

Workforce Information Advisory Council

Summary of Virtual Meeting

December 3, 2020

1:00 PM – 4:00 PM ET

The Workforce Information Advisory Council (WIAC) was convened for a virtual meeting at 1:00 PM on Thursday, December 3, 2020. 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), U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) and Designated Federal Officer (DFO) for the Council, convened the meeting. The entirety of the meeting day was open to the public and concluded at 4:00 PM on Thursday, December 3, 2020.

In Attendance:

Members of the Workforce Information Advisory Council

Bruce Madson, Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (Chair)

Thomas Anderson, Wellons Land Company and Arkansas Workforce Development Board

Alicia Crouch, Kentucky Community and Technical College System

Alexandra Hall Bovee, Colorado Department of Labor and Employment

Adrienne Johnston, Florida Bureau of Workforce Statistics and Economic Research

Dean Jones, Greenville County Workforce Development Board

Chelsea Mason, International Association of Machinists & Aerospace Workers District 751

Andrew Reamer, George Washington Institute of Public Policy

Jennifer Zeller, Georgia Power

Members of the Council Not in Attendance

Daryl Basset, Arkansas Department of Workforce Services

Deborah Carlson, Texas Workforce Commission

Staff

Steve Rietzke, Chief, DNPTTA, ETA (DFO)

Don Haughton, ETA

Pam Frugoli, ETA

Sara Johnson, ETA

Julie Hatch, BLS

Rebecca Rust, BLS

Ken Robertson, BLS

Michael Wolf, BLS

Cynthia Forland, Forland Consulting

Annette Summers, The GA Team

Sheila Crowley, The GA Team

Torrie Nickerson, The GA Team

Betsy Roberts, The GA Team

Staff Not in Attendance

Lauren Fairley, ETA

Others Attending for All or a Portion of the Meeting

Tom Gallagher, Retired

Emma Heth, Western Governors' Association

ShirleyJo Lee, OBCOC Learning & Testing Center

Lan Nguyen, YouthBuild USA

Ian Straughter, NYC Economic Development Corporation

Rachel Vilsack, National Skills Coalition

Kim Vitelli, ETA

Proceedings: December 3, 2020 1:00 PM ET

Welcome, Review of Agenda and Goals for December Meetings

MR. RIETZKE convened the meeting of the Workforce Information Advisory Council (WIAC). He provided opening remarks on the agenda for the day in addition to the objectives for the series of December meetings.

The Council members who were present at the meeting introduced themselves. **MR. RIETZKE** informed the Council that **MR. PALMER** is no longer on the Council due to having accepted a position with the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS). **MR. PALMER's** new position as Regional Commissioner disqualified him from participating on the Council.

MR. RIETZKE shared that the minutes from the September 8-10, 2020 meetings were sent to all Council members in advance of this meeting. He requested that any edits to the minutes be provided in writing prior to the December 10th meeting. The plan will be to approve the September meeting minutes at the beginning of the December 10th meeting.

Opening Statements

MR. RIETZKE introduced Council Chair, **Bruce Madson** and Veteran WIAC Member, **Jennifer Zeller**.

MR. MADSON greeted the members by sharing how much he is looking forward to the next few weeks. He reflected on how enlightened he was when he first joined the WIAC because of the members' workforce diversity. He explained that many members are not chosen for their labor market information (LMI) experience, but rather for all the other labor market strengths they bring to the Council. He encouraged the members to look outside of their direct LMI expertise and to allow their unique perspectives to inform the upcoming discussions. **MR. MADSON** expressed the importance of the new sets of questions, revolving around current and future workforce challenges, in the midst of a global pandemic.

MS. ZELLER echoed the sentiments that **MR. MADSON** shared and also expressed that she felt encouraged by the opportunity to influence and improve labor market information. **MS. ZELLER** urged the Council to take advantage of the unique dialogue that would unfold due to the members' diverse perspectives and expertise.

Review of Progress-to-Date on 2018 WIAC Recommendations and Discussion

Former WIAC Chair, **Cynthia Forland, Forland Consulting** led the Council through the exercise of reviewing and discussing progress-to-date on the 2018 WIAC Recommendations. Prior to this meeting, a survey was sent to the Council members that outlined each of the nine WIAC Recommendations from 2018 and the progress to date of each recommendation. The survey asked each member to identify if they would like to continue pursuing a recommendation, stop pursuing a recommendation, or if they needed more information on a recommendation in order to make any determination. **MS. FORLAND** thanked everyone for responding to the survey. **MS. FORLAND** walked through a slide deck that included progress-to-date information included in the member survey and additional progress-to-date identified through the member survey.

The 2018 WIAC Recommendations and corresponding member views are as follows:

- Enhance Unemployment (UI) Wage Records
 - 100% continue to pursue
- Expand Information on Occupations, Skills, and Credentials
 - 100% continue to pursue
- Develop and Disseminate a K-12 Career Awareness Education Framework
 - 90% continue to pursue
 - 10% need more information
- Develop Information on the Changing Nature of Work
 - 100% continue to pursue
- Increase Support for State and Local Labor Market Information in the WLMI System
 - 100% continue to pursue
- Overcome Barriers to Data Sharing
 - 100% continue to pursue
- Improve Consistency and Availability of Program Evaluation Data
 - 90% continue to pursue, 10% need more information
- Create a 21st Century WLMI System Using Advanced Technologies
 - 70% continue to pursue, 30% need more information
- Initiate Collaboration Among WLMI System Agencies

- 70% continue to pursue, 30% stop pursuing

In the conversations that followed each recommendation, the Council members discussed information updates on what has happened to implement the individual 2018 recommendations, including discussions on background, context, and motivations for each recommendation.

