



Wyoming Workforce Development Council Meeting Summary

October 18-19, 2017

Gillette College

3251 South 4J Road

TEC 136A & 136B

Gillette, Wyoming

Council Members Present

Jim D. Engel, Chairman

Del McOmie

Leonard Scoleri

Sen. Michael Von Flatern

Fabian Lobera

Gary New

Ron Wild

Ron Van Voast

John Cox

Jim Rose

Shawn Reese

Ray Fleming Dinneen

Kevin Kershnik

Rocky Anderson

Sid Gressette

Stacy Strasser

John Walsh

Rep. Cathy Connolly

Scott L. Norris

Mark Madsen

Katie Legerski

Felix Carrizales

Keith Zabka

Council Members Absent

Governor Matthew H. Mead

Shannon Buller

Randal Six

Jillian Balow

Tom Forslund

Council Members Designees Present

Noelle Reed

Laurel Ballard

Others Present:

Laurie Knowlton

Meri Thompson

Mike Griffin

Linda Orchard

Chris Wiederspahn

Leesha McIntire

Janet Ferrar

Hayley McKee

Nicky Harper

Vermona Petersen

Georgia Auch

Tony Glover

Carmalee Rose

Jeff Schulz

Tobi Cates

Andrea Hixon

Angela Rush

Marcia Hess

Joelle Lewis

Jeanette Pickinpaugh

Call to Order, Welcome and Introductions

Ms. Louise Carter-King, the Mayor of Gillette, WY, welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked the Department and the Council for all of the help that they provided after the coal industry down-turn that left so many area citizens unemployed. She also gave some highlights of interesting and promising new industries that are starting up in the region and will help to stimulate the economy and provide many employment opportunities.

Approval of Agenda

Mr. Zabka motioned to approve the agenda; Mr. McOmie seconded the motion; the motion carried.



Approval of July WWDC Meeting Minutes

Mr. Walsh motioned to accept the July Quarterly Meeting Minutes; Ms. Legerski seconded the motion; the motioned passed.

Approval of September WWDC Meeting Minutes

Mr. Van Voast moved to accept the Conference Call Minutes; Mr. Walsh seconded the motion; the motion carried.

Workforce Advisory Group (WAG) Strategy Session

Mr. Engel gave a brief overview of what the WAGs are and how Wyoming is in the forefront in modeling this innovative concept for the entire nation, which, he explained, is why the Council is trying to take baby steps to get this enterprise off on the right foot and to minimize errors. He also noted what groups make up the WAGs; the Business Council, industry leaders, the private sector, the Department of Education, Economic Development and other groups that are interested in Wyoming's economy. The information gathered by the WAGs will be available and valuable to many different government and private sector groups.

Ms. McKee introduced the Workforce Advisory Group (WAG) Support Team consisting of Ms. Hayley McKee, the Administrator for Public Affairs for DWS; Ms. Laurie Knowlton, Policy Analyst for DWS; Ms. Marcia Hess, State Director for Adult Education; and Ms. Noelle Reed, who is on the Wyoming Business Council as the Advanced Industries Manager.

Ms. McKee summarized how the WAGs began and what has been accomplished to date; the organizational structure of the WAG Model and how the Council interacts and guides the WAGs. Participation in the WAGs has been higher than anticipated and is greatly appreciated. A WAG Strategy Session will be held to brainstorm ideas after the initial update of the progress to date. Ms. Knowlton presented the WAG Organizational Chart and provided an overview of what the Council needs to accomplish under the expanded WIOA requirements.

Ms. McKee highlighted how the Council has determined what partners will be at the table working on the WAGs to provide a clear representation of the essential parties that will be instrumental in the effort to meet Wyoming's workforce, economic, and educational needs. The community WAGs are based on the Community College regional maps and will be supported by the WAG Strategy Group that was introduced at the beginning of this session. That WAG Strategy Group will provide resources, information and support for the community WAGs, and serve as a conduit or intermediary between the Council and the local WAGs.

Ms. Hess described that the local or community WAGs have a more open organization and the membership is determined by each community, but is business driven. The purpose of the community WAGs is to represent each area of the State and their needs to the Council through the WAG Support Team.

