

State Workforce Investment Board  
Full Board Meeting Minutes  
July 22, 2014

The public meeting of the State Workforce Investment Board (SWIB) convened at the Jackson Convention Center in Jackson, Mississippi on July 22, 2014.

Board members in attendance:

Ron Aldridge	Brent Christensen	Butch McMillan
Jackie Beasley	Robert Clark	Jay Moon
Richard Berry	Chris Epps	Bob Mullins
Brad Bounds	Steve Gary	Davis Stephens
George “Bunky” Butler	Charles Holder	Michael Thomas
Lee Carson	Ed Langton	Sherrye Thompson

There were approximately 30 guests in attendance.

### **Call to Order**

- Chairman Jay Moon called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m. and welcomed the board members in attendance. He advised the group that Mark Henry was undergoing surgery at this time and requested he be remembered in prayer.

### **Approval of Minutes**

- The Chairman called for a motion to approve the minutes of the SWIB full board meeting of December 11, 2013. A correction to the minutes should reflect Dr. Eric Clark is with the Mississippi Community College Board rather than Institutions of Higher Learning. The motion to approve the minutes was made and seconded. There was no opposition and the minutes were approved.

### **Workforce Development Bill (SB 2958)**

- Jay Moon, SWIB Chairman, gave an overview of Senate Bill 2958. He explained the purpose of the SWIB and the responsibility assigned by the legislature. A base must be established to provide continuity for the process of working through the requirements of SB 2958. All money generated will come from private sector funds. The SWIB fund will not affect the integrity of the Unemployment Insurance (UI) trust fund or the WET funds, nor will it increase employer UI rates. The WET Fund is a fraction of the percentage of Unemployment Insurance (UI) payments transferred to the Community Colleges, which in turn is transferred for various programs' use.
- The Mississippi Department of Employment Security (MDES) shall be the fiscal agent for receipt and disbursement of all funds into the SWIB bank account. Funds will be in the SWIB account and will generate approximately one million dollars annually. The funds will be available to the SWIB exclusively for use in administration of SWIB business, grants relating to training, and other projects as determined appropriate by the SWIB. Policies for grants and other projects shall be approved through a majority of the SWIB.
- The SWIB 's responsibilities include ensuring funds are expended for contributing services paid only to service providers selected on a competitive basis. Contracts should contain deliverables

that allow assessment of work performed against measurable standards to include milestones for completion. Each contract should include a quality assurance plan. Any commodities provided should be in accordance with provisions in Section 31-7-13.

- A Comprehensive Study of Workforce Development Needs is to be developed by the SWIB and delivered to the Lt. Governor, Speaker of the House, Chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, and Chairman of the House Appropriations Committee by February 2015. Study components are defined to include the need for better ties between public and private sectors, so the partner is providing what is needed. The SWIB should develop a list of strengths/weaknesses/opportunities of the current system and how it relates to the needs of employers. Also, result oriented measures should be established.
- Future uses of SWIB funds may include branding and marketing to improve workforce development and to insure that what is done is relevant for today and the future. Jay Moon stressed the SWIB must promote strategy and initiative and strive for continuous improvement. SWIB members need to develop a statewide career awareness program and work to reduce dropout rates. A long-term plan should address the needs of businesses, industries, and workers of the state. A study needs to be done related to restructuring the state's workforce program and delivery systems.
- Ed Langton stated that the SWIB is the frontline representative to showcase what is being done in workforce training. He suggested a meeting to discuss what is currently happening in various agencies and what resources others may have to offer.
- Ricky Berry stated there is a continual problem with the student dropout rate, and there are various things to consider when formulating a strategy to achieve success in retaining students.
- Robert Clark asked if the legislation in SB 2958 allows the SWIB to look at the entire state and suggested that the workforce areas be utilized to promote what the SWIB is doing. He voiced his concern that education is continuing to lag behind. Dr. Eric Clark and Bunky Butler reiterated that the workforce areas are a good starting point for workforce resources.
- Jay Moon reported that the legislature has been asked for extended time to complete the comprehensive study in order to do a more thorough analysis of each component. The SWIB would like to submit several reports rather than one massive report. Jackie Beasley stressed the importance of having no contradicting information among the reports.
- Chairman Moon advised the members that the SWIB is prohibited from directing the Community College Board or individual community colleges on how to expend money for workforce training.
- The Mississippi Department of Employment Security (MDES) will provide space for SWIB staff and will provide administrative support. A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) will be drawn up, and MDES will establish the SWIB fund and collect revenue.
- Jay Moon stated that the SWIB will develop policies and procedures, establish committees, define responsibilities of each committee, and allow board members to select their preferred committee.
- Brent Christensen, Executive Director of the Mississippi Development Authority (MDA), suggested that a task force be put together to create a study in order to present a comprehensive report to the full SWIB.
- A motion was made by Ron Aldridge for Chairman Jay Moon to move forward with hiring staff and establishing a task force to develop a study of workforce development needs as directed by Senate Bill 2958. The motion was seconded by Rep. Robert Clark and passed unanimously by SWIB members.

## **Workforce Data Quality Initiative**

- Dale Smith, Deputy Executive Director, COO, of MDES, presented the Workforce Data Quality Initiative (WDQI) which will utilize the State Longitudinal Data System (SLDS) to create a reengineered system to help Mississippians find jobs. Measures required by the Department of Labor include tracking when people get jobs, wage gains, and job retention.
- Dr. Mimmo Parisi, Professor and Director of nSPARC at Mississippi State University, presented Mississippi Jobs and Workers using a skill level chart which showed how matching people to jobs is developed, the applicant screening process, and how the accumulation of resumes to match skills to jobs is used to retain workers in Mississippi. Dr. Parisi explained that WDQI will study and utilize middle skills, develop resources, and design protocol that conveys universal needs. The SLDS captures multiple years of information to determine whether dollars are spent prudently and usefully. Dr. Parisi further explained that Life Tracks, 13 years of collaboration, plays an important role by providing data to early childhood, K-12, postsecondary education, and the workforce which can be used to make data-driven decisions to enhance student achievement and career-readiness. The SWIB and SLDS are similar in that both strive to improve career-readiness in the workforce and develop new job opportunities in the state.

## **Priority One Survey Analysis**

- Dr. Mimmo Parisi presented the survey analysis which will forge and sustain contacts with businesses. The requirements were put into place by local businesses, community colleges, and local economic development agencies. First, businesses were asked to identify their urgent needs. The consensus indicated a need for a quality workforce with basic skills in math, science, reading, and writing. Also, businesses look for dependability and reliability, initiative and a willingness to learn, and communication and interpersonal skills. These components were grouped into low, medium, and high skill needs. The focus of the analysis will include a priority-based analysis of the critical factors currently limiting the state's ability to provide a trained and ready workforce.

## **Committee Discussion**

- Chairman Jay Moon directed board members' attention to the Proposed Committees insert in each packet. He asked the members to select one or two committees of interest, and explained that an advisory committee and task force will also be established. Chairman Moon reiterated the SWIB has a pointed direction to move toward and must be absolutely honest and embrace the difficult tasks. Ed Langton made the motion for the advisory committee and task force to be established and committees put in place. The motion was seconded by Robert Clark and passed unanimously.

There were no announcements at this time. The meeting was adjourned at 1:05 p.m.