

Workforce Information Advisory Council

Summary of Meeting

July 13-14, 2016

Washington, D.C.

The Workforce Information Advisory Council (WIAC) was convened for its inaugural meeting at 9:00 A.M. on July 13, 2016 at the Janet Norwood Conference and Training Center, Postal Square Building, Washington D.C. The Council was convened pursuant to Section 308 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 (WIOA) (Pub. L. 113-128), which amends section 15 of the Wagner-Peyser Act of 1933 (29 U.S.C. § 491-2) and in accordance with the provisions of the Federal Advisory Committee Act, as amended (5 U.S.C. App.) and its implementing regulation at 41 CFR 102-3.

Mr. Steven Rietzke, Chief, Division of National Programs, Tools, and Technical Assistance (DNPTTA), Employment and Training Administration (ETA), and Designated Federal Officer (DFO) for the Council, convened the meeting and chaired the first morning's activities prior to the morning break. This portion of the meeting was closed to the public while the members were briefed on their legal responsibilities and obligations, and those of the Council. The remainder of the meeting was open to the public and concluded at 4:00 P.M on July 14, 2016.

In Attendance:

Members of the Workforce Information Advisory Council

Aaron Fichtner, New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development

Bruce Madson, Ohio Department of Job and Family Services

Ellen Golombek, Colorado Department of Labor and Employment

Pamela Bucy, Montana Department of Labor and Industry

Graham Slater, Oregon Employment Department (Chair)

Cynthia Forland, Washington State Employment Security Department

Brenda Lisbon, South Carolina Department of Employment and Workforce

Mathew Barewicz, Vermont Department of Labor

Angela Pate, University of Florida Startup Quest, OwnForce, Inc.

Jennifer Zeller¹, Georgia Power

Mark McKeen, General Motors

¹ Ms. Zeller was absent on the second morning and attended the second afternoon by teleconference call.

Chelsea Orvella, Society of Professional Engineering Employees in Aerospace
Bruce Ferguson, CareerSource of Northeast Florida
Andrew Reamer, George Washington Institute of Public Policy

Invited Speakers

Chris Lu, Deputy Secretary of Labor
Portia Wu, Assistant Secretary of Labor, ETA
Erica Groshen, Commissioner of Labor Statistics
Mike Horrigan, Associate Commissioner for the Office of Employment and
Unemployment Statistics, Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS)
Amanda Ahlstrand, Administrator for the Office of Workforce Investment, ETA
Joseph Plick, Office of the Solicitor, USDOL
Zach Mancher, Office of the Solicitor, USDOL
Byron Zuidema, Deputy Assistant Secretary, ETA

Staff

Steve Rietzke, Chief, DNPTTA, ETA (DFO)	Alex Nallin, ETA
Don Haughton, ETA	Lester Coffey, Coffey Consulting, LLC
Pam Frugoli, ETA	Roger Therrien, Coffey Consulting, LLC
Lauren Fairley, ETA	Dani Abdullah, Coffey Consulting, LLC
Simi Atolagbe, ETA	Abby Miller, Coffey Consulting, LLC
Bob Viegas, ETA	Mason Erwin, Coffey Consulting, LLC
Mike DeMale, ETA	

Members of the Public Offering Comments or Called Upon to Address the Council

Dr. Kenneth Poole, Executive Director, LMI Institute/Council for Community and
Economic Research (C2ER)
Scott Cheney, Policy Director, Workforce and Economic Development, Senate HELP
Committee
Douglas J. Holmes, President, UWC – Strategic Services on Unemployment & Workers’
Compensation
Charles McGrew, National Center for Education Statistics, Department of Education

Others Attending for All or a Portion of the Meeting

Travis Johnston, Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committee
Amy Nussbaum, American Statistical Association
Rebecca Rust, Assistant Commissioner, Occupational Employment Statistics and
Projections, BLS

Jason Palmer, Michigan Bureau of Labor Market Information and Strategic Initiatives

Elijah Moreno, National Congress of American Indians

Josie Link, National Association of State Workforce Agencies (NASWA)

Christina Pena, Workforce Data Quality Campaign (WDQC)

Tiffany Smith, ETA

Kim Jones, Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics (LEHD), Census Bureau

Hayden Springer, Center for Regional Economic Competitiveness (CREC)

Andrew Rogers, Center for Regional Economic Competitiveness (CREC)

Tom Crowley, ADP and the National Payroll Reporting Consortium (NPRC)

M. Manning, ETA

R. Sienkiewicz, Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics (LEHD), Census Bureau

Emilda Rivers, National Center for Science and Engineering Statistics (NCSES),

National Science Foundation (NSF)

David Weissbaum, Senate HELP Committee

Monique Nassallah, Government Accountability Office (GAO)

John Marotta, Center for Regional Economic Competitiveness (CREC)

Day One Proceedings

Members' Briefing

MR. RIETZKE convened the meeting of the Workforce Information Advisory Council (WIAC), welcomed the members, and provided opening remarks on the agenda for the first day. The members introduced themselves, and the WIAC was briefed on the responsibilities and obligations of the Council and its members by representatives from the Office of the Solicitor for the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL).