Ms. Reed went over the timeline from the beginning about 2 years with the State Unified Plan and how the WAGs first got started. The Council has detailed the scope and mission of the community WAGs and that direction was presented from the Council at the beginning of 2017.

Ms. McKee continued with information about the community survey that is being developed and will be rolled out by the community WAGs and then used to compile information from those surveys to mobilize the efforts of the Council in meeting the changing economy and diversifying industry in the State. A WAG Academy will be held in Casper on November 14 that will provide information on what each of the WAGs are doing and sharing information with WAGs that are just getting started.



Ms. Knowlton demonstrated the information that is now on the Council website at <http://wyowdc.wyo.gov> regarding the WAGs in each sector of the State, and made some suggestions of how the Council can assist the WAGs in the future.

Mr. Anderson asked if there were any funds set aside for the WAG Academy in November. Ms. Knowlton stated that there is currently about \$5,000 available for travel that could be used for this effort. Ms. Reed also added that the four Sectors identified by the Council are Healthcare, which will be the first launched, Technology, Value-Added Natural Resources and the Trades. Several other questions were asked and answered about the groups and the meetings that are being held.

The Governor's Vision and Goals were summarized by Ms. Knowlton.

Sector Strategies – Ms. McKee and Ms. Reed went over what the Sector Strategies are and the different public and private organizations to fulfill the goals and needs of the State. It is an effort to gather information from Businesses and Industry about their needs and barriers to success in the State and its Regions, and then to use that input to overcome those barriers. The businesses need to be the drivers in this process, and the agencies and organizations will be the providing the solutions for those businesses and industries. The Survey will be used for all of the Sectors, but a few technical questions may be added if the Council determines that they have Sector-specific inquiries.

Available Assets and Resources– The Council and the WAG Support Team will be researching these resources and then providing that information to the community WAGs, so that a solution can be implemented to fill those gaps. There is about \$1.1m available in Federal Funds for both discretionary and non-discretionary purposes over the biennium. Ms. McKee summarized the Workforce Development Training Fund, the Pre-Hire Program and the Wyoming Grown Program as some of the assets that are available to businesses. The Workforce Development Training Fund will be presenting some proposed rule changes that will be presented during the session tomorrow.

After the break, DWS Director Cox added some information the future of Wyoming Grown's potential and more detail on the Federal Funding discretionary budget limitations and opportunities.

Ms. Reed noted that both Colorado and Louisiana have a lot of information on their websites about how they have used Sector Strategies and funding in their states. The group divided up into four smaller groups to brainstorm on the WAG topics listed below, led by Ms. Janet Farrar, the DWS Deputy Director for Strategic Management.

- In an ideal world, how would the Council like to see the available Assets and Resources previously discussed distributed to the regional and/or community WAGs?
- What types of projects or initiatives would you like to see from your regions or communities?

Each of the four groups shared the results of the 30 minute brainstorming session. The results of the brainstorming sessions will be compiled and distributed to the Council.

Computer Science Education – Laurel Ballard

There are a lot of things happening in K-12 around Computer Science education, as previously discussed with the Council. Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) professions are currently the fastest growing employment field and STEM jobs are available in most any job sector. Estimates are that for the period of 2014 - 2024, there will be a 73% expected increase in computer-related STEM jobs. In contrast, nationwide there is only about an 8% increase in college graduates in Computer Science. Another related barrier in Computer Science is diversity; if young women are exposed to Computer Science classes in high school, they are 10 times more likely to

major in Computer Science in college. There are currently 500,000 unfilled positions in this field in the nation, with a projected 1.1 million by 2022. There are currently about 253 open computing jobs in Wyoming, and there is a 3% higher demand rate for computer-related jobs than any other field, and an average salary of \$65,000 for these jobs. The estimated economic loss for Wyoming is currently about \$14.9m with that many unfilled jobs.

