

Workforce Information Advisory Council

Summary of Meeting

Virtual Meeting and Conference Call

2:00 P.M. to 5:00 P.M. EST

January 11, 2017

The Workforce Information Advisory Council (WIAC) convened for a virtual meeting and conference call at 2:00 P.M. on January 11, 2016. The Council was convened pursuant to Section 308 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 (WIOA) (Pub. L. 113-128), which amends section 15 of the Wagner-Peyser Act of 1933 (29 U.S.C. § 491-2) and in accordance with the provisions of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA), as amended (5 U.S.C. App.) and its implementing regulation at 41 CFR 102-3.

Mr. Steven Rietzke, Chief, Division of National Programs, Tools, and Technical Assistance (DNPTTA), Employment and Training Administration (ETA), and Designated Federal Officer (DFO) for the Council, convened the meeting, which was open to the public in its entirety.

In Attendance

Members of the Workforce Information Advisory Council

Aaron Fichtner, New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development

Bruce Madson, Ohio Department of Job and Family Services

Ellen Golombek, Colorado Department of Labor and Employment

Cynthia Forland, Washington State Employment Security Department

Brenda Lisbon, South Carolina Department of Employment and Workforce

Mathew Barewicz, Vermont Department of Labor

Angela Pate, University of Florida Startup Quest, OwnForce, Inc.

Jennifer Zeller, Georgia Power

Mark McKeen, General Motors

Chelsea Orvella, Society of Prof. Engineering Employees in Aerospace, IFPTE Local 2001

Bruce Ferguson, CareerSource of Northeast Florida

Andrew Reamer, George Washington Institute of Public Policy

Members Not in Attendance

Pamela Bucy, Montana Department of Labor and Industry

Graham Slater, Oregon Employment Department (former Chair, resigned prior to meeting)

Staff

Steve Rietzke, Chief, DNPTTA, ETA (DFO)
Don Houghton, ETA
Lauren Fairley, ETA
Simi Atolagbe, ETA
Pam Frugoli, ETA
Robert Viegas, ETA
Mike Horrigan, BLS
Rebecca Rust, BLS

Lester Coffey, Coffey Consulting, LLC
Roger Therrien, Coffey Consulting, LLC
Abby Miller, Coffey Consulting, LLC
Dani Abdullah, Coffey Consulting, LLC
JJ Ketchum, Coffey Consulting, LLC
Mason Erwin, Coffey Consulting, LLC

Others Attending for All or a Portion of the Meeting

Duane Brown

Alexandra Hall, Colorado Department of Labor and Employment

Eunice Ikene, U.S. House of Representatives, House Committee on Education and the Workforce

John Marotta, Labor Market Information (LMI) Institute

Christina Pena, Workforce Data Quality Campaign

Christine Quinn

Members of the public in attendance were asked to identify themselves and their respective organizational affiliations. Where affiliations are not noted, it is because they were not provided by the attendee.

Members of Groups Referenced in the Minutes

Planning Work Group

Graham Slater (former Council chair)

Aaron Fichtner (Council member)

Ellen Golombek (Council member)

Cynthia Forland (Council member)

Jennifer Zeller (Council member)

Andrew Reamer (Council member)

Rebecca Rust (BLS)

(This small group was formed after the Council's July 2016 meeting to identify potential deliverables for the Council and was assigned the task of drafting an informational report for Council submission to the Secretary of Labor.)

First Review Group

Graham Slater (former Council chair)

Brenda Lisbon (Council member)

Chelsea Orvella (Council member)

Bruce Ferguson (Council member)

Rebecca Rust (BLS)

(This small group was formed during the Council's November 2016 meeting and served to revise the draft informational report based on feedback received from the Council.)

Second Review Group

Cynthia Forland (Council member)

Andrew Reamer (Council member)

Jennifer Zeller (Council member)

Aaron Fichtner (Council member)

Rebecca Rust (BLS)

(This small group was established during this meeting to incorporate the Council's feedback on the revised draft informational report and to develop subcommittee proposals for the Council to review during its next virtual meeting, scheduled for February 8, 2017.)

Proceedings

MR. RIETZKE convened the meeting and offered introductory remarks, noting that the agenda called for the Council to review the revised draft of the informational report prepared by the First Review Group, hear public comments, if any, and conclude with any new business offered by the members. **MR. RIETZKE** also informed the Council that **MR. SLATER** had withdrawn from his position on the Council and that, as the DFO for the WIAC, **MR. RIETZKE** would moderate this meeting. **MR. RIETZKE** requested that all meeting attendees, including members of the Council, staff, and members of public in attendance, enter their names and organizational affiliations in the chat box. He also noted that **MR. FICHTNER**, **MS. LISBON**, and **MS. FORLAND** had given prior notice that they would need to leave the meeting prior to its scheduled ending due to other commitments.

