

MINUTES OF THE HOUSE COMMERCE AND LABOR COMMITTEE.

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Donald Dahl at 9:00 a.m. on January 22, 2003 in Room 521-S of the Capitol.

All members were present:

Committee staff present: Jerry Ann Donaldson, Kansas Legislative Research Department
Renae Jefferies, Revisor of Statutes
June Evans, Secretary

Conferees appearing before the committee: Barb Reavis, Workforce Policy Liaison, KDHR

Others attending: See Attached List

The Chairman called the meeting to order and introduced Barb Reavis, Workforce Policy Liaison, KDHR.

Barb Reavis stated that Acting Secretary James Garner was not present due to having the flu. Ms. Reavis introduced the Workforce Network of Kansas staff that was present. Connie Leffler, Special Projects Assistant, works on ideas getting marketing to the business customers in Kansas. Steven Jack, Director, Division of Employment and Training, oversees programs that are considered workforce development which focus on individuals. Jim DeCoursey, Department of Works, manages the Area 2 Employment and Training One Stop in Topeka which is the centerpiece of how services are now delivered. Wayne Isaac manages the Area 4 Employment and Training One Stop, Wichita and Natalie Bright works with marketing and other issues.

Ms. Reavis stated she worked in two distinct areas: (1) assists the statewide advisory board, the Workforce Network of Kansas Board, in meeting their goals and (2) assists with the understanding and coordination of workforce development activities in Kansas.

The Workforce Network of Kansas Board (WNKB) is an advisory body mandated by the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 with the majority of the membership coming from private industry. The Commerce and Labor Chairman and Ranking Minority member represent the House along with 32 people from across the state. The Workforce Investment Act wants private industry to influence how workforce development programs are designed and delivered to businesses and job seekers. Businesses need some control on how services are delivered. The Workforce Board is broken down into five local areas and each board manages the local area. These five separate local governing boards direct services in a number of federally funded programs.

Ms. Reavis' second and larger responsibility, besides staffing the Workforce Board, is to provide information and coordinate services.

CONTINUATION SHEET

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Services are delivered through multi-service sites or one-stop centers in about 25 communities across Kansas. Services may be delivered through single service centers like a local Social and Rehabilitation Services Office in other communities. Customers may use the Internet to find services, build a resume or apply for a job. Business customers also may use that same source to locate qualified employees. Funding for most of these thirty programs comes through six state agencies and from a variety of federal and state programs.

The WNKB is engaged in two activities right now aimed at this stated mission. The Quality Task Force is developing some system outcomes that are strategic in nature. Individual programs measure how many people they serve, whether a person's wage has increased or whether they were satisfied with the service.

An additional tool has been developed to help understand what the variety of employment and training programs in Kansas are designed to do. This incorporates what criteria must be available to receive services, whether the service is for a job seeker or business customer, what services the customer can expect and what the program measures to show its success has been developed to help understand what the variety of employment and training programs in Kansas are designed to do.

The WNKB serves as a review board and change agent empowered with the responsibility of making recommendations to the Governor and to state agencies to drive economic development in the state by helping to produce lifelong learners, highly skilled and productive workforce and high wage jobs.

The second critical activity underway has to do with employers needs. The WNKB is engaged in a research project to learn specifically what skills Kansas employers need their employees to have. The end result of this effort will be a continuously renewing set of data and an interactive web-based database so real-time responses can be made by education, post-secondary education and training programs that satisfy the demands of business customers (See Attachment 1).

Representative Sharp requested information regarding the numbers on the Workforce Investment Act to see how effective the program is working.

Steven Jack, Director, Division of Employment and Training will give an overview on February 3 to respond to this question.

The meeting adjourned at 9:40 a.m. The next meeting will be January 24.