In K-12 education in Wyoming last year (2016-17), there were 3 Advanced Placement (AP) courses offered in the state, 1 International Baccalaureate Course (IBC) offered and 3 districts had dual enrollment courses with the colleges. Only 6 of 16 districts offered Computer Science classes, and there are 34 teachers in the State that are certified to teach Computer Science, but only 9 are actually teaching Computer Science courses. From 2015-16, 6 students across the entire state tested for AP Computer Science courses, with 3 passing the exam, putting Wyoming in last place in the nation in students taking AP Computer Science courses. The Joint Education Committee has put Computer Science as one of their priority topics to look at this year. At their June meeting, the Joint Education Committee was asked to request that the Department of Education put together a task force to look at 3 major goals:

1. What would it take for every high school in the state to be able to offer AP Computer Science or be able to deliver the dual enrollment classes?
2. What would it take for every high school to be able to offer 2 semesters of coding?
3. What would it take to get 500 students passing the AP Computer Science exam or receiving credit with dual enrollment classes with demographics that match the state's population?

The task force consists of a diverse cross-section of regional, national and government Computer Science professionals in the fields of infrastructure, software engineering, data centers, Geographic Information System (GIS) mapping; and education and curriculum experts from K-12, superintendents, principals and district administrators, technology integrators, teachers, after-school organizations, representation from Community Colleges, the University of Wyoming, the State Board of Education, Array coding school in Cheyenne, code.org (a national non-profit that supports states with Computer Science efforts,) and the Professional Teaching Standards Board.

Some of the barriers identified are:

- Private industry jobs pay so much more than teaching jobs that it is difficult to keep qualified teachers in the school system;
- Funding for schools does not include the Computer Science piece;
- There is a lack of alignment between what is required for graduation and the qualifications for the Hathaway Scholarship and other scholarship programs, so a lack of incentive for students;
- There is a lack of understanding about what Computer Science is, not only in Education, but among professionals themselves;
- No one really knows what to teach, when to teach it and where do you teach it.



The Professional Teaching Standards Board is working on changing the standards required for qualifications to teach Computer Science in the schools. Currently the standards to teach Computer Science are set so high that school districts cannot compete with private industry salaries for equivalent educational levels; so a professional development plan is being explored that would allow teachers to gain professional endorsement to teach Computer Science.

The Council was asked to help garner support from industry partners that are targeted by the Council Committees in the pursuit of its goals to overcome current barriers to employment by supporting communication and conversation with the Department of Education and school districts to create authentic learning environments in community spaces, such as Maker's Space in Gillette. Computer Science teachers do not need to be Computer Science experts, but do need to be able to facilitate students through on-line learning, industry partnerships and web-based resources that will expand the individual school system's ability to meet the needs of the students and create interest and relevance for students and will help fulfill the needs of industry simultaneously.

2018 Meeting Dates and Locations

Next meeting is in Cheyenne on February 14-15, 2018.

May 9-10 in Lander

September 12-13 in Guernsey

November 7-8 – Casper

Department of Workforce Services Updates – John Cox

Dir. Cox noted the hiring of Kristin Burkhart as agency CFO, Janet Farrar as agency Deputy Administrator of Strategic Planning and Tony Glover as the Manager of Research & Planning. He also requested that the Community Grant portion of the Workforce Development Training Fund proposal be tabled for additional internal revision before going up for Council vote. Dir. Cox also suggested that, in regard to the WAGs, the department do more information gathering from the Center Managers to try to define what they are all seeing at the local level and determine what the agency can do to address some of their issues or hesitations.

The Chairman added that businesses may push back when approached with another survey. He encouraged everyone that the message should be that this is not about another government program, but a local and regional effort to meet the needs that they all have in terms of meeting employment goals and overcoming the barriers that are preventing them from meeting those goals. Ms. McKee suggested that the agency could put together a white paper on where the WAG effort is so that all interested parties are on the same page.

Advanced Carbon Products Innovation Center – Phil Christopherson

Mr. Christopherson, the CEO of Energy Capital Economic Development, provided an overview of the efforts to diversify the local economy in Gillette after the downturn in the Mining & Minerals industries in the last few years. Advanced Carbon Products Innovation Center (ASPIC) is a business that is developing uses for coal in new and different ways. Carbon fiber, carbon nano-tubes, and activated carbon are three of the products being developed at Advanced Carbon Products Innovation Center. The prospect of building a coal refinery was suggested, which could produce any of the products that are currently produced from oil, out of coal instead. The business is currently developing the lab research, which will then, hopefully transitioned to become a pilot plant and then a fully functional and commercially viable operation.

