

## Work-A-Day Earn-A-Pay Task Force

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148<sup>th</sup> General Assembly  
October 12<sup>th</sup>, 2015  
Capital One B&O Building  
1 S. Market St., Wilmington, DE

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### Meeting Attendance

#### *Task Force Members*

Present	Email	Phone
George Krupanski, Chair	<a href="mailto:Gkrupanski@bgclubs.org">Gkrupanski@bgclubs.org</a>	302.658.1870
Representative Michael Mulrooney	<a href="mailto:Michael.Mulrooney@state.de.us">Michael.Mulrooney@state.de.us</a>	302.7444351
Patricia Cannon	<a href="mailto:Patricia.Cannon@state.de.us">Patricia.Cannon@state.de.us</a>	302.577.8485
Mark Kleinschmidt	<a href="mailto:kleinschmidt@ncccc.com">kleinschmidt@ncccc.com</a>	302.294.2068
Senator Robert Marshall	<a href="mailto:Robert.Marshall@state.de.us">Robert.Marshall@state.de.us</a>	302.577.8744

#### Absent

Senator David Sokola	<a href="mailto:David.Sokola@state.de.us">David.Sokola@state.de.us</a>	302.744.4286
Senator Bryant Richardson	<a href="mailto:Bryant.Richardson@state.de.us">Bryant.Richardson@state.de.us</a>	302.744.4298
Rev. Donald Morton	<a href="mailto:donald@themortonfirm.com">donald@themortonfirm.com</a>	302.658.9883

#### *Staff*

Katrina Cowart	<a href="mailto:Katrina.Cowart@state.de.us">Katrina.Cowart@state.de.us</a>	302.577.8718
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#### *Attendees*

	Organization	Phone
Porsha Wiggins	CTAC	N/A
Hope Bellamy	Hopes Academy	215-253-1898
Brahmin Jackson	Community Service Worker	302-357-7123
Sheila Griffin	New Destiny/IMAC	302-764-7036
Edwin Bool	N/A	302-690-6679
Elder Ty Johnson	CTAC	302-420-7889
Mahkies Booker	Warriors 4 Christ	302-932-5343
Jeffrey Thomas	Warriors 4 Christ	302-762-4003
Vernell Walts	Warriors 4 Christ	302-723-8864
Christopher X	NOI	302-669-7361
Antoine Johnson	CTAC	302-420-7889
Shaun Bellamy	Hopes Academy	215-253-1898
Prince Seward	Hopes Academy	302-761-3144
Jeffrey Bradley	Hopes Academy	302-762-3173
Larry Portis	Hopes Academy	302-377-0488

Dwight L. Davis  
Matthew Meyer  
Edwina Bell

Patomac Law Group  
N/A

302-654-1993  
302-897-1579  
N/A

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Mr. George Krupanski called the meeting to order at 10:06 A.M.

Mr. Krupanski discussed the purpose of the Work-a-Day Earn-a-Pay (herein WDEP) Task Force and identified the need for WDEP Task Force to clarify, discuss and further define what the WDEP Pilot Program could be. He then introduced WDEP members and their affiliations and continued to provide an overview of the meeting agenda.

Mr. Krupanski provided an overview of the background, vision and leadership of the WDEP Task Force and concept as per Senate Resolution 10 of the 148<sup>th</sup> General Assembly. He explained that the initiative was led by State Senator Robert Marshall, who identified needs in the community to get people back to work and further develop job skills, which led to the concept of a public works program.

Senator Marshall provided background of the idea for public works program and his relationship to the history. He mentioned the similarity to President Roosevelt's public work's project and the Lewes Canal in Delaware. He continued to discuss the thoughts behind the WDEP public works program concept, which included the idea to get men and women back to work, the economic, political, and human capacity for public works projects throughout the state, the possible influence on young people in the State of Delaware in regards to work ethic and motivation, as well as increasing their economic circumstances, and to create employment opportunities for Delawareans. He explained his effort to include the WDEP Pilot Program through the Bond Committee and legislation and also explained how the concept led to the WDEP Task Force.

