wage

information. We focus also on offering grant opportunities to offer incentives such as customized training, and competitive grants. Under the competitive grants, we help job seekers with registered apprenticeships, technical assistance, job posting and additional employer incentives such as grant opportunities to fill the needs of business such as OJT and others as well. We investigate all of these to ensure we are bridging the gaps where anything may be lacking so that we can help identify information and where businesses may have a retention issue, and we work with the Office of Research Information so that we can help where wage gaps may be. We focus on listening to exactly what their needs are so that we can figure out how we can give them the best possible support. We have postings on the NJDOL website to expand the information for registered apprenticeship, and the tax credit information is listed as a 5-thousand-dollar tax credit and listed on the website as well. Mr. Bob Wise asked how we determine personal needs in business needs. How does NJDOL apprenticeship reach out considering we have staffing issues. Jim said that filling positions has been hard, and the business services and industry partnership team is challenging with leadership changes, but we are staffed in every county and if there is a need we do not have a whole team and sector and regional representatives that can help throughout the state and the regionally based. Beth Rodgers said that she met with Tom Cassidy yesterday to discuss the 5-thousand-dollar tax incentive to the businesses with apprentice within the first year, where we can find additional information. Howard Miller mentioned that Tom Cassidy handles the OJT which is another incentive tax credit. There are two different tax credits, one for OJTs and another under the registered apprenticeship programs. If they are creating a new registered apprenticeship program with the US Department of Labor, New Jersey will provide a tax credit for that business for placing the registered apprenticeship within that first year. We will drop both these links in the chat as well. Jim discussed there are several employers that work with each partner in the state and sometimes there are two or three agencies at the table. Some of those services offered by Choose NJ include market intelligence, they help with site selection, provide resource information and public support relations as well. They are focused globally on bringing businesses to New Jersey. Also helping businesses in New Jersey by expanding their international development as well. We also work with the Economic Development Authority where they provide economic development tools to help expand businesses in New Jersey, and again this is a big picture industry strategy looking at land development, property reuse and community development programs. If you think about the EDA, they are there to help with support services. We also work with the Business Action Center which helps businesses directed to the correct agencies on a state and local level. Our industry partnership is very focused on this area, and we continue to connect our workforce system to the workforce partners. Howard Miller then discussed the importance of our Industry partnerships to the Department of Labor, how are they important, how are they comprised, and what are they used for and where do we see them going in the future at NJDOL? Industry partnerships are a vehicle which covers industry sectors across the state specifically regionally. The industries we are focused on are Healthcare, Energy, Life Sciences, Manufacturing and Transportation. We have energy and we are looking at what we are doing with wind energy and focusing on the

southern region of the state. We are dedicated to healthcare in the northern part regionally in the state. In Life Sciences we are focused north and south and Manufacturing and Transportation we are focused regionally north, south and central in the state. We are bringing businesses together in the state and working collaboratively to find out the common threads within the industry and can build trust so that we can come up with solutions, make recommendations and provide resources. We are also working on a sector model which is used in over 10 regions and 20 states across the country. We have been growing specific partnerships in the last few years and enhancing them. Our department is engaged with American Institutes for research. Howard then jumped back to answer Bob Wise's question related to staffing and reiterated that we have 20 business reps which are embedded into One Stops, and they are an instant connection point to the workforce and local partners. Recently, I have been asked to distinguish the difference between businesses service and industry partnerships. We are working with business and asking what do you need help with now so that we can align services and through the Biden Administration there has been a tremendous amount towards infrastructure from the American Rescue plan. We also are working on several projects with the EDA and Board Public Utilities. Solar for example is a \$3 billion dollar project and investment from the US Department of Energy. We are also working with companies such as South Jersey Gas and Bristol Myers-Squibb. Keith C. White with the SETC made a mention that Jim Manning and Howard Miller were working from the ground floor to ensure all of the needs were being met and partnerships are being made. By working with businesses, we have seen several success stories and many of these projects become visible, and we are part of the planning process. We are working on these larger scale projects, and every grant has a sliver of helping meet the needs of the partners and we may become great pipeline opportunities. We have helped link companies to other companies to see many of these industry partnerships work with each other and we help make the connection. Teri Duda asked if the money has been received with regards to BPU from the Biden Administration? Howard mentioned that yes, the money can be cut in Congress. BIA is the largest business organization in New Jersey, and they are assisting the vendors who in turn work with the NJDOL. NJBIZ are a subscriber and that is the connection as they are also a vendor. Teri mentioned that she wanted to know what the connection is because I am involved in many, many, groups and so I can let them know what the connections are. NJMVP is a partner simply because they are the largest training provider. Bob Wise then asked, monies received in grants are not always spent in the time frame and what happens if the money is not spent. Howard said, when you apply don't after a grant that won't fit your needs, for example, businesses need to keep in touch and unused money is where the money could have gone to someone else. We work with businesses to ensure they can spend the money they use. We work with businesses to make sure we can help them, and we are also listening. We must understand in real time so we can make decisions to help these companies and to make sure they are managing it. Keith C. White with SETC asked how often to engage with EDA and other agencies? Howard mentioned they work with OSHE and others? Howard mentioned, we introduce them as often as once a year or every year. Jim Manning closed the meeting and thanked everyone for listening. Donna Custard, how can we be better

connecting teachers to opportunities for pre-apprenticeship program for students? If we want to connect students to internship and apprenticeship programs? Howard Miller mentioned, it is a slow growth model, and you can go to the website and employers can go to the apprenticeship unit on NJDOL website and there are opportunities they can apply to. Jim mentioned the Jag program and he can connect pre-apprenticeships to help graduates to get employment. We will work on a directory to help.