WIOA Compliance & Finance- Keith Zabka

- **360 Training Appeal** –Ms. Wiederspahn reviewed the appeal history and why they were previously denied and also the history of the Eligible Provider List. This training provider, 360Academy, which is a certificate program, provides computer technology training both on-campus and virtual training on-line. The previous denial was because it was thought that it was duplicating services already provided in the state and the training was thought to be on-campus only in Denver. The current appeal went into detail about the differences between what they could provide compared to what is currently provided in Wyoming and also clarified that there were online courses available that would not require students to attend classes on campus at the school.

Mr. Scoleri motioned to deny the provider; there was some discussion, Rep. Connolly seconded the motion; the motion did not go forward. Mr. McOmie then motioned to approve; Mr. Anderson seconded the motion; the motion carried.

- **Title I Policy** - Ms. Wiederspahn briefly went over each section of the policy. The changes involved mostly in definition of eligibility.

Mr. Zabka motioned to approve; Mr. Scoleri seconded the motion; the motion passed.

- **Wagner-Peyser Policy** – Ms. Hixon noted that most of the changes are in terminology changes from WIA to WIOA measures.

Mr. Scoleri motioned to approve; Mr. Zabka seconded the motion; a question was raised about whether there are any provisions to provide services for First Responders or their families and it was stated that there was not currently any programs that would provide services to that population. The motion carried.

- **Monitoring Policy** – Ms. Pickinpaugh outlined the policy, stating that the One-Stop centers will be divided into three sections. The scope of the monitoring will be on intake and referral processes, eligibility certification, priority of service, registration, effective assessments, classroom training, OJTs, work experience, supportive services, EEO, internal control, and reporting. Desk audits of case files will continue to be done annually, with on-site audits every three years. The monitoring will include findings, recommendations or best practices, corrective action, technical assistance, and procedural changes that may need to be made, any corrective action plans or corrective action implementation. This policy is to ensure that programs and participants and making sure that the WIOA law is being followed. The various checklists that will be used are included in the meeting information binders. Ms. Pickinpaugh added that the Council will receive an annual report of all monitoring results and the Council will have oversight over all audit results and resulting action.

Mr. Scoleri made a motion to accept the policy; Mr. Zabka seconded the motion; a question was raised and answered regarding funding for the on-site monitoring costs, and another that asked for clarification of this monitoring and the certification process in the next agenda item. Ms. Cates clarified the Federal oversight required in this policy. The certification process below is State Requirements that the One-Stop Centers must comply with. The motion carried.

- **WWDC Certification of American Job Centers Policy (Revisions)** - Ms. Knowlton clarified that the One-Stop Certification effort by Ms. Knowlton is separate and assures that each of the One-Stop Centers in the state is providing at least the minimum of services provided in the WIOA law and will be done every three years. She then did a quick review of some revisions requested by the Department of Labor (DOL).

Mr. Van Voast made a motion to accept the revisions; Mr. Zabka seconded the motion; a few questions and comments were voiced and answered. Mr. Scoleri commended Ms. Knowlton on her efforts to stay on top of all of the rules and the revisions. The motion passed.

- **Budget** – Ms. Knowlton reviewed the required items to be funded by the Council. Dr. Fleming-Dineen suggested an amendment to include additional funds for the WAG efforts. The chairman stated that line item modifications will be addressed in the approval process. WIOA does not specify what funds are Discretionary and non-Discretionary, it is up to the Council. The budget line items can be modified as needed.

Mr. Van Voast motioned to approve the Budget; Sen. Von Flatern seconded the motion.

Dr. Fleming-Dinneen proposed an Amendment to Budget Line Item 13 that would increase it from \$5,000 to \$250,000, under the authority of the Executive Committee. The WAG Support Team would present funding requests to that Committee. This would enable an innovative and exceptional WAG Academy in November because of the progress that has been made to date and the national attention that Wyoming's WAG effort is receiving. Sen. Von Flatern seconded the motion for the amendment.

In discussion that followed, Sen. Von Flatern moved to amend the WAG amount to \$50,000. Mr. McOmie seconded the motion; discussion followed and the proposed Amendment to the Amendment failed.

The original Amendment of \$250,000 was voted upon and passed. Mr. Scoleri voted against the Amendment to raise Line Item 13 to \$250,000.