Mr. Krupanski continued the discussion on SR 10. He posed questions such as what was the charge of the WDEP Task Force, what needs did the community have that could be addressed through the WDEP Pilot Program or Public Works Program, how would these programs operate, and what are some associated costs. He identified lines 17 through 21 within SR 10 as critical in identifying the framework for the program. Specifically, he identified the following key points for the WDEP Task Force to address and discuss: at-risk and disadvantaged residences, meaningful tasks, the definition of the compensation at an hourly range, targeted spending for companies, and allocation of pilot programs in the strategic fund. He also identified the short time frame of the WDEP Task Force and identified the report date of December 4<sup>th</sup>, 2015. He then opened the floor for WDEP Task Force members for discussion.

Representative Mulrooney asked if the idea was designed to be a city program.

Senator Marshall responded that the idea and thought process with the Governor having appointed Mr. Krupanski as Chair, that the program could be driven by an organization such as and similar to the Boys & Girls Clubs of Delaware, where 41 locations existed throughout the State, in order to reach all of Delaware. He also identified that Wilmington

had two, and potentially three, Boys & Girls Clubs and also identified the need in both Wilmington and Dover and other cities throughout the State.

Representative Mulrooney identified that meaningful labor would need to be defined. He also suggested the idea of the program partnering with the Delaware Skills Center and other similar organizations in order for participants to obtain meaningful training to move past general laborer skills. He provided an example of this occurrence from a past experience. He identified that funding would be needed to support partnerships and training programs, and he also identified the need for transportation options as well. He identified free training opportunities that were available at the Delaware Skills Center.

Mr. Krupanski supported Representative Mulrooney's suggestion of defining meaningful labor in order for the program to be meaningful to the participant and allow them to grow and acquire new skills for other job opportunities.

Representative Mulrooney mentioned Habitat for Humanity and the effort and reward associated with helping others and accomplishing difficult tasks as an example of defining meaningful labor.

Senator Marshall suggested the WDEP Pilot Program would need to be a hybrid program, and something new, that would take an aggressive approach to provide immediate opportunities to earn an income. He referenced John Blyden with Local 55 and possibilities through his organization and other similar organizations. He also identified that such opportunities through the proposed program could lead to other employment options in Delaware. He provided examples from the Delaware Skills Center. He also discussed the motivation and confidence that the program could instill in individuals with currently no opportunities.

Representative Mulrooney stated that there was plenty of work throughout the State to do and that this would be a great opportunity to get people out to work and fix infrastructure.

Senator Marshall supported Representative Mulrooney's comment and stated that there were 1,500 empty houses in Wilmington. He also mentioned his connection to building renovation and reiterated the opportunities available in Wilmington for employment and the many benefits to tax payers to remove the numerous vacant homes located in the City of Wilmington and throughout the State.

Mr. Kleinschmidt discussed President Roosevelt's public works program and infrastructure projects. He suggested that the Task Force fast forward to when the WDEP Pilot Program would begin, and he identified issues such as that projects would need a lead, the need of partnerships, and a list of projects available prior to beginning the program. He suggested that establishing a program for the summer of 2016 that was a smaller scale and was easily accomplished would allow the program to gain momentum. He identified other items such as the need to research examples from other states, the tight fiscal year and Strategic Fund, the need to identify other opportunities for funding, and the idea for tax credits to be offered to the private sector to fund the program. He also supported previous comments related to job skills training, support services for the program, bringing value to the participants through the job offered, and integrating support to maintain the program and continue

services. He also identified the option of a van pool or car pool to fill the transportation component. He suggested options for partnerships such as with schools districts, and also identified a specific project opportunity in the Mike Castle Trail for maintenance and beautification projects.

Senator Marshall added river cleanup and stream cleanup projects. He also summarized the idea of having a designated site for transportation options, so that participants could be picked up and work a day to earn a pay.

Mr. Krupanski yielded the floor to community member Elder Ty Johnson to offer perspective on the WDEP Pilot Program concept.