MR. RIETZKE then briefed the members on the charges and other pertinent information from the WIAC charter, noting the Council's charge to provide recommendations to the Secretary of Labor for improving the nationwide workforce and labor market information (WLMI) system. In the discussion that followed, it was established that: the Council's recommendations could exceed the current legal and budgetary authority of the Employment and Training Administration provided that the recommendations were relevant and acknowledged the pertinent constraints; that the Council members were required to be selected to ensure, among other things, representation of primary stakeholder groups and geographic diversity of state workforce investment agency and workforce and labor market information representatives; and that the Designated Federal Officer (DFO) would take primary responsibility for releasing reports on Council activities, but members were free to inform others of Council activities provided that they do so as individual members and not as representatives on behalf of the WIAC.

Guest Speakers

After the morning break, the Council welcomed several invited guest speakers from the federal agencies with principal responsibilities for the nationwide WLMI system.

ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF LABOR PORTIA WU expressed her excitement at the talent assembled on the Council. **MS. WU** noted the important role of the Council in advising the Secretary on use of LMI and in recommending strategic improvements to the WLMI system. She added that the Council's recommendations would come at a good time with respect to coming updates to the states' workforce investment plans. She advised the members to make a range of recommendations, from long-term structural investments to short-term approaches that would maximize existing resources and to take full advantage of the federal staff assigned to the Council. She closed her remarks by reminding the Council that the Workforce Opportunity and Innovation Act (WIOA) was the first update to the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) in a long time and so represented a major opportunity for improvements and alignment among programs and agencies, and thanked the members for their service.

COMMISSIONER OF LABOR STATISTICS ERICA GROSHEN welcomed the members to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) building and expressed her thanks to the Council, gathered speakers, and Council staff. **MS. GROSHEN** explained that BLS must provide WLMI data that are accurate, objective, relevant, timely, and accessible, "which spells AORTA, because data is the lifeblood of our economic system." She further noted the importance of WIAC's input in helping BLS balance the needs of many data customers while working to ease reporting burdens on business and protect privacy. BLS, she pointed out, oversees national and state statistical programs that produce a wide variety of economic indicators at the national, state and sub-state level, in partnership with the states, but the only forecasts prepared by BLS are of national occupational employment. She emphasized the important distinction in the make-up of WIAC, which formalized the inclusion of a broader set of stakeholders as contrasted with its predecessor, the Workforce Information Council (WIC). She closed her remarks by noting several new BLS initiatives, including a new Contingent Workers Survey, thanking the members for their service, and encouraging the WIAC to be bold in its recommendations.

Next, **ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER FOR THE OFFICE OF EMPLOYMENT AND UNEMPLOYMENT STATISTICS MIKE HORRIGAN** addressed the Council. **MR. HORRIGAN** began by describing the data needs coming out of WIOA, which he identified as a new focus on regional planning and labor market areas and occupation data. He also noted that the law included numerous references to: labor market projections, identifying employer needs for site location as well as for skilled workers, measuring skill and workforce

gaps, and aligning training providers with market needs. He then turned to providing an overview of the agencies and programs that make up the “world of LMI.”

Referring to slides, **MR. HARRIGAN** described the interconnected relationships between ETA, BLS and state WLMI agencies, which will take input from the Council. He noted the wide array of customers, stakeholders, and statistical programs that are administered by these agencies. As an example of how WIAC could support the efforts of these organizations, **MR. HARRIGAN** suggested the possibility that data from the Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW), overseen by a BLS Labor Market Information Oversight Council (BLOC) policy council, could be used to develop maps of where to find in-demand jobs based on input from WIAC on the definition of in-demand jobs. **MR. SLATER** interjected that the data used in the QCEW program are state data drawn from state unemployment insurance programs so activities like this would be done in collaboration with the state LMI agencies. Mr. Harrigan also described efforts underway to add new capabilities to a variety of other BLS statistical programs.

ADMINISTRATOR FOR THE OFFICE OF WORKFORCE INVESTMENT AMANDA AHLSTRAND then addressed the Council on the workforce development system authorized by WIOA. After thanking the members, she noted the opportunity for WIAC to offer strategic advice on collecting data to support actionable information that would facilitate pushing decision-making to the lowest level possible. She noted that workforce efforts continued seamlessly through the transition to WIOA, but that the new legislation had brought a new focus on regional perspectives and increased alignment of programs, and that the state planning process offered an opportunity to disseminate best practices.

MS. AHLSTRAND then delineated some of the levels in the workforce system, emphasizing the difference between formula and competitive funding and the effects they have on stakeholder responses, noting the presence of both broad, universal services as well as services targeted to specific populations. She also drew the Council’s attention to the variety of customers served by the workforce system, including job seekers, businesses, and service providers, and emphasized the key role of business as a strategic and goal-setting partner. She concluded by noting the importance of effective communication between federal agencies and stakeholders in the workforce system in light of the release of the new WIOA regulations and requested WIAC’s input on how to do so effectively.