The Council briefly discussed the anticipated process for filling **MR. SLATER'S** seat and the position of Chair. **MR. RIETZKE** informed the Council that the ETA and BLS staff would hold discussions on the matter of selecting a new Chair and report to the Council at its next meeting. The Council was further advised that the staff would be required to solicit new nominations to fill the vacant seat, which would be subject to the normal review process, and that the new member, once selected, would serve the remainder of **MR. SLATER'S** term, through March 2019.

MR. RIETZKE then moved to the first item of business on the agenda, which was to review two versions of the revised draft of the informational report that had been prepared by the First Review Group. He noted that the First Review Group had worked with the staff to incorporate the guidance and feedback received from the Council on the initial draft of the informational report, which the Council had reviewed during its last full meeting in November, 2016. **MR. RIETZKE** and **MR. THERRIEN** noted that the First Review Group had submitted two documents to the Council for review: a longer, nine-page version (the long version) of the informational report, which sought to capture the Council's prior feedback, and a shorter, four-page version (the short version) which sought to respond to the Council's guidance to further condense the material from the initial draft into a four-page

handout which could be reformatted in an attractive, graphical layout to enhance its visual appeal and impact.

The members of the First Review Group each stated that they liked the short version. **MS. LISBON** noted that the longer document provided useful background information. **MS. ORVELLA** added that the long version could be of value as an internal reference document for the Council, and **MR. FERGUSON** noted that the long version was a necessary step in the development of the short version.

MS. ZELLER observed that the long version contained brief explanations of the issues that were only listed in the short version.

DR. REAMER added that the formatting of the document, with key items in red, allowed the reader to quickly identify the highlights of the report. He added that the difference in length between the two documents was minimal and that the short version could leave readers wanting more information. He concluded by encouraging the Council to use the long version for submission to the Secretary rather than the short version. **MS. GOLOMBEK**, **MR. FICHTNER**, **MR. MCKEEN**, and **MS. PATE** expressed agreement with **DR. REAMER** on that point. **MS. GOLOMBEK** felt the short version left her wanting more detail, and **MR. FICHTNER** observed that it made a compelling case for the importance of the Council's work. **MS. PATE** suggested combing the two versions into a single document to aid readers in navigating the document and noting that doing so would be easier in electronic form, such as with an accordion format, but more difficult in print. **DR. REAMER** added the suggestion that a list of the opportunities be included in the document prior to their detailed discussion, and a brief executive summary be added as the first page to aid readers in quickly ascertaining the key points of the document.

MS. FORLAND indicated that she was uncomfortable with giving up the short version, noting the value of the flexibility of a having a single, folded sheet of paper to distribute. **MS. LISBON** expressed agreement with that point. **MR. RIETZKE** suggested that it might be possible to both add a list of the opportunities to the beginning of the long version and also keep the short version.

DR. REAMER asked for input from **MR. RIETZKE** and the staff about what approach would be most effective for communicating to the incoming leadership team at the Department of Labor (DOL). **MR. RIETZKE** indicated that he liked the idea of a single, longer report that allowed readers to skim for highlights or read more closely for greater detail. **MR. HERRIGAN** suggested that the Council could develop the short version as a handout while adopting the long version as a living statement of record to be referenced and updated over time, and he emphasized the importance of separating the purposes of the two versions. **MS. ZELLER** added that the short version could take the form of an infographic.

DR. REAMER stated that he envisioned the informational report for DOL's incoming leadership as a holding document or initial statement on the work of the WIAC and the

need for the Secretary to develop a two-year plan for improving the workforce and labor market information (WLMI) system, and that he sees future documents building off of the Council's eventual recommendations to the Secretary. He further noted that producing a brochure was not essential to the Council's mandate, but that it might be a worthwhile product in the future. **MS. FORLAND** indicated she had understood that the informational document would serve both as a holding document and as a brochure that could be handed out to a wide range of audiences, and that she had expected that the Council would not wait to produce a brochure-like document.

MS. ORVELLA suggested keeping both versions and supported adding the list of the opportunities to the beginning of the long version. **MR. FERGUSON** suggested condensing the short version as an executive summary for the long version.

MR. MADSON indicated his support for the short version, noting that the long version would be more useful with a table of contents and summary at the beginning.