Elder Johnson thanked everyone who attended the meeting and Task Force members for their efforts. He focused his discussion about the WDEP Pilot Program on the idea of reaching people that would not typically be hired into traditional sites and service positions, and also to have the program provide a path to get training and options to obtain a driver's license. He identified a connection to public safety and also identified the possible cyclical nature of the program in providing further outreach to others. He supported previous comments that the funding component would be critical. He also expressed a personal connection to the concept and explained that he had heard from people in the community what the opportunity of having a job would do for their lives.

Mr. Krupanski explained that the program was a chance to make a difference in the lives of people who are struggling and trying to maintain jobs, but that have not always had opportunities readily available to them. He stated that the program becomes more important and impactful based on what the Task Force defined as a project because it should have the ability to lift people up and allow them to grow and mentor others. He also added that funding for the program does not necessarily only need to come from government and posed the question of resources that business and corporate entities could provide. He supported previous comments regarding starting off small with one or two projects for the WDEP Pilot Program, and then it could grow and be built upon. He suggested then the State could have something of real significance that could impact thousands of people.

Ms. Cannon thanked Senator Marshall and Representative Mulrooney for their efforts. She identified the importance of the discussion and her personal connection to the program through her teaching and experience with at-risk students. She discussed other programs available that are similar to WDEP, and identified that one challenge of funding for current programs was that performance outcomes were tied to funding needs. She proposed the need to research other sources of funding besides the Strategic Fund and supported the tax credit idea proposed by Mr. Kleinschmidt. She identified that the performance metric often associated with similar programs was a barrier to funding as well as participants. She asked community members to identify barriers in order to better inform the discussion and program.

Senator Marshall provided his view on the need to not drift into the traditional policy thinking of yesterday. He also identified Ms. Cannon's dedication to public service and how that was valuable to the WDEP Task Force. He explained that the overriding issue was that the Governor's Office and the General Assembly had dedicated millions of dollars for the

Strategic Fund, and identified that as State tax payers' money. He explained that the grant money in the Strategic Fund is used to attract companies to Delaware and keep them in Delaware to hire Delawareans; and he also explained that as easy money for private sector. He reiterated the need for public works projects in order to look ahead to next five to ten years, and stated that public funds needed to be dedicated to that for employment.

Elder Johnson thanked Ms. Cannon for comments and identified the issue of not enough employment options to influence actions of community members. He also identified that the other programs available did not address the real issues.

Ms. Cannon clarified that she was referring to temporary employment agencies and added that such agencies implemented the van pool option to take people to a job. She suggested finding a way to incentivize such agencies in order for them to do more and that the Task Force could help to define that.

Mr. Krupanski then yielded the floor to community member Mr. Hope Bellamy to ask a question.

Mr. Bellamy asked a question relating to how much funding for WDEP Pilot Program and how many people could potentially be employed.

Senator Marshall explained the working concept for the WDEP Pilot Program, and stated that the concept proposed 2 million dollars from the Strategic Fund for the program and 500 thousand from the private sector. He suggested dividing the State into grids in order to implement the program.

Mr. Krupanski yielded to Ms. Cannon to provide an overview of the Strategic Fund and the application process.

Ms. Cannon provided a typical "sales-pitch" of the Strategic Fund to a private company, explained as if DEDO provided a company money to create jobs, and explained that those jobs must be held and maintained for the first three years after the grant. She explained that the grant was the value of personal income tax and provided an example. She also identified that the grant money eventually goes back to the General Fund if the company hires an employee for the three years, due to the value of income tax. She provided examples from when DEDO was affected by the recession, and also explained that the attractiveness of the Strategic Fund was due to other qualities of Delaware and not that it provided significant dollar figures to companies. Ms. Cannon also provided examples of other states' Strategic Funds' procedures to the Task Force members. She concluded by identifying possible partnerships to bring employers to Delaware and the Blue Collar Tax Act as an incentive.