IV. Sarah Singer Quast, Senior Policy Advisor, NJDOL PY23 WIOA Annual Report Overview

We aligned these to the 3 key goals this year were to: Expand and develop pathways and services that open access to career services for all New Jerseyans; Align the system and support serving business and career seekers; Strengthen our public Infrastructure to both support and enforce high quality employment opportunities and practices “good jobs”. Part of what we are focused on is expansion and access through programs and pathways. We are strengthening 23 One Stops across the state of New Jersey career centers to serve as hubs for the broad variety of workforce programming and services available through federal and state funds. As far as state workforce programs are concerned, we are working on WIOA investment in state workforce programs to expand opportunities for youth and justice involved individuals specifically. With regards to virtual platforms, WIOA investment with SkillUP NJ and my Career NJ to support individuals in guiding their own career development and serving as on ramps to deeper career and training services. We are doing excellent with staffing and expanding our workforce as we have promoted 104 staff and hired 141 new staff members to address turnover during the pandemic. In our Data Modernization, we issued an RFP to procure a vendor to support data modernization of our existing system of record for WIOA and AOSOS. Many of us from the state to local staff worked on this and we are looking to replace the AOSOS system and we spent a lot of time in PY23. We also finished our work with GSETA on 12 different training modules and working to support and develop professional development, specifically guidance around service integration and co-enrollment, and functional alignment. We are focused on the MOU/IFA’s as we work and collaborate with One Stop partnerships and infrastructure agreements. Our local areas are working with NJDOL with competitive procurement implementation, state program awareness building, new partnership frameworks, and local governance training series and we added these in the state plan, in which we highlighted the critical role our WIBs play in our local public workforce systems. Keith C. White asked Sarah to give a brief explanation as to why we are looking to replace AOSOS. Sarah discussed the need to replace the system because it is not easy to scale programs and capture data and a lot of our data from our One Stops are using it and we are in need to capture the data and more ease with data sharing with a new system, and the goal is to try to get our data to work around our data driven system and will provide more information to help with reporting and getting data out of the system. Currently, only New York and New Jersey. The new system will really be able to see what is happening in real time. Sheryl Hutchison, with ORI, mentioned all our legacy systems are in a modernization place. My CareerNJ is a great tool for customers looking for a job and we are looking at ensuring our systems are modernized, especially AOSOS because we need to be able to see accurate data and we need data entered correctly as Sarah mentioned when running reports. Also, the Governor’s office currently has an AI task force and ORI is involved and Workforce Development is

working on this as well. Sarah discussed how we are working on projects with the industry partnerships and the importance of supporting our employer's. The reporting and the end of the year report are also what ORI is working on. Lesley Hirsch, Sheryl Hutchison, and Paul Tattory have been working on the following: evaluation, studies and findings, customer satisfaction and approach findings, effectiveness in serving employers, PY23 local performance levels for local areas, approach to data validation and negotiated performance goals and local areas, ensuring data integrity, and common exit policy. We also focused on several big evaluations which have been PY21 WIOA evaluation, a study of title 1 and title IV, transportation services, and RESEA evaluation which was to look at the impact. We are also looking at accountability tools which can capture federal evaluations, MyCareerNJ, NJDOL research data lake, quality assurance ETPL training, and local areas statistical adjustable model. Sheryl Hutchison mentioned we are working on doing a PY25 sum up at what we are working on with all these different elements. We are moving on getting all of our information together for consumers and these will be great tools to customers to training providers, and also the feds are using this adjustable model so that we can see who we are providing services to, and the feds are using this with us and we are finalizing this model to pull out the quality assurance piece and the consumer report card is ok for the ETPL list. We are really excited about this, and we are really working to give customers enhanced tools with job matching. PY-24 and PY25 have been set for our 17 local areas in our annual report and there is a requirement listed with services received in PY23 and we exceeded and met all the gain measures and have achieved also surveying employers is another key measure. The important note is that these were pilot measures and trial measures when USDOL put out and after all the states had tested these out, the USDOL and USDOE are changing the measure for the PY24 report especially with retention rates and the measure is in flux right now. Howard Miller mentioned we are only looking at 2% but that this is deceiving and what the indicator of what they liked, and the trust we are building is there, so at this point looking at all the retention sides and metrics the good drives are where we are looking, and we are continuing to build a better model. We are looking at how we fully look at the services customers are receiving and not that they are just employed but that they are employed in a good job. Looking at data validation needs to be aligned with USDOL requirements and ensuring that our compliance is aligned with how the customer is exiting. Sarah mentioned that WIOA and state funded initiatives are underway, and the governor has set aside funding, there is Wagner Peisner funding and transitional workforce initiatives. We have highlighted the monitoring, training and policy support and we have built up support. Kendra Lee is overseeing the team with a core area of focus on program monitoring and to keep moving forward with investment into our business outreach teams and to build in success and transitional workforce initiatives are working on title I and response teams. In addition to providing employment services it has been focused on staff support, engaging our staff around MOU training and a wide array of unemployment and seasonal workers, migrant farm workers, we have provided language services. Minor working papers we continue to support that system, there are over 130 applications approved to date with an application approval rate of 93%. Lastly, with state funded NGO's there are several underway such as Pathways to Recovery, Fund our Future, SNAP Skills training, and training employment program to success (SNAP steps) and Workfirst Innovation fund. Moving forward we are seeing as promising and where we see practices and technical assistance. We are happy about the investment in program efforts and virtual platforms, and alignment of workforce funding and working towards funding streams. In terms of challenges that we initiated after USDOL met with us PY21, we are still working to support are local level and continue to share data and our levels

