



**Missouri Workforce Development Board**  
October 8, 2020 from 10 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.  
**Conference Call Meeting Minutes**

**Members Present:** Commissioner Dan Atwill, Garland Barton, Greta Bax, Tony Bryan, Vice Chair Cara Canon, Dr. Don Cook, Celeste Cramer, Dr. John Gaal, Assistant Commissioner Tim Gaines, Director Anna Hui, Commissioner Gary Jungermann, Kathy Lambert, Commissioner Zora Mulligan, Gregg Roberts, Fred Steinbach, LeRoy Stromberg, Chair Len Toenjes, Commissioner Margie Vandeven, Virgil White, and Jill Williams

**SWDB Staff:** Mark Bauer, Dr. Mardy Leathers, and Allyssa Miget

**CALL TO ORDER & WELCOME:** Chair Len Toenjes called the meeting to order at 10:00 AM and welcomed everyone. Chair Toenjes expressed his gratitude to the National Governors Association and EDSI for leading the State Workforce Development Board (SWDB) Retreat today. Vice Chair Cara Canon welcomed all new SWDB members. The team assembled now are stronger than ever and with a better direction.

**ROLL CALL:** Allyssa Miget conducted roll call and quorum was declared.

**HIGH PERFORMING BOARDS SESSION BY NGA:** Dr. Mardy Leathers stated how exciting it is for the National Governor's Association (NGA) to be with the board today to help understand how the public workforce system and the board can modernize and innovate. Dr. Leathers said he appreciated the leadership from Governor Parson and his priority for workforce development. Dr. Leathers welcomed Rachael Stephens and Loren Shimanek from NGA.

Rachael provided an overview of NGA and its origins. NGA focuses on workforce development and supporting businesses and job growth, especially during the recovery from the pandemic. To accomplish this, it requires focusing on 3 things: (1) build a statewide ecosystem to promote continuous life-long learning, (2) invest in an agile, technology resilient workforce, and (3) enable every worker to participate in the workforce through comprehensive support. COVID-19 has exacerbated pre-existing challenges and it is accelerating job shedding in certain sectors through the adoption of technology in workplaces. The low wage and low skilled jobs are impacted the most during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Loren asked what is the role of the State Workforce Development Board (SWDB) in the stabilization in the future? Chair Toenjes commented that technology was not listed as a way to remove geographical barriers.

Tony Bryan asked, how does the public workforce system and the board gain corporate buy in?

Commissioner Mulligan commented that the public and even state agencies are having trouble understanding what is going on. It is difficult to respond to the pandemic when it's unclear what is happening in the market and the level of uncertainty in everyday life. Garland Barton added, people don't know what is happening, therefore people are unsure how to react.

Chair Toenjes asked the staff to report a status on initiatives for every board meeting. Fred Steinbach asked if there were examples of other state workforce development boards in other states and measurable goals. Loren responded that states across the nation are making huge investments in dashboard.

Commissioner Mulligan added that SWDB Board members need to have the education to receive the information or to ask questions.

Dr. Leathers commented that the guiding principles of Job Centers of the Future (JCF) align with the recovery agenda for high performing state workforce boards.

Ken Mall said JCF aligns very well in a couple of ways such as 95% of the Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDBs) said they struggle with partnerships. Partnerships are Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) 101, do the local boards understand their role? Some local boards need help understanding the services provided.

Rachael asked how would the SWDB define a high performing board and responses from SWDB members included: nimble, responsive, adaptive, highly engaged and delivering on goals, high level and strategic, involved in LWDBs, work together across all partnerships.

Chair Toenjes responded that there is a potential disconnect between the State Board and LWDB and encouraged dialogue.

Gregg Roberts responded that the LWDB is receiving information on regulatory compliance, information from customers, service vendors and regional boards. The information needs to be in an understandable format.

Dr. Leathers added that Becky Fletcher with OWD is engaging the Local Boards on a weekly basis on regulatory compliance and offering technical assistance.

Tony Bryan said he has worked with the greater metropolitan St. Louis area, and works with five different board. Each of the boards conduct business differently. Tony offered for the SWDB to establish a set of parameters and clear role clarity between the SWDB and LWDBs.