The Council then received remarks from **DEPUTY SECRETARY OF LABOR CHRIS LU**. **MR. LU** expressed his thanks to the members and staff and pointed out the valuable role that advisory committees like WIAC play in bringing in new ideas to government operations. He especially noted the importance of continuous improvement in the synthesis and dissemination of the wealth of data produced at the federal and state

level in light of the passage of WIOA, and noted that implementation of the new law would also be critical. He emphasized the importance of modernizing the process by which data are disseminated, citing the work of the International Labor Affairs Bureau in converting its compendium on child labor conditions from a “phone book” to a mobile app and highlighted the role that the WIAC could play in advancing that effort.

During the subsequent discussion with Council members, **MS. PATE** commented on the opportunity to use business employment dynamics to help identify job opportunities, and **MS. GOLOBEK** called on the Council to help bring in partners from the education community. **DR. REAMER** inquired about how the Council’s recommendations would relate to the incoming Secretary’s two-year plan for the WLMI system. **MR. BAREWICZ** noted the difficulty that small states with limited resources have carrying out performance accounting under WIOA, and noted the misleading nature of top-line indicators when the underlying populations are not taken into account. **MS. WU** replied that while she could not speak for the incoming Secretary, various agencies would be providing input to the new administration and that the Council might consider meetings or a subcommittee focused on workforce data interfaces with education data and inviting experts on education statistics. **MR. LU** encouraged the members to bring in the expertise available through their own networks. He further noted that the work of the career staff associated with WIAC would help smooth the transition and that he did not anticipate major changes in priorities.

Member Introductions

MR. RIETZKE introduced **MR. SLATER** as the inaugural Chair of the WIAC, and **MR. SLATER** assumed the duties of the Chair. **MR. SLATER** then led the members through a round of formal introductions during which the members discussed their reasons for volunteering for the Council, how they use WLMI, and some of their preferred WLMI sources. Some themes that emerged from the introductions included developing more granular, timely and predictive WLMI data to better support decisions by policy makers for training and economic development and to better aid job seekers and employers. The most commonly referenced data sources included BLS products; Census products; unemployment insurance (UI) administrative data, especially wage records; and special surveys; and also included occupational employment, wages and demand; data from on-line job postings and administrative data from employment services programs; the Job Openings and Labor Turnover (JOLTS) survey; OnTheMap; and state workforce and education longitudinal data systems.

The members of the public and staff present then introduced themselves, at **MR. SLATER’S** request.

LMI Directors' and Workforce Agency Heads' Remarks

MR. SLATER invited remarks from the LMI directors present on the Council. **MS. FORLAND** described her department's efforts to utilize big data in response to tightening budgetary constraints, noting that they produce 5-year projections in addition to 2- and 10-year projections. She also stated that they begin their labor supply and demand analysis by looking at UI and One Stop data rather than educational records, which has contributed to her interest in using skills rather than matching occupational and program codes to identify supply and demand. **MR. BAREWICZ** spoke to some of the challenges facing the WLMI system in a very small state, including the variety of tasks that fall on a small staff with very limited resources and their limited capacity to make use of new WLMI sources due to the limits of statistical methods with respect to a small population, noting the TAACCCT grant evaluations as an example. **MS. LISBON** described how her department is currently implementing a data warehouse to meet new reporting demands brought about by a recent agency change that added performance reporting to their responsibilities in addition to their traditional reporting and BLS partnership activities. She also noted that WLMI has only recently been brought to the forefront of policy making in her state by a shift in leadership priorities within the state. Speaking in his role as an LMI director, **MR. SLATER** noted the unique conditions his department enjoys in Oregon due to a supplementary funding stream, which enables them to do things other state LMI offices are not able to do like produce occupational prioritization guidance for community colleges, locate LMI staff at the regional offices and workforce investment boards (WIBs) to act as local resources, and maintain dedicated technical staff to develop and enhance a successful WLMI website for the state.

MR. SLATER then invited comments from members who are workforce department heads. **MR. FICHTNER** related how, in recent years, his department's WLMI office transformed its operations to facilitate answering important questions than rather simply collecting and reporting data. Steps they have taken included developing industry experts by assigning some WLMI staff members to specific sectors and moving others in with their performance and evaluation staff, as opposed to housing them with the BLS data collection staff, to create an analytics group. **MS. BUCY** related recent efforts her department has made to produce unemployment rates for their Indian reservations to better address their poverty issues. She also described an increased effort to better market their data products to end users who sometimes turn to commercial vendors for data that is available without cost from her department. **MR. MADSON** described his department's efforts to transition the housing of longitudinal education and workforce databases, originally collected under now expired grants, to public universities. He also noted their emphasis on validating occupational growth projections with major business stakeholders. **MS. GOLOMBEK** indicated that her

department also validates projections through existing sector partnerships, and noted her department's success publicizing data products through the media despite highly constrained funding.

Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) Roundtable

MR. SLATER led the members in a fast-paced SWOT roundtable, asking the members to each name three to five current strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, or threats to the nationwide WLMI system. The resulting SWOT list is appended to the minutes as Appendix A.

Following the SWOT Roundtable discussion, the Council recessed for the day.

Day Two Proceedings

Discussion of the Council's Charter and Regulatory Charges

MR. SLATER reconvened the meeting at 9:00 A.M. with introductory remarks about the day's agenda, and noted that **MS. ZELLER** would be absent in the morning but would rejoin the afternoon session by telephone. He then asked **MR. RIETZKE** for remarks concerning the Council's charter.

MR. RIETZKE stated that the charter provided two main objectives: the first being to advise the Secretary on how to improve the nationwide workforce and LMI system and associated statewide systems, and the second being to advise the department on how it and the states will cooperate to manage that system. He further noted additional duties, including studying workforce and LMI issues, looking at innovative approaches and new technologies, and ensuring data being available to inform employment and skills training and workforce and economic development decision making and policy.

MR. RIETZKE proceeded by describing the role of WIAC in the development of the Secretary's two-year plan, adding that he sees WIAC's input as being a driving force in the formation of the plan in addition to the Council's role in providing feedback on the plan, once produced. He stated that the plan would address the coordination by the states and the Secretary in the development and implementation of the plan, as well as evaluation of the performance of the nationwide WLMI system. Additionally, the plan would also take into account state planning activities.

In the discussion following **MR. RIETZKE's** remarks, **MS. FORLAND** and **MR. FICHTNER** highlighted WIAC's role in improving ETA's guidance to the states for the preparation of their two-year plans and better aligning data collection programs so that states would have the data needed to meet ETA's expectations. **MR. MADSON** noted that the states had generally treated their initial two-year plans as compliance checklists, and

MS. GOLOMBEK added that WIAC could play a role in improving the checklist established by ETA to encourage innovation and creativity in the state plans. **MR. RIETZKE** and **MR. MADSON** also discussed WIAC's role in defining UI and other data elements and the need to address changes in regulations that would be needed to accommodate any of the Council's recommendations.

MR. SLATER asked **DR. REAMER** for additional remarks regarding the Council's charges. **DR. REAMER** noted the 11 mandated charges and 12 suggested charges to the Council coming out of WIOA. He also noted that a separate section of WIOA directs the WLMI system to ensure information is available on job opportunities, relevant skills, and in-demand occupations and their skills and wages, as well as the grants to support the WLMI system with a focus on regional WLMI needs. The charge to the Council, he noted, is to advise the Secretary on how to implement the system. **DR. REAMER** concluded by asking for further clarification on the workflow for the development of the plan and incorporation of WIAC in the process.

In the ensuing discussion, it was noted that neither the law nor the regulations provide a deadline for the Secretary to produce the two-year plan, and that it might be beneficial to align the timing of the recommendations and the plan with the state planning cycle. Furthermore, the recommendations should take into account state planning activities and related ETA guidance, in particular, to ensure that data needed by the states are available, but that it need not address specific items from one or more state plans. It was suggested that WIAC seek input from the broader group of LMI Directors, and that the Council had an opportunity to set innovative strategic goals for the WLMI system, beyond immediate state planning needs. **MR. FICHTNER** also suggested discussion of additional products to be generated by the Council. Following a comment from **MS. PATE**, the Council also discussed the extent to which its activities might extend beyond data, strictly defined, to touch upon ensuring that related programs provide data that meet the needs for evaluation of workforce and economic development programs.

Foundational Questions Roundtable

MR. SLATER asked **MR. FICHTNER** to share his thoughts on the foundational questions that the nationwide WLMI system should answer. **MR. FICHTNER** suggested a framework that began with three main groups of questions: one around the state of the economy and the structure of work; one around the workforce and supply of labor and the intersectional question about gaps between the supply and demand of labor, i.e. in-demand jobs; and one around the evaluation of education and training programs. He also suggested the characteristics of the unemployed with regard to target populations as an important issue.

DR. REAMER then proposed an alternative framework based on the decisions made by end-users in the labor market and the information needed for them to make those decisions. He suggested starting with educators and students to define a list of WLMI customers and how they use WLMI to make decisions. **MR. FICHTNER** suggested that the customers and questions of interest to **DR. REAMER** could potentially be categorized within the framework he proposed as a first step. **MR. SLATER** noted that similar work had been done by the Workforce Information Council (WIC). **MR. BAREWICZ** asked **DR. KENNETH POOLE** of the Labor Market Information Institute (LMI Institute) for additional information on the LMI Institute's related work for the WIC, and **DR. POOLE** stated that the LMI Institute had prepared a report which included a matrix of six types of customers. **MS. GOLOMBEK** noted the complementarity between the proposals, and suggested that the analysis begin with business and employers, as they drive state economies. **MS. PATE** reiterated the importance of focusing on business as a primary customer and on effective dissemination of data.

