

**MINUTES OF THE  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND WORKFORCE SERVICES INTERIM COMMITTEE**

Wednesday, June 19, 2013 – 2:30 p.m. – Room 20 House Building

**Members Present:**

Sen. Aaron Osmond, Senate Chair  
Rep. Rebecca P. Edwards, House Chair  
Sen. Patricia W. Jones  
Sen. Stuart C. Reid  
Sen. Brian E. Shiozawa  
Sen. Jerry W. Stevenson  
Rep. Jim Bird  
Rep. Rich Cunningham  
Rep. Lynn N. Hemingway  
Rep. Bradley G. Last

Rep. Ronda Rudd Menlove  
Rep. Kraig Powell  
Rep. Angela Romero  
Rep. Dean Sanpei  
Rep. Brad R. Wilson

**Staff Present:**

Mr. Benjamin N. Christensen, Policy Analyst  
Mr. Peter L. Asplund, Associate General  
Counsel  
Ms. Debra Hale, Legislative Secretary

**Note:** A list of others present, a copy of related materials, and an audio recording of the meeting can be found at [www.le.utah.gov](http://www.le.utah.gov).

**1. Committee Business**

Chair Edwards called the meeting to order at 3:20 p.m.

**MOTION:** Rep. Cunningham moved to approve the minutes of the May 15, 2013, meeting. The motion passed unanimously. Sen. Reid, Sen. Stevenson, and Rep. Wilson were absent for the vote.

**2. Department of Workforce Services Assistance Programs**

Mr. Asplund and Mr. Geoffrey Landward, Deputy Director, Department of Workforce Services (DWS), briefed the committee on a written report "Department of Workforce Services Assistance Programs," which was prepared by the Office of Legislative Research and General Counsel and given to each committee member. As illustrated in the report, Mr. Asplund and Mr. Landward discussed the 19 public assistance programs administered by the DWS or that DWS determines eligibility for the Department of Health to administer. They reviewed the summary describing each program's purpose, eligibility requirements, benefit amounts and restrictions, state and federal spending, administrative contact information, and statutory citations.

**3. Department of Workforce Services -- Structure, Mission, Duties, Goals, and Concerns**

Mr. Jon S. Pierpont, Executive Director, Department of Workforce Services, discussed a visual presentation and handout "State of Utah – Department of Workforce Services" and DWS's mission statement and commitment. He reviewed data of each of the department's divisions, showed the department's office locations, explained operating strategies, gave an operational update, described eligibility services for public assistance, and reported on savings from case closures of November 2011 and September 2012.

Mr. Pierpont said that between November 2011 and September 2012, 26,000 temporary assistance cases were closed with savings of \$700,000 in staffing and administrative costs, \$14 million in food stamp payments, and \$400 million retained in Unemployment Insurance Trust Funds.

Mr. Pierpont invited committee members to attend the World Refugee Day on Saturday, June 22, 2013, from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at Liberty Park, to celebrate the unique insight and contribution of Utah's refugees. Mr. Pierpont noted that Thurl Bailey will be featured as Special Ambassador at the event. He

said that entrance to the event is free and open to the public, and further information can be accessed at [worldrefugeedayutah.wordpress.com](http://worldrefugeedayutah.wordpress.com).

#### **4. Unemployment Insurance Program**

Mr. Christensen reviewed a visual presentation and handout "Employment Security Act – Utah Code Title 35, Chapter 4." He described the Employment Security Act, which provides an employment benefit for employees who are terminated through no fault of their own. He discussed the Unemployment Insurance (UI) program, including its purpose, function, benefit eligibility, duration, trust fund information, and tax facts.

Mr. Bill Starks, Director, Unemployment Insurance Division, Department of Workforce Services, reviewed a handout with further information on the Unemployment Insurance division. He explained that the state benefit is for a maximum of 26 weeks and is funded by unemployment insurance contributions collected from employers. He said the amount of the contributions is calculated by a formula based on the wages of each employee and is deposited into the Unemployment Insurance Trust Fund and that the average contribution rate for 2011 was 0.85% of total wages for that year. Mr. Starks concluded with a review of departmental recommendations for statutory changes.

#### **5. General Assistance Program**

Mr. Pierpont explained the state-funded General Assistance Program and stated that it provides cash assistance to adults who, because of physical or mental impairment, are unable to work and are not eligible for other cash assistance. He said that the maximum amount of cash assistance is \$287 per month for an individual, \$398 per month for a household of two, and is limited to 12 months of benefits in any 60-month period.

Mr. Bill Tibbitts, Director, Anti-Hunger Advocacy Project, and Associate Director, Crossroads Urban Center, stressed that the General Assistance Program fills a gap in the community and has been very successful in assisting people to find employment who would otherwise be on the street.

#### **6. Housing and Community Development Programs**

This item was postponed.

#### **7. Child Care Subsidy Program**

Mr. Geoffrey Landward, Deputy Director, Department of Workforce Services, described the Parent-to-Parent Child Care Assistance Program, a federal program which provides funding for child care to low-income parents who meet eligibility requirements and are employed or attending school or a training program. He also described the benefits of federal after-school programs.

Mr. Landward explained that the Utah Professional Development Program's purpose for early education child care is to increase the quality of the caregivers by providing training, curriculum, and incentives.

Ms. Debbie Tilley, Tilley Time Childcare, Taylorsville, Utah, stressed her concern that grants only last one year. She stated that her program is required to follow 325 rules and regulations, with 2,000 interpretations, and that government-funded competition is hurting her business. Although licensing is not

expensive, she added, she is not reimbursed by the state for 25% of the children she cares for because of how difficult it is to follow system requirements.

8. Single Audit Management Letter Findings

This item was postponed.

**9. Other Committee Business/Adjourn**

**MOTION:** Rep. Bird moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed unanimously. Sen. Jones, Sen. Reid, Sen. Shiozawa, Sen. Stevenson, and Rep. Wilson were absent for the vote. Chair Edwards adjourned the meeting at 5:17 p.m.