

**Operations Committee Meeting Minutes  
February 11, 2022  
WDB Office, 1111 Marlgress Road, Cherry Hill (Zoom Conferencing)**

COMMITTEE INFORMATION AND ATTENDANCE								
NAME	ORGANIZATION	TRUSTEE MEMBER	10-Sep-21	12-Oct-21	12-Nov-21	9-Dec-21	14-Jan-22	11-Feb-22
DeBaere, Gregg T., CHAIR	Atlantic Coast Communications	✓	X	X	X	X	X	X
Cirii, Frank	Camden County One Stop	✓	X	X		X	X	X
Connors, Kristi	NJ Department of Labor, Business Services	✓	X	X	X	X	X	X
Deitz, Jeff	NJDVRS	✓		X		X	X	X
Jones-Benjamin, Michaela	Camden County Board of Social Services							X
McFarland, Salama	Camden County Board of Social Services		X	X	X	X	X	
Regensburger, Robert	Lockheed Martin	✓	X	X	X	X	X	X
Ludizaca, Raul	NJ Dept. of Labor				X	X		
Sinclair, Nidia	Camden County Resource Center					X		X
Weil, Bob, BSOT Chair	Connor, Strong & Buckelew	✓	X		X	X	X	X
Levitt, Alex	WDB					X	x	X
Swartz, Jeffrey S.	WDB		X	X	X	X	X	X
Williams, Leslie J	WDB		X	X	X	X	X	

**Welcome**

Gregg DeBaere, Chair, called the meeting to order at 9:02am and welcomed attendees.

**Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes**

Gregg reviewed the minutes from the January 14, 2022, meeting. He commented that that the functions of each of the entities previously denoted have been deleted to condense the minutes. Hearing no questions, Gregg asked for a motion to approve the minutes. Frank Cirii made the motion, seconded by Bob Weil. By unanimous vote to the affirmative, the motion carried and the minutes from January 14, 2022, were approved.

**WDB Planning and SETC Updates**

Per Gregg, there is nothing to report on the regional local plan. Jeff confirmed there was still no direction from the SETC regarding the local plans, citing personnel departures and transfers to other offices. Sheryl Hutchinson replaced Dave Ramsey in the statistical area and is a data analyst working under Leslie Hirsch at the Department of Labor. Guidance will be passed along as it is received.

**One-Stop Director and Career Center Updates**

Frank Cirii, Camden County Career Center, Local Area Operations Director

*Facility & Safety Update*

- The Career Center remains open to the public both virtually and in-person for One-Stop Career Services. Board referrals are picking up and things are moving in a positive direction. Using COVID protocols, PPE, temperature scanning equipment and the assistance of the Goodwill-provided porter (keeping high-touch and high-occupancy areas clean throughout the day) helps maintain a COVID-safe work environment. The porter is paid for by the Department of Labor as OJT through Goodwill.
- The public’s growing frustration with the absence of UI on site for in-person access, and the inability to reach customer service by phone, has resulted in aggression toward One-Stop staff, to the extent that the involvement of public safety officers has been warranted. One irate person commented “Do I have to do something stupid to get the attention of Unemployment?” and was escorted from the

building. Jeff commented that the bottleneck is because the people are not aware of the ID.me system which was implemented to curb fraudulent claims. The State has been provided with a substantial grant from the federal government to totally upgrade its antiquated unemployment insurance computer system.

- The lease extension for the current location of the One-Stop is still pending, but approval is expected to be for 5 to 10 years. The current lease expires September 1, 2022.

#### *Staff Training, Meetings and Learning Link*

- Sponsored GSETA training and internal training is being offered regularly to refresh staff as need is determined by Management.
- QLess and customer tracking will be evaluated to determine whether another system is needed. The QLess contract was extended until December 2022. Regarding the Docu-Sign contract, the best option is buying the minimum amount which is 500 signatures that expire after one year. The current usage rate is under 300 but the rate is likely low due to COVID's impact on services.
- The acquisition of software for Learning Link, CASAS and HI-SET or GED is in process and the implementation process is now under consideration.

#### *Virtual Service*

- Jonathan Young, Camden County Commissioner, appeared on Comcast News Makers and The One-Stop will be promoting its services on all avenues possible.

#### *Incumbent Worker Training (IWT)*

- The One-Stop has been working with Bill Moen at Camden County College to get the IWT program off the ground. The updated application process is being reviewed for finalization and implementation. It is still challenging finding employers to take advantage of the program. Bancroft is assessing their needs, to tailor IWT for future participation but, at this point, a conglomerate of ShopRite stores (Zallie's, Ravitz, Wakefern, Brown's, etc.) will be the first grantee.