During the discussion, **MR. MADSON** pointed out the potential impact of data that identify the link between educational and workforce development investments and economic development in a political environment. **MR. FERGUSON** noted that the speed, at which data products were needed to make informed decisions, was accelerating, suggesting the necessity for data to support predictive capabilities. **MS. LISBON** noted the need for clarification of WLMI related definitions and terminology. **MR. BAREWICZ** suggested that the Council weigh in on forthcoming data collection programs before they begin, in particular the conversion of Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) to a time series.

Guest speaker

MR. SLATER welcomed **DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR THE EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING ADMINISTRATION BYRON ZUIDEMA** to address the Council. **MR. ZUIDEMA** noted that WIOA was a significant expansion of the workforce system which brought in new partners including BLS and other federal agencies. He further observed that WIOA had expanded the client base for workforce information. He added that, despite comfort with the current data products and approaches to state planning, it would be necessary to transform data into stories accessible by this new customer base. **MR. ZUIDEMA** thought that the adjustment would require dealing with the tension between performance and innovation by all stakeholders. He encouraged WIAC to help ETA assume a helpful role of providing technical assistance, rather than compliance assurance, and help think about defining realistic expectations for performance within the population and economic context down to the local level.

Following **MR. ZUIDEMA'S** comments, he responded to questions and comments from members. **MR. ZUIDEMA** indicated that the Secretary was looking forward to the Council's recommendations, and that the importance of the Council's input to the department's overall mission would transcend upcoming leadership changes. **MR. ZUIDEMA** noted that ETA is interested in meeting increasing demands for real-time analytics and data customizable to individual needs. He added that the agency is interested in helping state and local boards better understand and utilize WLMI data. Further, WIAC was a good venue to not only enhance the existing conversations between economic development agencies and workforce development agencies but also to create a model and a convincing story linking the two.

MR. SLATER then called upon **SCOTT CHENEY, WORKFORCE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT POLICY DIRECTOR FOR THE SENATE HELP COMMITTEE** for further comments on the Congressional intent behind WIOA. **MR. CHENEY** emphasized the affirmative steps taken in the legislation, to include: discontinuing the WIC, retaining an advisory council, and reformatting the Council to include a broader set of stakeholders, noting the hope that the Council would take this as a bold mandate to help make the work of BLS more relevant and make WLMI serve the needs of a broader customer base. He also noted the explicit omission of a deadline for the Secretary's two-year plan and specification of products to be produced by the Council, noting the goal to allow the Council to be adaptive.

In response to a question from **MS. PATE**, **MR. CHENEY** identified the avoidance of federal workforce investment dollars being used to move businesses from one state to another as the reason for the prohibition in use of WIOA funds for economic development, but expressed a desire for WIAC to address how WLMI data can be used to support economic development decisions. In response to a question from **DR. REAMER**, he expressed a hope that WIAC and a proposed commission investigating the potential for a federal data clearing house would inform each other in the pursuit of information to better support congressional decision-making and program evaluation.

MR. SLATER next asked for comments from the members regarding innovative approaches and new technologies for data to inform employment skills training and workforce and economic development decision making. **MR. MCKEEN** commented on the importance of helping end-users navigate large amounts of data through contemporary formats. He described efforts underway at his firm to use technology and websites to match up jobs and skills with job seekers emphasizing the use of video and features like forums that allow job seekers to talk to recruiters in real-time. **MS. FORLAND** described an ongoing effort in Washington State, in partnership with Monster Government Solutions, to incorporate customizable WLMI data into the state labor exchange. She emphasized the importance of ensuring that the public have access to

accurate and reliable WLMI data despite competition from potentially less reliable sources in the marketplace. **MR. BAREWICZ** agreed, noting the importance of avoiding mission creep. He cautioned the Council to be mindful that WLMI data may also be used in an advocacy role by members of the public, and emphasized that the Council's discussions of education in general should be taken to include career technical education.

Summary of Submitted Written Comments

MR. SLATER asked **MR. RIETZKE** to report on public comments received in advance of the meeting. **MR. RIETZKE** summarized comments received from **TOM CROWLEY** of ADP, representing the National Payroll Reporting Consortium, and from **DOUGLAS HOLMES** of UWC – Strategic Services on Unemployment and Workers' Compensation (UWC). He noted that the comments conveyed support for workforce development and the labor market information system, and described potential issues related to the feasibility, employer burden, and cost related to new employer reporting requirements identified in recent WIOA proposed regulations.

MR. SLATER then asked if anyone in the room would like to offer comments. At the request of **DR. REAMER**, **DR. POOLE** provided the Council with additional background on the LMI Institute, noting that the Institute is conducting projects around allowing federal agencies to access privacy protected information and identifying potential real-time analytics based on the National Labor Exchange (NLx) and would be pleased to be a resource to the Council on those and other matters.

Review of SWOT Roundtable

MR. SLATER asked the members to offer their top 3 to 5 priorities, referencing the SWOT analysis conducted on the prior day, the Council's proceeding discussions, and any other key issues. The outcomes of the roundtable are included in the minutes as Appendix B.