MS. FORLAND informed the members that this exercise was designed to identify the three key discussion areas for next week's meeting.

Discussion of Potential Areas for Future Recommendations

As a part of the survey that was sent to Council members prior to the meeting, the members were asked to provide their views on two potential areas for new recommendations as well as any additional areas where they thought the WIAC should pursue recommendations. **MS. FORLAND** facilitated the discussion on potential areas for future recommendations. She shared a slide deck that outlined these future recommendations.

The two areas provided in the survey for potential new recommendations, along with the member views are as follows:

- Skills Clustering
 - 70% to pursue
 - 30% need more information
- COVID-19 Impacts and Issues
 - 80% to pursue
 - 10% need more information
 - 10% not pursue

The additional potential areas for future recommendations provided through survey responses are as follows:

- Determining demand/decline occupations in a rapidly-changing and hard to predict labor market.
- Encourage Census Bureau to add non-degree credential attainment categories (e.g., certificates, industry-recognized certifications, licenses) to the American Community Survey (ACS).
- Continued investment in the expansion of the number and capabilities of state longitudinal data systems as well as cross-state collaborations.

In the discussions that followed regarding each potential area for future recommendations, the Council members asked questions and provided comments as to why potential areas had been suggested and how those areas related to the existing recommendations. **MS. FORLAND** reminded the members that it would be possible to integrate new areas into the original nine recommendation categories, rather than needing to establish new ones.

Before concluding the discussion of potential areas for future recommendations, **MS. FORLAND** circled back to the first additional potential area: Determining demand/decline occupations in a rapidly-changing and hard to predict labor market. She shared a link to a valuable webinar: *Discussing Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) Employment Predictions and COVID-19*. The webinar was presented by BLS Staff Member, **Michael Wolf**. **MS. FORLAND** introduced **MR. WOLF** and asked him to speak for a moment on the relevance of in-demand occupations, employment projections and how BLS is looking at adapting to COVID-19.

MR. WOLF provided background information on the BLS product, *Employment Projections of Structural Change in the Economy*. The publication is released on an annual basis, but the most recent projection for the period 2019 – 2029 that had been released did not take into account the pandemic due to the timing of when those projections were finalized. Rather than waiting a year to release a new set of projections, BLS created alternate sets of projections for the same 2019 – 2029 period to identify some of the impacts of COVID-19. They recognize there is a lot of interest in the data user community about the impact of COVID-19 and also questions on how to use the long-term projections in light of the fact that the pandemic has happened. The webinar presents some high-level findings from the alternate projections. He shared that BLS does have a more detailed research paper that will be published in the near future. **MR. WOLF** concluded that the alternate projections are just one way that BLS is trying to both continue to provide the long-term perspective on structural changes in the economy, but also trying to anticipate interest in rapidly changing events due to the pandemic.

MS. FORLAND thanked **MR. WOLF** for his informative remarks and encouraged everyone to view the webinar recording.

DR. REAMER asked **MR. RIETZKE** and **MS. VITELLI** if the President-Elect transition teams have been in touch with ETA and if they foresee any impact on the Council's recommendations in anticipation of the new administration's priorities. **MS. VITELLI** responded by encouraging the Council to continue working to make the best recommendations to the Secretary regardless of the current administration in place. She also shared that ETA does like to invite members of the administration to the WIAC meetings and that she and **MR. RIETZKE** would keep the Council informed as the new administration team outlines their policy priorities.

Public Comment

MR. RIETZKE opened the platform for the public attendees to ask questions and provide comments and feedback. No public attendees requested to speak. **MR. RIETZKE** requested that the public attendees send a request in advance of the next meeting if they would like to address the Council.

Determining Top 2-3 Priorities of Focus for December Meetings

MS. FORLAND led the Council through the final action item on the agenda, the discussion of priority areas and/or unresolved areas that would become key topics for the designated breakout groups for the next meeting on December 10th. She shared that these topics are not official recommendations, but rather areas the members want to explore further.

MR. MADSON suggested collapsing the existing recommendations and the potential new areas into three broader topic categories such as:

- Credentials, Skills Clustering
- Change in Nature of Work, Economic Disruption and COVID-19
- Data Sharing at the State Level, Data Sharing Analytics, 21st Century Piece, and Wage Record Enhancement

DR. REAMER also suggested a method of organizing the existing recommendations and the potential new areas based upon function. Such as:

- New Data (Bringing in Data)
- Uses of Data (New Products and Tools)
- Systems (Funding, Collaboration, Data Sharing)

MS. MASON expressed hesitation with grouping the Economic Disruption piece into one of the three breakouts because it deserves its own space. The Council unanimously agreed.

From the conversation that followed, the resulting three breakout groups for December 10th were formed:

- COVID-19 Lens Group
- Skills Group
- UI Wage Record / Changing Nature of Work / Non-Degree Credentials Group

Closing and Next Steps

MR. RIETZKE expressed his pleasure with the amount of progress made during today's meeting. He shared that members will be asked to complete a survey, indicating their preferences for breakout topics.

MR. MADSON encouraged the members to consider engaging with the breakout group they feel most drawn to whether it be on the basis of expertise or just wanting to learn more.

The link to the BLS webinar is included in the minutes as Appendix A.

The meeting was adjourned.

Appendix A. Link for the Webinar: *Discussing Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) Employment Projections and COVID-19*

<https://performancereporting.workforcegps.org/sitecore/content/global/events/2020/11/19/16/47/Discussing-BLS-Employment-Projections-and-COVID-19>