#### *Youth One-Stop*

- The One-Stop Youth video will be uploaded to the County website and social media links pending approval at the next Youth Committee Meeting on February 23, 2022, and the video dissection to bring it to a shareable size for email distribution.

#### *Youth Engagement & Virtual Services Updates*

- Laurie McGuire has completed her 90-Day Plan for the Youth Committee, outlining how the Youth One-Stop can enhance existing programs. The plan has 6 recommendations and modifications of current practices in response to COVID and the evolving nature of the youth business. The use of TikTok may be implemented to reach the youth. Youth ageing out of the foster care system and coming from youth detention are included in the focus areas of the 90-Day Plan. RFP's may be considered to assist with the work experience issue of the youth program, in addition to inclusion

#### *OJT Funding Issues*

- OJT grant funds received must be exhausted by June 2022.
- There are contractual issues with the county for OJT.
- The funds must be used for displaced workers, which the One-Stop has an abundance of and has been unable to use to date.
- The NJ DOL issued an notice of grant opportunity estimated at \$2,000,000 for businesses to apply for incumbent worker training in competition with the county's own program.

### **Board of Social Services**

Michaela Jones-Benjamin, Board of Social Services

#### *Administrative Updates, Staff & Training*

- Beginning Monday, Feb 14<sup>th</sup>, all staff report to work on-site. Services will be by appointment only.

\*SNAP - Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program ,

\*TANF - Temporary Assistance for Needy Families

\*GA - General Assistance

\*E&T - Employment & Training

Board of Social Services Outcomes – January 2022			
	SNAP	TANF	GA
<b>Total Outreach</b>	<b>650</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>575</b>
<b>Referred to a Work Activity</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Not Interested or Available</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>Participating</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Referred to Employment</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Childcare Vouchers</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Transportation Vouchers</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>5</b>

**Total Applications in January for the Agency was 1,939**

*SNAP/ABAWD Waiver End & Work Activities Referral Plan (Extension updates)*

- SNAP-E&T remains a voluntary program. Clients are being called to inform them that their participation in services is now mandatory, but still without sanctions for non-participation. They are being assigned to the March 1<sup>st</sup> G-Job, OEO and to the Camden County College TIP Program. Nobody has been placed in any of the few CWEP programs currently operating.
- Last month's numbers: 1,828 online applications and 111 **mail-in** applications for a total of 1939 applications in January. Outreach numbers increased from December but remain low because of the change from voluntary to mandatory participation requirements, and barriers to participation for part of the month.

### **Division of Vocational & Rehabilitation Service Updates**

Jeff Deitz, Manager, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services

*Administrative Updates & Staff Training*

- DVRS currently is understaffed due to staff members being promoted or retiring. Jen V. is leaving for another agency and Keith Austin is retiring, possibly leaving at the end of April. Training for staff is ongoing.

*Project Search*

- Project Search continues. Jefferson is going well. TD sold their Project Search license to Lenape Regional High School District, and it is rumored that they will not participate in the program in the future. Lenape's intent is unknown, and time is running out to find another employer to participate.

*General*

- Interaction with clients is low, likely due to COVID and people still being afraid to return to the workforce. Referrals overall are down at least 50%. The DVRS' State plan reflects how well county agencies work well together as a team and the plan is, overall, a duplication of what a One-Stop should be.

### **Employment Services-LWD Updates**

Kristi Connors, ES Manager, Labor and Workforce Development

*Administrative Updates and Staff Training*

- Gregg thanked Kristi for her literary input on the White Paper.
- An Employment Service Trainee has been interviewed and if approved, will bring the total staff count to 15. The candidate is a former parole officer whose experience with ex-offenders and resources for facilitating employment for people with criminal backgrounds make him a great addition to the staff.

- Staff are viewing mandatory presentations covering the Job Source aspects of the system that could be useful in daily operations and a mandatory Medical Marijuana training from the Civil Service.

#### *Virtual Service Updates and Referrals*

- Services are being offered virtually, primarily by phone.
- A narrated PowerPoint has been created for the GA 28-day that was pushed back from the Feb 1<sup>st</sup> date. The presentation will be delivered by Zoom and the presenter will stay on the Zoom call to answer questions at the end. Google forms and MS forms will also be used for questions. Conference calls and in-person by appointment only are the additional methods of contact that will be available to people who cannot access Zoom.
- The Division of Family Development (DFD) is working on a policy for absences due to COVID and exposure quarantines.
- The State E-Gov scheduling system is for in-person services only, so adjustments need to be made to update calendars for counselor appointments.
- DocuSign is being utilized for the Re-Employment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA). A video desk aide and the reference guide created have been helpful.
- See employment services outcomes below:

Employment Services Outcomes	
Year to Date Check in	4312
Provide Outcomes to Virtual Services	3167
Referred to Training	771
Referred from Training Counselor	80
Voluntary Work Campaign	105

- Another training may be necessary to track virtual services.
- LWD in Trenton is operating on site 5 days a week.