The ensuing discussion turned to data sharing. **MS. GOLOMBEK** emphasized that the Council's recommendations should keep in focus the sharing of WLMI data with data producers as well as other data producers sharing data with the WLMI system. **MS. BUCY** noted that she has found little basis for perceptions of legal limitations on data sharing beyond those for the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) and UI data and that a statement from the Secretary might help allay concerns. **MR. SLATER** added that his experience with a four state consortium supports her observation. **MS. GOLOMBEK** suggested that a statement from the Secretary might be included in the two-year plan. **MS. PATE** suggested data.gov may be a platform for sharing WLMI data for public use. **MS. FORLAND** noted that data.gov focuses on machine readable data and does not

directly address end-users, and **MR. HARRIGAN** added that some WLMI data did exist on the site, but was not certain how well it was maintained. **MS. PATE** suggested that new efforts to structure data on the Internet, such as those facilitated through schema.org, could help make data warehoused on data.gov more accessible to developers.

MS. GOLOMBEK also inquired as to whether a simple, easily digestible catalog of WLMI data products is generally available, which would be of particular value to uninitiated political appointees. Several members offered suggestions, and **MR. DEMALE** noted that ETA offers a website called LMI Central with some related information. **DR. REAMER** offered the LMI Institute's website as a potential resource. **MS. FORLAND** observed that a comprehensive catalog would necessarily contain so much information as to be overwhelming.

DR. REAMER commented on the interest in enhanced wage records and asked for input from those involved in related work. **MR. SLATER** noted that the WIC had commissioned some studies on wage records and customer groups and asked for further comment from **MR. HARRIGAN**. **MR. HARRIGAN** stated that two related efforts were moving forward under the auspices of the BLOC, one on skills and career pathways and one on enhanced wage records. He related a concern that asking employers to code occupations would create additional burden and could contribute to inaccuracies, but suggested that asking employers to add job titles for subsequent auto coding had potential. **MS. ZELLER** suggested that CareerBuilder has a tool in place to crosswalk from job titles to occupational codes, and **MR. HARRIGAN** acknowledged that a variety of systems were being considered. **MR. BAREWICZ** observed that use of auto coders could lead to a static mindset ill-suited to the changing workplace, noting that high-touch programs such as OES have been more successful. **MR. HARRIGAN** added that the approach currently under consideration automatically triggers an intervention for job titles with a low probability of a Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) code match, which could improve discovery of emerging jobs.

MR. SLATER then invited **DR. DOUGLAS HOLMES** of UWC to offer comments to the Council, in recognition of his having arrived at the publicly announced time for public comment. **DR. HOLMES** expressed UWC's pleasure with the incorporation of the business community on the Council along with state workforce agencies and its hope that WIAC recommendations would be specific and actionable and customer driven. He encouraged the members to consider the issues before them from the perspective of employers, including how they benefit from WLMI data and the costs and benefits to employers of additional state or federal reporting burdens. **DR. HOLMES** asked the Council to consider that UI reports are not typically prepared by employees who evaluate SOC codes, which could contribute to inaccuracies in the data, and that asking

employers to evaluate SOC codes for the entire workforce could be construed as a large unfunded mandate. He further asked members to think about how additional UI reporting requirements might affect UI administration. He encouraged the Council to take an approach that starts with employers and local WIOA boards and to work with them before coming up with a solution.

DR. REAMER asked **DR. HOLMES** how he thought employers viewed the benefits of enhanced wage records. **DR. HOLMES** stated that research has shown that only a small proportion of businesses actively use the public workforce system and that, therefore, the reporting cost to many businesses, especially smaller businesses with low turnover, did not compare favorably with the benefits. However, **DR. HOLMES** also noted that for employers who are very engaged in the public workforce system, the benefits can be significant, which he acknowledged presents a dilemma. He suggested that the solution will require a partnership between public and private actors, noting that most workforce training takes place in the private sector.

DR. REAMER added that it was important for the Council to keep in mind that the WLMI system must serve the decision-making needs of a broad range of customers, including community colleges and career technical education providers, not just employers or state workforce investment boards. He further underscored the need to connect the Council's recommendations to compelling rationales and benefits and to communicate those connections effectively.

Discussion of Action Items

Prior to beginning the scheduled discussion of action items, **MR. SLATER** invited **CHARLES MCGREW** of the National Center for Education Statistics, who had also arrived during the scheduled public comment period, to offer remarks to the Council.

MR. MCGREW expressed appreciation for the Council's consideration of two-way data sharing and noted forthcoming guidance from DOL and the Department of Education on sharing and linking of data. He encouraged the Council to look for ways to patch gaps caused by primary education not always having social security numbers for individuals. He added that pipeline studies have been conducted which could have been of benefit to employers had they received more attention and that interstate standards could facilitate sharing of data across state lines.

MS. FORLAND asked the Council whether members could receive updates on the forthcoming guidance being developed under the auspices of the Privacy Technical Assistance Center mentioned by **MR. MCGREW**. **DR. REAMER** inquired as to whether all the states represented on the Council had state longitudinal data systems and/or WDQI grants, to which all replied in the affirmative, but with a number of qualifications.