MR. RIETZKE asked if the members would support keeping both a short and long version. **MS. ZELLER** indicated in the affirmative, and **DR. REAMER** noted that there seemed to be a consensus for adding a list of the opportunities as a table of contents at the beginning of the long version. **MR. HORRIGAN** expressed his support for the long version with the addition of an executive summary and table of contents. **MR. FICHTNER**, **MS. GOLOMBEK**, **MS. ORVELLA**, **MR. MCKEEN**, and **MR. BAREWICZ** all indicated support for the approach of keeping both versions.

Mr. Barewicz noted that ETA had recently emphasized that products developed with ETA funding should provide attribution, such as "A workforce product supported by ETA," and he asked whether that would apply to the informational report. **Mr. Rietzke** indicated that he did not think such attribution would be necessary given that the report would be considered a product of the Council.

MS. ORVELLA asked what the anticipated audiences were for the report, noting that the long and short versions might each be appropriate, but for different audiences. **MR. RIETZKE** identified the incoming DOL leadership in general, particularly the incoming Assistant Secretary for ETA and Commissioner for BLS, but he acknowledged that wider audiences also existed, including the Council itself. **DR. REAMER** added other Federal statistical agencies as a potential audience. **MS. FORLAND** added the U.S. Congress and congressional staff, non-profits, and state-level workforce and labor market information (WLMI) and workforce development agencies.

MR. FICHTNER observed that the short version would be helpful in explaining what the WIAC is and why it matters to a wide range of audiences, to which **MR. FERGUSON** added his agreement.

MR. THERRIEN noted that there were two key differences between the short and long versions. First, the details under the individual opportunities had been removed from the

long version to shorten it. Second, the short version was designed so that it would begin with a statement of why WLMI should matter to the reader, and the WIAO and WIAC background material had been condensed and placed at the end. **MR. RIETZKE** indicated that the contextual portion at the beginning of the longer version would be of more value to policymakers, but of less value to the broader audiences identified.

MR. RIETZKE then asked if any of the members objected to moving forward with both versions and adding a table of contents and executive summary to the long version. There were no objections.

MR. RIETZKE then turned the discussion toward the content of the report.

DR. REAMER suggested re-ordering the opportunities listed in the report by moving item #3, "Understanding the Characteristics of the Workforce" to the first position; combining item #2, "Informing the Career Decisions of Students and Workers" with item #5, "Making WLMI More Accessible and Relevant to Workers," and making the combined item second on the list; and placing the original item #1, "Aligning Workforce Training and Education Investments with Industry Needs," third on the list. The intent of this recommendation, **DR. REAMER** added, was to put the items into a logical thematic order consisting of items describing the workforce, items addressing the information needs of customers, and items looking at labor market supply and demand issues. He also suggested several minor changes to the titles of the opportunities to clarify that they referred to a broad range of activities and programs, not only those that are federally funded.

MR. FERGUSON acknowledged the thematic logic of **DR. REAMER'S** suggestion, but he observed that keeping the original first item, which dealt with aligning education and training with industry workforce needs, might appeal to members of the incoming leadership with business-oriented backgrounds. **MR. MADSON** expressed agreement, noting the value of emphasizing topics that are at the forefront of policy discussions. **MS. GOLOMBEK** also agreed, adding that addressing the mismatch of skills in the labor market is a frequently raised issue. **MR. MCKEEN** and **MR. FICHTNER** also voiced agreement with **MR. FERGUSON**.

MR. FICHTNER expressed reservations about combining the original items #2, "Informing the Career Decisions of Students and Workers," and #5, "Making WLMI More Accessible and Relevant to Workers," pointing out that item #2 addressed a specific need of specific customers, whereas item #5 referred to more general improvements intended to make WLMI more accessible. He indicated that he supported keeping them separate.

MR. FICHTNER also pointed out that the first four items listed in the draft report addressed questions of why WLMI is needed, while the last two addressed approaches to how the system could be improved to achieve those ends. He argued that this formed a different, also logical, organizational structure and indicted his support for maintaining the original order.

MS. PATE noted that the order of the items in the draft, especially the first two opportunities listed, accurately reflected the emphasis seen in activities carried out in the field. She suggested that those opportunities be kept as the first two items. **DR. REAMER**, **MS. FORLAND**, and **MS. ORVELLA** noted that the document should not imply a prioritization through the order in which the opportunities were presented.

MR. RIETZKE suggested moving opportunity #4, "Determining the Effectiveness of Workforce Education and Training Programs," to third in the list, so it would be closer to the first two items, to which it was thematically related. **DR. REAMER** expressed agreement with that approach, as did **MS. PATE** and **MR. MADSON**. The members also agreed to keep opportunities #2, "Informing the Career Decisions of Students and Workers," and #5, "Making WLMI More Accessible and Relevant to Workers," separate, with a suggestion from **DR. REAMER** to add a reference in opportunity #2 to opportunity #5, to clarify the relationship between them.