are still pre-pandemic and we are looking on how we can accommodate people needs and their challenges and we are working on more technical assistance guidance and development performance and service levels and industry recognized credentials and support program provisions and I want to open it up for me more questions. Bob Wise asked about the proposed immigration of the president's idea of immigration. Are there any ideas as to how that will impact New Jersey. Recognizing that there is a potential immigration issue in New jersey and affect the state's economy and industry, what are the plans considered? Nicol Nicola with ORI answered that we are unsure and will have to watch and see. This will have a policy impact, and we are vibrant, and we have over 20 percent and we do not have data yet, but we will have to wait and see. Keith C. White with SETC mentioned that this is a topic and on the business side conversations are underway. Sarah also mentioned there is discussion and we are making sure that there is clarity and NJDOL is working to wait and see. Jim Manning mentioned it is too early to say, and I am sure there will be ongoing conversations. Teri Duda made a comment also mentioned that we must be prepared as there is a gubernatorial election upcoming and we must be prepared to see if the national policy will change and be prepared for these things. And see if there will be a policy change at the state level. The people need to be able to pay the bills for the family and we must be prepared more because that is what is expected. Keith C. White mentioned the new jersey is aware and we need to be prepared for those that have jobs and need jobs. Joan Desmarais closed that the link is posted in the chat, and we will send out a packet out to everyone who attended today. Thank you, Jim, Howard and Sarah and all the presenters, and everyone for participating.

VIII. Public Comment – Open Remarks

IX. Closing Remarks – SETC Chairman, Dennis Bone

Chairman Bone mentioned his appreciation and how incredibly impressed by this meeting and this meeting was powerful. Chairman Bone thanked everyone for their presentations, and we will see everyone at the next meeting. Thank you everyone and we will see everyone at the next meeting. The motion to close the meeting was at 11:57.

Next SETC Meeting

SETC Commission Meeting on Wednesday, March 19th, 2025

PRESENT MEMBERS AND ALTERNATES

Dennis Bone - Chairman
Jessica Steiger – OSHE
David Gehrke – NJDOE
Julie Diaz – NJDOL
Christine Beyer – NJDCF
Anthony Ferrera
Hosea Johnson
John Gagliano
Kate Butler DCA
Dr. Danielle Jubanyik - NJDOL
Tim Sullivan -EDA
Bob Wise
Gregg Debaere
Sally Nadler
Teri Duda
Dr. Jorden Schiff DOE

ABSENT MEMBERS

John Donnadio
Carolyn Carter Wade
Angela Allen-McMillan
Sarah Adelman
John Franklin
Charles Wowkanech

Other Attendees

Desmarais, Joan
White, Keith C.
Lamarca, Carlye
Williams, Michelle
McCain, Terrell
Brown, John
Miller, Howard
Manning, James
Beshai-Ascander, Mariana
Drew, Leslie
Paquette, Kathleen
Mark Cacace
Wiggins, Gwendolyn
Tattory, Paul
Vankampen, Mark
Paul Grzella
Bollhardt, Victoria
Sullivan, Sabrina

Barcelos, Cristhian
Walker, Kim
Hutchison, Sheryl
Wells, Rob
Liu, Helen
Taguwa, Denise
Reyes, Miguel
Syed, Zainab
Shanel (Unverified
McKenna, Charles P
Pierre, Eric
Patel, Kamlesh
Hardwick, Jawana
Molinelli, Tammy
Lavarin, Esther
Schimanski, Torsten
Wolf, Lynda
Laporte, Sophia
Nuria Sierra
Reed, Elizabeth
Menjivar, Briana
Major, Marvin
Levandowski, Andrea
William Holt
Poo, Lin
Idland, Christine
Alonso, Hilda
London, Niambi
Paz, Diane
Shah, Nimit
Ramachandra, Raji
Timian, Jason
Singer Quast, Sarah
Lee, Kendra
Spector, David
Ford, Althea
Rodgers, Beth
Nicola, Nicol
Chiluisia, Juanito
Davis, Bernice
Hopson, Felicia
Polack, Carol
Pouncey, La Tonia
Connors, Kristi