

April Monthly Meeting Minutes:
April 7, 2010, 1:00 p.m.

1:00 Welcome and Introductions

1:05 Follow-Up Topics

a) Call Wait Times Update (Casey Erickson, Bill Starks)

- UI – Avg. wait time Monday was 14 minutes, lowest of the year. Staff has been increased by about 15 and claims are coming down. Week before on Monday was 26 minute average wait, usually just a few minutes on days other than Monday.

- ESD – “Customer Experience” – volume with inbound calls is big, coming down a bit. Wait times and how long served are coming down. Avg. wait time is about 8:56. Worker time 15:45 – time on call and post-call time. 106,000 calls for February.

b) Stimulus Grants - SESP (Connie Laws)

- Did receive this award - \$4.6 million. 1470 customers in energy efficiency training occupations. Focus on Dislocated workers, Disadvantaged youth, Vets, at-risk workers impacted by energy/environmental industry

- waiting for DOL to issues definitions for these targeted populations, waiting for these. Working to get training academies up and ready to go with these trainings.

- Pilot academy – SLCC at Miller Campus. Should be ready to go by end of summer or fall. Covers from UT county to Bear River/Cache County.

- Hiring 6 “energy career development specialists” – doing eligibility and job placement at the different sites.

- Charter signed by 30+ industries, many are employees in the energy industry. DWS has a grant with SLCC to do “cluster acceleration projects” – the focus here is energy. Assigned to bring industry to the table and to understand their needs, skill shortfalls, where career openings are. Are utilizing this cluster project to get the foundation from employer/business side.

1:15 Recent Changes

a) Eligibility Call Center - Closing at 5:30 p.m. beginning April 12th (Casey Erickson)

- Goes into effect as of Monday. Can still come into employment centers until 6:00 p.m. Plus 24/7 online access.
- Different hold messages, will be one that will inform them of change starting April 12th.

b) Change to Online Application

- Right now there is a pdf version and an online version, but as of 4/12 will only have the online option. Now won't have the option to print it up and bring it in, but can get a paper application at the employment centers, or can fax or mail them if customers call the call center. Won't see an actual change in the online application, this just removes the pdf version of the app from the website. “Utah Helps” – pdf application is longer and hard to find anyway. “Utah Helps” associated eRep application.

- 80% of DWS customers are applying online (Casey says it has gone down just a little bit – 25,000 apps in February, last year was about 14,000 apps. This increase has caused the # of people applying online to decrease a bit).

I:25 eREP Conversion & SNAP Modernization Study (Casey Erickson)

- Last weekend did largest eRep conversion yet, about 40,000 – aged, blind, disabled population. 49 teams across the state in ESD, all but 2 are functioning in eRep, about 22,000 still remain in PACMIS. Next month will be last big conversion, and want to completely out of PACMIS by June 30th. Last conversion was at 83% - then have to do mini-conversions to get them all over. LTR conversion on April 30th. System operating pretty well at this point, on Monday did go down for about 90 minutes, but conversion is going pretty well.
- Enhancements planned for the future – “Day Two” – fall 2010 – customer homepage to access and do some things online, also have an auto-registration – should help with interview wait times.
- SNAP Modernization (Steve Cuthbert) – UT selected as a state to participate in National FS program – look at modernization efforts and put some more money into serving customers – will do some enhancements to eligibility. Mainly accessibility issues and ease of the process. – Imaging – want to reduce use of paper a lot, get more stuff electronically available. Will keep us posted as enhancements proceed.
- Workers receive a “task” and will enhance this in “Day Two” – in PACMIS had real time alerts, in eRep it is different, can see tasks for the next year – so projects information further. In process of realigning those. Staff still receive a “task” and if don’t work on it in an appropriate time it goes to a dashboard that supervisors see. Usually have ten calendar days to work these “tasks.” Supervisor can move high priority or overdue tasks to other workers.

