

Governor's Council for Workforce and Economic Development

Minutes of Regular Meeting

Date: October 25, 2024

Time: 9:05 a.m.

Place: Oklahoma State University – OKC, Student Center-3rd Floor, North & South Conference Rooms

Call to Order/Welcome

Chair Gray called the meeting to order and determined there was a quorum. He welcomed the group and reviewed the agenda. Item #6 (Bylaw Project Update) was moved to Item #2.

Bylaw Project Update

OESC General Council Andrew Chilson discussed changes made to the bylaws, specifically around voting rights and the role of designees. The executive council voted before the meeting to allow designees to vote on behalf of their appointees, resolving prior restrictions on proxy voting. This change is intended to eliminate administrative barriers and allow GCWED to operate more efficiently, as it has recently been hindered by procedural standstills. This ensures that business can continue without delays caused by vacancies or absences. The General Council is currently preparing a legal opinion to formalize these updates.

Approval of January 19, 2024 & April 26, 2024, Minutes

A motion to approve January 19, 2024 and April 26, 2024 meeting minutes as presented was made by Jeanie Webb and seconded by Stan McCabe. No further discussion. The motion carried unanimously.

Guest Speaker, Chad Warmington

Chad Warmington, CEO of the State Chamber of Oklahoma, emphasized the State Chamber's commitment to supporting business growth through strategic policy and advocacy. He highlighted the Chamber's pro-business stance, focused on identifying and removing barriers that hinder business operations across Oklahoma. Warmington noted that efforts to tackle workforce challenges are beginning to yield results, emphasizing the need for alignment between policymakers, businesses, and educational institutions to drive progress. Workforce issues have been a priority for Oklahoma's business community, as evidenced by a State Chamber survey three years ago, in which 64% of respondents identified workforce as their top concern. Although the percentage has declined, workforce development remains a primary issue.

Warmington also addressed House Bill 621, which led to the creation of a new workforce commission, with its priority being the recruitment of a CEO to lead these initiatives. A secondary priority is enhancing workforce data. Warmington stressed the importance of building a strong workforce infrastructure, particularly in preparing K-12 students to be career-ready by the time they graduate. He shared Superintendent of Oklahoma City Public Schools' vision that students should be ready to "Employ, Enroll, or Enlist" upon graduation, and he talked about the need for schools to align their programs with the state's workforce requirements. Warmington thanked

everyone involved for their dedication to this mission, recognizing the positive impact these efforts are beginning to have on Oklahoma's businesses.

Career Pathways Committee Updates

Chair Gray shared that a previous committee structure was effective and noted that the Youth Committee and Adult Education Committee were recently combined into a new Career Pathways Committee, chaired by Shawna Nord with Stan McCabe as vice-chair. Chuck encouraged everyone to consider how they could contribute to the committee's initiatives in career pathways.

Shawna Nord introduced her background in counseling and career development, noting her previous experience as a high school counselor. She emphasized the importance of helping students understand the practical relevance, or "why," behind career preparation. Shawna shared that the June meeting was primarily attended by educators and made a strong appeal for business community members to get involved. She invited everyone to attend the next committee meeting on December 13 at Metro Tech.

Stan McCabe spoke from his perspective in the business sector. He suggested that a significant focus of the committee could be to develop a collaborative internship program that would provide meaningful work experiences for students. Although he acknowledged that building a premier internship program would not be easy, he believes it could have a substantial impact with collective support and effort.

Review of Policies

DeDe Smith gave a recap of the following policies. These policies were passed at the last Executive Council meeting.

1. WSD 12-2024: WIOA Title I Youth Program Guidance
 - This policy has been completely rewritten to align with the latest federal guidance, including TEGLs 23-19, Change 2, and 10-23, as well as TEN 22-19. Significant updates include revised ISS instructions, self-attestation protocols, and expanded definitions to clarify the criteria for dependent, independent, and basic skills deficient youth. A new Attachment D has been created to align with youth eligibility, documentation, and self-attestation requirements. Additionally, this update addresses all youth-related findings highlighted by the DOL at COWIB. This policy went through a workgroup that included service providers, board staff, and DOL.
2. WSD 07-2024: Eligible Training Provider List Policy and Procedures
 - This policy has been completely rewritten to ensure alignment with federal regulations and TEGLs 13-16, Change 1, and 08-19, Change 1. The directive has been enhanced to provide clearer guidance to local areas, ensuring that the processes for maintaining the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) are more straightforward and transparent.
3. WSD 13-2024: Process for Local Area Redesignation
 - Clarifications have been made to align this policy with federal regulations, with updates aimed at providing clearer guidance to local areas. A new section has been added to facilitate local areas in applying for redesignation assistance along with their proposals. The attachment has also been

updated to include revised performance measures and additional redesignation assistance options.

4. WSD 85-2024: Regional and Local Plans

- Timelines within this policy have been updated, with local and regional plans now due to the state by November 1. Please note that this policy will undergo further updates next year to adjust the sequence, with regional plans due before local plans. Every local area must submit a local plan every four years and a modified plan every two years.