MR. SLATER then asked the members to offer any specific action items for the Council. **DR. REAMER** suggested a list of federal agencies, the data product and contacts. **MR. FICHTNER** called for an understanding of the Council's final product and deadline and a proposed framework to organize the Council's thinking. **MS. BUCY** suggested that the key issues identified earlier could be broken up into categories before the Council adjourned. **DR. REAMER** stated that he would like input from ETA and BLS on the process for the development of the Secretary's two-year plan. **MS. GOLOMBEK** added a request for a process and timeline. **MS. PATE** requested a copy of **MR. HARRIGAN'S** slides from the prior day, which **MR. HARRIGAN** indicated had been sent to **MR. SLATER** in the morning. **DR. REAMER** and **MS. FORLAND** suggested a monthly or even weekly digest of items of interest to the Council, which **MS. PATE** advocated posting online for the members.

Categorization of Key Issues and Roundtable Discussion

MR. SLATER asked **MS. BUCY** to lead the Council in categorizing the key issues identified in the morning, in accordance with her suggestion. The categorized issues are included in the minutes in Appendix B.

During the discussion, **MS. PATE** noted that during his remarks, **MR. ZUIDEMA** had indicated that there is research showing that workforce development inspires economic development, and that she would like for the Council to see it and to include economic development in the list of key issues. **MR. BAREWICZ** recalled **MR. CHENEY'S** observation that use of workforce development funding for economic development was prohibited in WIOA. After further discussion about the inclusion of economic development evaluation data in the nationwide WLMI system, **DR. REAMER** suggested as clarification of **MS. PATE'S** suggestion that the Council give consideration to data needed to allow for proper evaluation of workforce and economic development programs in general, suggesting that evaluators be considered a data customer.

In response to **DR. REAMER'S** question about evaluation funding, **MS. AHLSTRAND** noted that while previous legislation had required funding for evaluations, it had been common for states to receive waivers due to lack of funding. Presuming new funding would be made available under WIOA, she added that efforts would have to be undertaken around sharing and level setting for evaluation. She emphasized the important distinction between performance in terms of outcomes and evaluation. She went on to state that evaluations of paradigms such as sector strategies and career pathways were lacking due to funding limitations, but that it was not up to WIAC to resolve all the attendant issues.

The Council then discussed scheduling of future meetings and potential establishment of a planning subcommittee. **MR. HAUGHTON** noted that the Council could have two

meetings per fiscal year, suggesting one in the fall and one in spring, and could have subcommittee meetings by teleconference or online. It was also clarified that all currently serving members have at least two year appointments. **MR. RIETZKE** confirmed that staff would work on a proposed timeline for preparing recommendations, but requested additional input from the Council on the structure of the final written product to the Secretary.

DR. REAMER suggested that the Council could either write a draft of the two-year plan, or take a more collaborative approach developing the draft with ETA staff. He noted that the final product would need to address the requirements laid out in the legislation wherein the Council's primary role would be identifying priorities, but that the Council could also provide additional recommendations. **MR. HARRIGAN** stated that the consensus of the Council gives the recommendations added weight.

MR. SLATER then invited closing comments from the members. **MR. FICHTNER** expressed his gratitude to BLS and ETA for the opportunity to serve on the Council and urged the Council not to wait two years before putting out some products. **DR. REAMER** suggested that the chair appoint a planning committee of four to five members to work more closely with staff on process issues, and **MS. GOLOMBEK** suggested that such a subcommittee could also investigate interim deliverables.

MR. RIETZKE added his thanks to staff, the leadership at ETA and BLS, to the public in the gallery, and to all the members.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 4:00 P.M.

I hereby certify that, to the best of my knowledge, the foregoing minutes are accurate and complete.

Graham Slater

Chair

Workforce Information Advisory Council

These minutes will be formally considered by the Council at its next meeting, and any corrections or notations will be incorporated in the minutes of that meeting.

Appendix A. Summary of SWOT Analysis

Identification of Strengths, Weakness, Opportunities, and Threats

- **Strengths**
 - Data have high integrity
 - Data are the same from state to state
 - BLS provides good technical assistance to states
 - Overall Federal-State cooperative data collection structure
 - Generally apolitical data collection and production

- **Weaknesses**
 - Insufficient funding for LMI programs; BLS and ETA grants to states frozen for over a decade
 - Lack of communication among key partner agencies
 - Lack of funding threatens data consistency
 - Data does not adequately capture contingent workers
 - Sample-based occupational data lacks geographic and SOC category granularity
 - Current Employment Statistics (CES) data quality, anomalies, and volatility are problematic
 - Siloed funding sources that do not match workloads; lack of flexibility in use of funding
 - Insufficient use of infographics/data visualization
 - State education SLDS do not track interstate moves
 - Inability to track employment status of the self-employed
 - Federal silos that promulgate state silos, including those due to Federal laws (e.g., FERPA, HIPPA)
 - Inability to track and capture labor market hiring on social media
 - CPS sample size is too small to publish some useful data
 - Federal technical assistance to states in lieu of real infrastructure funding