I:35 New Demand Driven - Workforce Development Division (WDD) (Dave Lewis, Diane Lovell)

- State and Regional Councils – how can DWS save money and better serve local employers. Want to be sure to provide more local control and flexibility to be more responsive to local employers. Now is pretty top-down from State council down, change model would propose that economic service areas (9) and the director of the service area will be able to decide where resources should go and what should be targeted.
- Had 7 regions with at least 16 members from the private sector. Is costly to maintain this. Each council gets \$18-23,000, plus staff costs is expensive. Want a more flexible model with ad-hoc industry advisory groups. Economic service area director will be the director and would organize the group based on the key workforce priorities they have identified. Would only organize for individual projects.

- If this process goes through will take a year to go through. Will also involve a statutory change. DWS thinks it will be more economical and more streamlined. “Primary customer” is business to provide pathways to customers to achieve economic sufficiency. Hopefully will have a clear pathway on how to do this by July.
- Karen Silver – may lose rapport and relationships from long-term service on regional councils. Diane: will start with existing regional councils. Won’t be difficult to identify employers, but want to make sure have the right employers. DWS will still make sure have the right partners at the table. Still use representation from community groups.
- Disband regional council and have replacement statute have requirements for community groups. Have visited with AOGs and county commissions throughout the state. – On the table to have this requirement as part of the statute.
- Dave Lewis – drew up service areas – trying to drill down and narrow the territory – understand where the economic activity is. Use existing funding streams to get customers in fields/occupations that will lead to gainful employment. Having discussions with local government and communities to get a better understanding of economic activity. Have senior mgmt team selected – 6 area directors running 9 service areas.
- One-Stop Administrative Concept – moving away from “Employment Center Manager” term and are not going to call them that in Workforce Development – managers within all divisions to participate in managing the facilities and being a “one-stop administrator.” All managers will participate in this function. Creates efficiency across facilities with a statewide management group.
- “Connection Teams” - Have really integrated eligibility, UI and training in front office – going to have them cross-trained and be able to help customer with everything up front. So goal is that they should only have to talk to one person that is trained overall in everything. All frontline staff will have this broader training. Will train all staff across state in June, and will take a couple months to get it rolling. Want to reduce customer confusion and make the experience better for them.

I:45 Utah's Back to Work Initiative (Connie Laws, Bill Starks)

- Look at ways to stimulate job growth. Looked at “Georgia Works” model – more focused on training unemployed workers, using training stipend. Not so crazy about this model, but looking more like the “Texas” back to work initiative. Use ARRA funding to provide UI wage subsidy to individuals on UI with intent to get them off UI. Targeting about 2,500 unemployed UI claimants – employer gets a \$500 incentive subsidy if hire someone and \$1,500 more if retain them for four months.
- Can be linked to federal program that incentivizes hiring. Would market Utah program in conjunction with that to provide bigger incentive to employers. Focus on employers that are “emerging” = have a history of hiring. Have to be in good standing on UI as well (not owe any back money). Will be marketing specifically here. Would not be focusing on temporary services or professional services (head hunters/etc). Not mandatory to retain, but primary goal is that they will retain employee, so not want to focus on seasonal or temp work. Use Reed Act funds and ARRA TANF funds. Hoped to do it with no eligibility, but probably will have to limit