#### **Regional Updates**

Jeffrey Swartz, WDB Executive Director

##### *Atlantic City Electric Initiative:*

- A 2022 cohort will start with three information sessions scheduled February 23<sup>rd</sup> & 28<sup>th</sup> and March 1<sup>st</sup>. The curriculum has been expanded from Line School to including training for nuclear and underground utilities employment. The program is now being called Physical Abilities School and will start in April. Constellation, a partner of Atlantic City Electric, has positions available at a nuclear plant in Limerick, PA. Atlantic City Electric will offer a \$5000 stipend for relocation allowance to a candidate who goes to work in Limerick. To date, all but one piece of equipment is in place, but the training will start in April. Two program graduates were hired by Atlantic City Electric.

##### *Camden Works:*

- As of the end of January, of the 723 people in the database, 369 have been hired through the Camden Works Initiative, (not including county and One-Stop referrals) with 592 being Camden City residents, of which 373 are viable and ready for positions. Approximately 124 individuals were no longer interested in the program. Goals and trainings in some occupational areas through Camden Works are under consideration for the coming year.

##### *Cooper EMT Program:*

- Several meetings have taken place over the past month and Cooper is in the process of getting a site certification for the EMT program. The site certification will undergo a 6-month review process by Office of EMS through the Dept. of Health. Once approved, training can commence, and the course is expected to launch in the Fall 2022. Camden County College will offer the 5-credit course for 12-

15 in the cohort at the Joint Sciences Building in downtown Camden. A draft of the MOU is expected from the college and the partners for the project.

#### *SETC and GSETA*

- SETC and GSETA continue to meet. SETC's Dennis Bone indicated that vacant seats will be filled. A presentation from 60 Minutes called "The Great Resignation" was shown. Prior to the pandemic 1 in 67 people worked remotely and currently the number is 1 in 7 people working remotely. The Commissioner provided numbers of the how much money was paid out by UI, the number of claimant and the Federal grant to upgrade the State's unemployment system. Regarding GSETA, the Board of Trustees has elected to hold a virtual conference in the Fall.

#### *Consortium Updates:*

- The South Jersey Energy Partnership will reach out to high schools in Atlantic County in the Spring to promote offshore wind jobs. Two companies participating in the partnership are Atlantic City Electric and Atlantic Shores Off Wind (wind farms in Atlantic County). A large family event is planned for May to present employment opportunities to parents and eligible candidates.

#### **Business Services Update**

Robert Weil, Business Service and Outreach Team Chair

- The December BSR meeting was not held to accommodate attendance at the quarterly meeting.
- Amanda Modale, Business Services Representative, LWD, continues to send updates about potential worksites seeking employees. She met with the newest business advocate, Sho Islam, who has been invited to the next BSR meeting. Sho is assigned to work with 6 counties, including Camden County. Ricky O'Hara advised that the reporting process of the DVRS' weekly outreach numbers has changed. The report reflects a lower outreach number that is expected to climb. The next BSR Committee meeting is February 17<sup>th</sup> at 2:00pm. Requests for assistance with UI claims continue to come in almost weekly, affirming the ongoing issue reported by Frank. Jeff stated that Amanda Modale has been reassigned to her former business services position, covering the central and coastal areas of the State. Her replacement has not been named.

#### **Best Practices Documentation Updates & Review (White Paper)**

Gregg DeBaere, Chair, Operations Committee

#### *Committee Discussion*

- Greg noted that he and Bob Regensburger discussed the document. He thanked Kristi Connors, Salama McFarland, and everyone else for their contributions. He stated that he and Bob Regensberger will now rehash and finalize the document. He will send it out for review to interested parties and hopes to have additional discussion on the subject at the March 11<sup>th</sup> meeting.
- Jeff Swartz asked if anyone had any suggestions for a speaker for the upcoming Quarterly Board Meeting. Gregg inquired about the possibility of resuming in-person meetings. Jeff responded that meetings would remain virtual through the first quarter and would be reviewed for the COVID numbers and the level of comfort among the attendees. Bob Weil commented that it may be efficient to consider doing a combination of virtual and in-person meetings going forward.

#### **Adjournment**

Gregg asked for a motion to adjourn. The motion was made by Bob Weil and seconded by Frank Cirri. The meeting adjourned at 10:35am.

The next meeting of the Operations Committee is Friday, March 11, 2022, at 9:00am.

Submitted by:

Debra Vaughn

Administrative Assistant to the Executive Director