Rachael asked what does the SWDB need? The SWDB members offered: a plan, resources to educate LWDBs, invested participatory members at the state and local board level, and clear understanding of the state's priorities. Director Hui commented that the state agencies are collaborating on information and resources, but isn't aware of any cross functional work among the LWDBs.

**WELCOME NEW MEMBERS:** Chair Toenjes welcomed the seven new members to the State Workforce Development Board and commented that each new member will be asked to provide feedback. New members include: Gregg Roberts, Jill Williams, Fred Steinbach, Virgil White, Tony Bryan, Celeste Cramer, and Gary Jungermann.

**2021 SWDB DATES:** Dr. Leathers reviewed the 2021 SWDB meeting dates with the board which include: January 28<sup>th</sup>, March 3-4<sup>th</sup>, June 24-25<sup>th</sup>, September 8<sup>th</sup>, and November 10<sup>th</sup>. The dates were agreed to by the SWDB members.

**JOB CENTERS OF THE FUTURE:** Ken Mall with EDSI offered an overview of the Job Centers of the Future (JCF) project.

Virgil stated that a universal platform is missing for all partners and stakeholders to use.

Chair Toenjes added that there may be a lack of partnership between the public workforce system and the educational system.

Ken noted that some LWDB regions are using omni-channel well, while others are not leveraging an omni-channel format.

Jill Williams asked what is the strategy for engaging employers. It may be confusing for employers and employers have employer fatigue. Jill recommended a model in which the business service representatives are consultants for the employers.

Dr. Leathers stated that the public workforce system struggles with market penetration and serves 1% of Missouri's workforce and only 0.5% of employers.

Vice Chair Cannon added that is unacceptable in a traditional business model. And asked if an acceptable to provide a LWDB a business plan?

Ken responded yes, the LWDBs are concerning about cutting staff and training new staff on the fly.

Director Hui stated building a relationship between the state board and the LWDBs to foster great trust is going to be critical to talk openly about these concerns and challenges.

Commissioner Mulligan added the biggest challenge is a question of leadership. Commissioner Mulligan added that the public workforce system is extremely fragmented.

Dr. Leathers commented that the public workforce system traditionally focused on job seekers over employers. As a result of Talent for Tomorrow and Best in Midwest, it was determined the Department of Economic Development's re-structure will support employers, but there continues to be gaps. Chair Toenjes added that support job seekers and employers supports Missouri's WIOA Strategic vision and for partners are employers. Vice Chair Canon added that if the job center sends employers poor candidates, the employer may not use job centers in the future.

Director Hui stated that COVID-19 challenged how services are traditionally delivered services physically. The future challenges will likely continue to push the public workforce system to continue to reinvent how services are delivered.

The SWDB members agreed Omni-channel is a strategy to improve the user experience and drive better relationships with the customer across points of contact by engaging customers across multiple channels the user experience is more efficient and appealing than using single channels in isolation.

**QUESTIONS, COMMENTS, AND CLOSING REMARKS:** Chair Toenjes asked the newly appointed board members for feedback from the retreat.

Tony Bryan said there was a lot of great discussion and is honored to be on the board. Tony hopes to support this transformative impact to the public workforce system. The SWDB should maintain a strategic level in regards to the public workforce system. The SWDB has the opportunity to streamline services for both job seekers and employers.

Gregg Roberts stated that he is excited to be a part of the SWDB and bring the northwest LWDB perspective.

Gregg thanked everyone for the opportunity to work with the State of Missouri.

Celeste Cramer said there were some discussions that were reassuring and some differences and barriers that were similar. Celeste recommends partnering, streamlining, and standardizing the public workforce system.

Gary Jungermann said he is happy to be on the board and represent local government. He hopes he can bring some input to this group from the Chief Local Elected Official (CLEO) perspective. He said he is anxious to get started and see the public workforce system move in a positive direction.

Virgil White said it is a pleasure to join the conversation today. He is optimistic about Missouri and would like Missouri to become a thriving place to live and work.

Chair Toenjes thanked the National Governor's Association (NGA) and EDSI for leading the retreat. Chair Toenjes is elated on the robust and honest discussion. He is proud to have this opportunity and very appreciative of NGA coming to support the SWDB and chart a course for the future.

Garland Barton moved to adjourn and Kathy Lambert seconded.

The meeting ended at 3:58 P.M.