- **Opportunities**
 - WIOA has created opportunities to discuss improvements in LMI
 - OES time series data to project occupational demand
 - Increased data sharing among agencies
 - New contingent worker survey
 - Leverage education SLDS to identify student success in obtaining employment

- Increased use of UI wage records
 - A way to combine UI wage records across state lines
 - Get ahead of rapidly changing industry staffing models
 - Ubiquity of electronic records make enhanced UI wage records possible
 - More occupational data linked to On-the Map
 - Allow BLS, like the Census Bureau, to access IRS data, to synchronize the data between the agencies
 - Build local leaders and stakeholders knowledge of data sources and data collection/development processes, and their understanding of why there are gaps Provide more assistance to states to understand data anomalies
 - WIOA can help break Federal silos, including those resulting from Federal laws (e.g., FERPA, HIPPA)
 - Create partnerships of workforce agencies with higher education; with employers to get feedback on trends; and with universities as analytic partners
 - Focus ETA funding on infrastructure building efforts
 - More effective way to disseminate BLS data, make it easier to access
 - Add occupational data to UI wage records
 - Encourage grant funders to ensure grant reporting requirements can be fulfilled by the states prior to issuance of the grant solicitation
 - Take advantage of a technology called the Semantic Web² to collect data from online job postings
- **Threats**
 - What we are measuring is changing faster than we can adapt to measure it
 - Privacy concerns and privacy-related restrictions on data; increasing risk of breach in privacy as confidential files are made available to more users
 - Rapid change in structure of workforce means we are missing a lot of data
 - Mission creep – trying to provide all things to all people
 - Over-centralization of data collection at Federal level
 - Missing the balance between just enough and too much information
 - Potential action by Congress to allow response to the American Community Survey to be voluntary would make data from it unreliable

² The term “Semantic Web” refers to the World Wide Web Consortium’s (W3C’s) vision of the Web of linked data. Semantic Web technologies enable people to create data stores on the Web, build vocabularies, and write rules for handling data. W3C is helping to build a technology stack to support a “Web of data,” the sort of data you find in databases. The ultimate goal of the Web of data is to enable computers to develop systems that can support trusted interactions over the network. (Retrieved from <http://www.w3.org/standards/semanticweb/>)

Appendix B. Key Issues Identified and Categorized by the Council

1. Funding
 - a. Flexibility in funding
 - b. Flat budget for data collection

2. Access to Data/Collaboration
 - a. Data Synchronization – BLS/IRS/Census; Federal and local
 - b. Data sharing
 - c. Relationship to BLOC
 - d. Coordinate with other actors in employment services universe
 - e. FERPA and data sharing agreements
 - f. Break down silos
 - i. Data sharing
 - ii. Tool coordination
 - g. Lack of communication among key partners (education and commerce)
 - h. Machine readable data – allows others to build on them
 - i. Catalog of data that is available – building on current efforts
 - j. Departmental encouragement to share data among organizations/entities
 - k. Laws/rules prevent info sharing for some organizations but not all

3. Data Quality
 - a. SOC Maintenance/updates – balance accuracy and frequency
 - b. Data quality
 - c. New approach to state estimates – hard to understand
 - d. Support new data – OES time series
 - e. Initiative favoring data quality
 - f. Better data at the local level
 - g. Potential for current workforce data by localized (county & state) level data – both performance/marketing to public
 - h. Over-centralization of data at the Federal level
 - i. More assistance in clarifying division of work
 - ii. Collection ‘silos’
 - i. Economic CES data at state level – new approach needed

4. Use of Data

- a. Encourage data use/engagement among producers
- b. LMI learning resources/modules (staff transitions)
- c. Modernize/make more accessible data warehouses (data.gov)
- d. Customer focus
- e. New tool development – apps, mobile
- f. Wage record – expansion of electronic tools
- g. Attention on customer experience – easily understandable data
- h. Need for infographic data visualization
- i. Using program/UI data in a more thoughtful way

5. Research/Data Gaps

- a. Add occupation to UI wage records
- b. Connect KSAs to demand – big data to enhance tools
- c. Modifications to BLS annual report
- d. Job quality – benefits, conditions
- e. Worker surveys
- f. Stronger, clearer crosswalks
 - i. How does this impact ‘new’ economy
 - ii. Auto coding = static state
- g. Burden/costs to data producers
- h. Cost benefit analyses of wage record enhancement – quantify return on investment
- i. “New” economy impacts
- j. The Future of Work
- k. Alternative work arrangements
- l. Contingent economy data
- m. Support new data – OES time series
- n. Workforce and economic development ROI
- o. Measuring buckets of skills needed per occupation/SOC
- p. How are current jobs changing?
- q. Worker requirements – is education properly preparing?
- r. Not good info on career pathways (skills/education/training)
- s. Not good info on job gaps