Board Certification & Vote

Chair Gray and DeDe Smith share the latest on local board certification. All six local boards have been recommended for certification. Chair Gray gave kudos to the work the local boards are doing. Representative Brian Hill made the motion to approve, with Stan Booker seconding. No further discussion. The motion carried unanimously.

Partnership Updates – OESC, DRS, & Career Tech

DeDe Smith, OESC:

- Efforts are ongoing to increase engagement within the council. Significant progress has been made on the combined state plan, which began last fall, was submitted in March, and has since undergone reviews with the Department of Labor (DOL). OESC is now focused on actively tracking the plan's goals and objectives with regular monitoring, ensuring that partners are aligned for optimal use of funding. There is potential for more partners to become involved.
- Work continues on building out committees by securing members and establishing regular meetings. The local boards completed a major effort to achieve certification, marking a critical milestone. Support for the GCWED council remains a priority, and Maci Majors was introduced as the new State Workforce Board Coordinator.
- DOL is now managing all grants directly with OESC, with special acknowledgment to Michelle for her contributions. The Oklahoma Works website has officially launched and will continue to be enhanced. Six fiscal monitoring reviews were conducted of the local boards, and the 2024 comprehensive monitoring schedule is now underway. Eight policies were modified and approved, including four in today's meeting; an additional four policies are expected for the next council meeting.
- Employer alliance meetings have launched and is collaborating with local boards and American Job Centers (AJCs) on rapid response efforts during disaster events and mass layoffs. Teams are actively working with affected employers and job seekers to facilitate reemployment or provide unemployment assistance. Six AJCs were relocated to improved facilities to enhance services.
- Interim studies are being conducted on unemployment insurance (UI) tax rates, with encouraging developments that may lead to tax rate changes. The council received an equity grant that provided funding for mobile service units and upgraded high-speed internet at AJCs.

Max McKnight, CareerTech

- Remarks were shared on behalf of Director Haken, who was unable to attend. CareerTech's mission is to prepare Oklahomans for success in both career and life. They partner closely with K-12 education and higher education, viewing business and industry as their primary customers and a well-educated

GCWED Minutes

[Governor's Council for Workforce and Economic Development, 900 N. Stiles Ave., Oklahoma City, OK 73104](#)



workforce as their product. All CareerTech programs are guided by advisory committees to ensure they meet the needs of local communities. CareerTech operates through five delivery arms: career centers, including programs at 16 correctional facilities; PK-12 school districts; business and industry partnerships; technology centers; and adult education, which served over 11,000 students last year through 32 programs.

- Key upcoming initiatives include CareerTech taking on the role of state lead apprenticeships as of September 1, a transition from the Department of Commerce. CareerTech has also introduced a short-term apprenticeship model, expanded the statewide truck driver training program, and look at all angles of workforce training including middle school career explorations. The JAG program is now up and running.

Local Board Updates

Ashley Sellers, CEO of COWIB

- Ashley Sellers gave a presentation on the functions of the six local boards, outlining the board's specific responsibilities and emphasizing the importance of collaboration and active participation from all members. She also touched on the role of the CLEOs. Board members play a crucial role and encouraged them to become more involved. Ashley shared the story of a recent youth event that began as a small idea from one of her board members and turned into a highly successful event, attended by hundreds of middle school students.

Mike Branan, Executive Director of Green Country Board

- The organization has recently undergone several staff changes, resulting in a consolidation down to seven staff members. This reduction is part of an effort to reallocate funds from staffing to programming initiatives. New partnerships have been established to enhance workforce opportunities, including a welding degree program in collaboration with Tulsa, technology-focused job programs with the Cherokee Nation, and ongoing work with the YWCA. Discussions have also been held regarding a possible consolidation with the Northeast Workforce Board, with the LEOs exploring the best approach for this change. The overall goal is to increase engagement from core partners and board members beyond voting.

Chair Gray challenged the council to think about opportunities for public-private partnerships, encouraging members to consider successful models, such as those in Kansas, as a potential framework. Chair Gray urged council members to actively participate.

Proposed 2025 GCWED Meeting Dates and Venue Change

Chair Gray discussed the proposed schedule for the 2025 meetings, emphasizing the importance of making it a priority to attend. A motion to approve was made by Stan Book and seconded by Caleb McDonald. The motion was unanimously approved.

GCWED Minutes

[Governor's Council for Workforce and Economic Development, 900 N. Stiles Ave., Oklahoma City, OK 73104](#)



Next Meeting: January 24th

- Francis Tuttle Technology Center: Rockwell Campus
12777 N. Rockwell Ave
Oklahoma City, OK 73142

Meeting Adjourned at 10:45 a.m.

*Respectfully submitted,
Maci Majors*

GCWED Minutes

Governor's Council for Workforce and Economic Development, 900 N. Stiles Ave., Oklahoma City, OK 73104