MR. RIETZKE asked if there were any objections to changing the order of opportunities #3 and #4, but there were none.

MR. RIETZKE then suggested that the goal for the next virtual meeting, scheduled for February 8, should be to review mark-ups of both versions for the Council's final approval. It was agreed that members could email specific content edits to **MR. THERRIEN**, with copy to **MR. RIETZKE**, so that staff could compile a revised version of both documents reflecting the Council's feedback. **MR. THERRIEN** suggested that a Second Review Group be formed to review the mark-up prior to the next virtual meeting, to which the Council agreed. **MS. FORLAND**, **DR. REAMER**, **MS. ZELLER**, and **MS. RUST** agreed to be on the Second Review Group.

DR. REAMER suggested that headings be added to the list of opportunities to assist readers in understanding the logical organization of the report. He suggested the heading of, "What" for the first four opportunities and "How," for the last two opportunities. **MS. ZELLER**, however, expressed concern that adding headings might reduce the clarity of the report.

MR. THERRIEN suggested using the active statements from the examples in the short version as the same lead-ins to the examples in the long version. He also suggested removing the numbering of the opportunities to avoid any implications of a priority in the order in which the opportunities were presented. **DR. REAMER** voiced support for using the active statements in the longer version, as did **MR. RIETZKE**. **MS. FORLAND** requested that the numbering be retained, to aid readers in navigating the report.

MR. RIETZKE then concluded the discussion of the content, and inquired as to whether **MS. ZELLER** would be willing to develop a graphically formatted product based on the short version. **MS. ZELLER** indicated that she would, after receiving clarification from the Council

that graphical formatting was only requested for the short version, and provided that any additional edits were provided to her promptly.

MR. RIETZKE then concluded the discussion of the draft informational report.

DR. REAMER requested an update from **MR. RIETZKE** on any interaction that ETA or BLS had had with the landing teams from the incoming Administration. **MR. RIETZKE** and BLS staff indicated that there had been some interactions. Mr. Rietzke added that the agency anticipated that a transition team would be in place after the inauguration and that they were still receiving information. He stated that Byron Zuidema would be the acting Assistant Secretary for ETA. Ms. Rust added that William Wiatrowski would be the acting Commissioner for BLS after Commissioner Erica Groshen's term concluded on January 27.

MR. RIETZKE then opened the floor for comments from the public. No members of the public offered comments.

MR. RIETZKE then opened the floor for new business. He stated that for the next meeting he would endeavor to have a further update on ETA's direction concerning the new Council chair and that the ETA staff would move forward with soliciting nominations for a new Council member as quickly as possible. He then requested input on potential dates for the Council's next in-person meeting. It was agreed that early June would be a viable timeframe and that the staff would seek additional input from the members about that timeframe.

MR. RIETZKE then raised the need for the Council to determine a subcommittee structure and make subcommittee assignments, and how best to address this need. The members of the Second Review Group agreed to accept the task of developing one or more proposals for a subcommittee structure for the Council to review at its next meeting on February 8.

DR. REAMER asked for confirmation on whether the FACA regulations allowed for non-members of the Council to participate on subcommittees, and **MS. ORVELLA** asked whether non-members of the Council serving on subcommittees would be considered members or advisors. **MR. RIETZKE** indicated that there is more flexibility with regard to the work of the subcommittees; however, non-members of the Council would likely be considered advisors and not members, and would work with the subcommittees in a more informal or ad hoc way. He indicated that he will further consult the FACA regulations to make a final determination on the approach the Council can take.

DR. REAMER provided the Council with a brief synopsis of the new Job-to-Job Flows Explorer (Beta) tool that had recently been released by the Census Bureau as part of its Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics (LEHD) program. He also informed the Council that **NANCY POTOK**, formerly the Deputy Director of the Census Bureau, had recently taken the position of Chief Statistician of the United States in the Office of Management and Budget, where she would provide guidance and coordination to the Federal statistical agencies. He further noted that the current Director of the Census Bureau

would be required by law to step down by the end of the year, with no Deputy Director in place, unless his term is extended, and the Commissioner of BLS would also be stepping down at the end of January.

This concluded the new business of the Council. **MR. RIETZKE** noted that the Council's next meeting would be a virtual meeting and teleconference at 2:00 P.M. EST on February 8, 2017. He also confirmed that the Second Review Group would meet prior to that to review the revisions to the two versions of the informational report, which would be compiled by the staff. It was agreed that the members of the Second Review Group would be available to meet on the week of January 23, except for January 23 itself.

The meeting was then adjourned by **MR. RIETZKE**.