- it to claimants that make under \$15.00 an hour and have a dependent child. Want them to have a minimum of 10 weeks of UI left. This should have a better effect on the UI Trust Fund.
- Figure will be marketed to 7-800 a week and about 1,500 employers statewide that meet the criteria.
 - Sheila – how selecting industry? Bill – Healthcare is one of the big ones. First requirement is that it is an industry that is hiring, and then eliminated those with a lot of layoffs. Removed temp services, retail sales, construction. Asked that they pay \$9 per hour at least, not want to subsidize minimum wage jobs. Healthcare was the number one. Not allow government entities to participate. New pilot, just a one-year. Hopefully get 2,500 people back to work. Will be tracking the outcomes, comparing average weeks of unemployment. Save about \$3.5 million on the trust fund. Can use wage data to see where they are each quarter and ask employer to say whether or not they are retaining the person.
 - Melissa – how to make sure people are “job ready” so they will be retained at the jobs. Connie – do have a work history because are receiving unemployment, but would have to qualify for TANF – non-FEP TANF folks.
 - Connie Laws – Youth version of this program – similar funding to serve individuals 18-24. [Sheila – should really change the name because these are not “youth”]. Will have funding for this group – TANF ARRA funds – focus will be to prevent out-of-wedlock birth. Won’t necessarily have to do eligibility for this population and won’t need to be attached to UI. Can target around 700 in that population. Pretty same as the Back to Work program – still \$500/\$1,500 incentive to employers.
 - Youth Summer Internship - Have a very small amount of ARRA WIA youth funds to run small summer stimulus internship program similar to last year. Can run about 125 customers over the summer – will be distributed to SW and Central UT (used to be Western) and 1/3rd to Wasatch Front South – mainly focused on refugee youth. Stipend goes directly to youth, nothing to employers.
 - Other initiatives – UI help desk – working with UI claimants – instead of just directing them to a computer, will get more direct help. Some enhanced screens in YouWorks.
 - Applied for an REA Grant (Reemployment Grant - \$1.3 million) – will profile claimants most likely to exhaust their UI benefits – (often are higher wage folks that are profiled here – have a UI “profiling model” have used for years). Then will give online orientation and assessment, asked to come in and meet with an employment specialist, go over self-assessment, work a workplan up with them, resume, workshops, etc. Make sure are doing necessary things to be reemployed, do 10,000 for the year and compare with 10,000 person control group.
 - RES technology upgrade project – using about \$500,000 ARRA stimulus funds to upgrade technology that will be ongoing benefit to DWS and not just one-time staffing for a year. Upgrade software in unemployment/job system – autocoder

software to better identify skills and abilities into a code and employers will have more accurate coding for hiring. As part of weekly filing, will match individual's skills with employers and give them jobs to contact as part of the job reporting process.

1:55 Basic Job Skills (Karen Silver)

A need for basic job skills such as basic literacy & computer skills is always a need for many DWS customers to attain employment. How does DWS provide this skill training? Is there a way to use some Reed Act dollars for re-employment?

- Karen – can Reed Act be used to focus on basic literacy/computer skills for reemployment? Bill Starks – Reed Act is used for the same as Wagner-Peyser which is reemployment.
- What can DWS do to promote these basics? Bill Greer – we do have some now. Karen – says has never seen this.
- [ask Connie Laws to address this next month]

2:05 Legislative Impacts (Bill Greer)

- a) General Assistance
- b) Unemployment Insurance

Some of the federal bills will impact DWS – including healthcare. --- *** Joint topic for next meeting****

2:20 FY 2011 DWS Budget (Bill Greer)

DWS took on-going cut of \$3.3 million, but did give \$2 million from Spec Admin Fund for Reemployment. DWS took a \$6.6 million cut from General Funds this year. Medicaid applications jumped 1.6% in one month. Seeing about a 12% increase this year for Medicaid. FS is still growing as well, over 35% growth over last 5 months – good news is that YTD – GF for FS and Medicaid – are about 8-13% down from where we were last year – so creation of ESD is having a positive impact on budget and savings.

Deficit for this year, even with legislative cuts – are down about \$1.1 million! Last year it was \$14.5 million – this is due to the cost savings that DWS has found, does not include the TANF MOE that will use to get through the end of the year.

One-time funding for GA has gone away, but planning on funding at \$4.9 million with TANF MOE to run it through the next year.

Workforce Development division – hoping to see savings from this as did with ESD. Reduction of about 40 FTE in Workforce Development division. “DWS is a train on a track racing towards a bridge that we know is out and the driver of the train is named ‘caseload’.”

Sheila – how many other states are using TANF MOE how we are? Bill Greer says there are at least a half dozen that he is aware of.

Bill Starks – UI – jobs bill expired 4/5, Congress on recess.

Bill Greer – Health analyst at Leg Fiscal Analysts – what will impact be on Medicaid, and also identify advocates and community groups who are interested in this issue – let them know if interested in this – by April 21st.