A motion was made to have the Executive Committee bring back to the Council a report on a quarterly basis the expenditures from this \$250,000 amount and get feedback on how the money is being spent and going forward to the next quarter. The motion was seconded. The amendment passed.

Mr. Reese made a motion move the amount of \$250,000 from Line 13 to Line 27. A discussion followed to re-word Line 13 to include "via WAGs"; Mr. Reese agreed to that suggestion and withdrew his motion. Sen. Von Flatern motioned to insert "via WAGs" into Line 13, where the \$250,000 will reside. Mr. Reese seconded that motion for amendment. The motion passed.

No additional discussion on the budget. The motion passed to approve the Budget as amended.

- **Memorandum of Understanding** – Ms. Knowlton stated that changes in the WIOA law now require an MOU between the partners, or in the case of the State of Wyoming, an Inter-Agency Agreement between the Governor, the WWDC, Wyoming Community College Commission and DWS through June 30, 2020, with the guidance of the DOL. Attachment A is based on a sample provided by DOL. This agreement must be approved by the Council before the Attorney General acts upon it.

Mr. McOmie motioned to approve the MOU, contingent upon approval by the Attorney General; Mr. Zabka seconded that motion; Dir. Cox questioned if the Council approves this MOU pending approval by the Attorney General, will the Council have to act on any edits by the Attorney General? The Chairman stated that the Executive Committee should be able to act upon any Attorney General edits to form only. Dir. Cox moved to amend the motion to include this language; Mr. McOmie agreed and Mr. Zabka concurred. The amended motion passed.

- **Trade Adjustment Act Policy** – Ms. Knowlton gave a brief overview of this policy, as an example of one of the required partners of the One-Stop Operators. Ms. Auch added that this federally-funded program is targeted most often to factory jobs that are lost or negatively affected as a result of foreign trade. There are not a lot of incidents of this type of job loss in the State of Wyoming.

Ms. Knowlton will research whether the Council will need to act on this Policy. The Chairman requested that if that is found not to require Council action, that the word, “Policy” be replaced with “Guidance.” Ms. McKee added that this program is not under the purview of the Council, like the WIOA law is, and is being presented to the Council as an example of one of the programs that works **in conjunction with** WIOA and is presented as “information only” as an example of one of the Partner Programs that are required to be offered through the One-Stop Centers. This item does not require any Council action.

- **WDTF – Rules Changes** – Ms. Cates gave an overview of the changes and the reasons for the changes. There is an additional program, the Apprenticeship Training Grants being suggested to be added to the types of grants available to businesses. This grant would provide funding for businesses that have multiple-year apprenticeships. The Business Training Grants are limited to one year, which does not meet the needs of businesses that have multiple-year apprenticeship programs and would provide additional relief and support for those programs. The proposed Community Development Training Grants is being held back at this time for further input and revision to be able to more fully support the goals of the Council.

- Ms. Rose went briefly through the changes to Chapter 1, Business Training Grants:
 - Combine New Position and Existing Position Grants into a unified Business Training Grant.
 - A stipulation is being suggested that a business must be in business for at least 365 days before being eligible for these grants, or provide with the application, a Letter of Support from the local, regional or state economic development entity.
 - There will be no consideration given for training applications that do not contain any direct training costs, such as tuition, registration fees or class fees.
 - The trainee funding cap is being lowered from \$2,000 to \$1,000 per fiscal year per trainee.
 - The per-trainee cap may be up to \$1,500 for specific industries as dictated by the Council.
 - Business caps have been instituted in August of \$10,000 per month and \$50,000 per fiscal year.

- Where additional money is received for the training, the grant would cover only the remaining balance, not to exceed the actual expenditures.
- Non-allowable training expenses now include Lodging and Meals.
- Reimbursement will be remitted to the businesses if the trainee completes the training and stays in employment with the business for 90 days after the completion of the training.
- Applications must be submitted at least 30 days before the first date of travel or start of training instead of the previous rule of 45 days.
- If the trainee completes the training, but does not stay in employment for at least 90 days following the completion of training, no reimbursement will be made for that trainee. A business may request a waiver for reimbursement under conditions of:
 - Termination for cause
 - Activation for military service, or
 - Death of the trainee during the training period.

Mr. Lobera raised a question about the reimbursement model being proposed, and questioned the effect of this reimbursement only after the final report is completed and accepted 90 days after the end of training as being an undue burden on entrepreneurial or small business, which may have cash-flow issues and would be damaged if they have to wait that long for reimbursement. Ms. Cates suggested that if a business is granted an exception for the 365-day restriction, that an exception may also expedite the reimbursement timeframe for that business. Sen. Von Flatern stated that he did not think that a reimbursement exception should apply if the 365-day exception is given. Dir. Cox added that the purpose of this rule change from a 75% payment on executed contract to a reimbursement model is to take the program out of the debt collection business. The Chairman defined that the question was to deal with the 90-day period until reimbursement; perhaps a shortened period before reimbursement could be entertained.

- The next change states that if the business does not submit a complete final report within 135 days after the final contract date, no reimbursement will be made.
- All information regarding New Position Grants has been deleted;
- The last change was to define workforce development needs as businesses who are involved in one of the following:
 - Local or regional WAGs formed by the WWDC; or
 - Industry Partnership associated with the WWDC; or
 - Local, Regional, or State-designated workforce initiatives associated with the WWDC or Wyoming Governor.

Mr. Zabka suggested changing “apply for” to “receive” on page 1-3 and for all similar instances going forward.

A question of clarification was raised regarding preference and what that would look like on page 1-13. Ms. Rose stated that if a business meets the qualifications of a WWDC preference, they would be first in line for funding for that month and then the trainee funding limit would be addressed next, determining whether the trainees are eligible for \$1,000 or \$1,500 per fiscal year.

Mr. Anderson asked for clarification that reimbursement would be made between 90 and 135 days after the end of training upon completion of the final report. Ms. Rose confirmed that is correct.

Mr. Reese asked for clarification on prioritization of funding. Ms. Rose stated that there is no set-aside amount of funding, but there is a monthly budgeted amount of \$110,000 per month for the WDTF to spend based on the amount of funding allowed by the Legislature for the biennium. Mr. Reese questioned how the criteria on page 1-13, and the terminology “actively involved” would be demonstrated by the business. Ms. Rose stated that this issue could be addressed in policy rather than the rules.

Keith Zabka motioned to approve the rule changes, including changing “apply for” to “receive”; Mr. Scoleri seconded the motion; the motion carried.

- Ms. Rose continued on with Chapter 2, the Pre-Hire grants.
 - The first change is to remove language on page 2-3 and to allow funding from other sources.
 - The next 2 changes are clarifications of that change on pages 2-4 and 2-9 to allow additional monetary contributions received by the business.
 - The change on page 2-11 states that no final reimbursement will be made until the final report is received.

Mr. Scoleri moved to approve the rules changes for the Pre-Hire program; Mr. Zabka seconded the motion; the motion as revised carried.

- Ms. Rose explained Chapter 5, the new Apprenticeship Training Grants
 - This program will have the same rules and process as the Pre-Hire Grants, but removes the requirement for the business to show a net increase of employees.

Mr. Zabka moved to approve; Mr. Scoleri seconded the motion; the motion carried.

2018 Safety & Workforce Summit – Council Participation – Jim Engel

The Council is to decide if they will participate in the 2018 Safety & Workforce Summit in July at Cheyenne. The Council did not take part last year because of funding restrictions.

Mr. Scoleri made a motion not to participate because of the previous amount provided of \$50,000, and the WAG effort being a priority in the present budget; Mr. Anderson seconded the motion.

Dir. Cox encouraged the Council to participate in the Summit in some way, as businesses have asked that the Summit return to a joint Summit with Workforce Services, instead of focusing on Safety as it did this last July. Rep. Connolly asked Dir. Cox about who participates in the Summit from Workforce Services. The Chairman noted that the joint summit has cost \$10,000 in the past, not the \$50,000 that was previously stated in the motion. Mr. Van Voast added that the perception that the Council chooses not to participate, may not resonate well in the Wyoming business community.

The Chairman recommended that the Council table. Mr. Scoleri withdrew his previous motion, as did Mr. Anderson rescind his second to that motion. Sen. Von Flatern made a motion to participate up to a limit of \$10,000; Rep. Connolly seconded the motion; the motion carried.

Open Discussion and Public Comment

Mr. Scoleri motioned to adjourn; the motion was seconded; the meeting was adjourned.