Senator Marshall explained the Blue Collar Tax Credit as dollar for dollar off of a tax bill. He stated that the Act was expanded in 2011 to include any type of business to qualify. He also identified that employees in the WDEP Pilot Program and subsequent program would contribute the same value as private company employees, with income tax going back into local economy.

Elder Johnson discussed the million man march, and passionately described the need to locate funding options and also described alternative options to invest in Delawareans.

Mr. Krupanski asked Ms. Cannon if there was an application deadline for the Strategic Fund.

Ms. Cannon explained that there was not an application deadline and also explained the process through the formal application, business case presentation, Council on Development and Finance review, the vote, and that the Cabinet Secretary can write a report to the General Assembly to justify any disagreement.

Senator Marshall asked when the public hearing would take place.

Ms. Cannon explained that the date had not been set yet for the public meeting.

Senator Marshall requested on behalf of the Task Force to urge the public meeting of DEDO so that there was a public meeting before the Commission meeting.

Ms. Cannon stated that it was something the Senator could ask for. She also asked if the Task Force was willing to consider other funding sources besides the Strategic Fund.

Senator Marshall explained the urgent need of the WDEP Public Works Program in the State, which could happen May 1 of next year (2016), especially if Governor Markell supported the program. He further stated that the program would need money to be allocated in order to fund the current fiscal year and then further funding could be allocated from the General Assembly.

Ms. Cannon asked if the Task Force would be willing to research an alternative plan, or a plan B.

Senator Marshall stated that the Task Force could be open-minded.

Mr. Krupanski stated that as many resources as possible should be examined to focus on the program. He further stated that the Strategic fund was an option, and alluded to previous comments by Elder Johnson which indicated other possible funding sources.

Ms. Cannon identified the Workforce Investment Board as an alternative funding option, and provided an example of a pilot program for nurses training through the Federal Workforce Investment Act. She asked if Governor Markell still maintained any discretion over those funds to run pilot programs. She encouraged the option of the Department of Labor for Request For Proposal (RFP) contracted services, and provided a potential example filtered through the Delaware Skills Center where a certain number of employment options could be added based on WDEP Pilot Program concept under more relaxed requirements in order to give opportunities to people who otherwise could not receive employment opportunities.

Mr. Krupanski then opened the floor to public comment.

## **Public Comment:**

Ms. Edwina Bell identified her background working with children and at-risk youth and explained some of the issues she had encountered. She also posed questions regarding preparing youth for the workforce through established agencies in order to transition into a program such as WDEP and also partner with agencies in order to better implement the program. She also identified the need to break the cycle of those that are under employed or unemployed, and she explained that it is important to begin the process with youth in order to change people's mindsets. She identified that intervention as well as prevention must be implemented in order to put forth a holistic concept for the community.

Mr. Bellamy explained his experience through Hope's Academy with community members and identified the multitude of applications that he received for the Academy and that many applicants had no high school diploma or GED, no driver's license, and/or could not read. He continued to identify that jobs are available across the State and suggested that a political barrier existed that barred people from obtaining jobs. He also explained his perspective in opening his own business. He identified the previously identified issues as statewide problems and explained where current employment agencies fail to meet the needs of the community. He also made a connection between the basic necessities of living, such as having a job, and crime. He identified the significant need to implement an opportunity to get people back to work and qualified for jobs.

Mr. Christopher X supported Mr. Bellamy's previous statements. He also identified DEDO's Strategic Fund application process and expressed his dislike of people paying the money back per income tax versus the businesses paying it back that employed them. He continued to also identify barriers of race relations to employment, specifically identifying the African American community.

Mr. Antoine Johnson stated that he was in attendance on behalf of his father, Elder Ty Johnson, and he continued to describe his father's efforts in the community. He supported Senator Marshall's previous statement regarding keeping the program simplistic as to not complicate the situation and reach a common goal. He also described his personal experience in applying to jobs and how that experience has been difficult.

Ms. Porsha Wiggins identified a business owner, Perry I. Davis, who owned a construction company and utilized the business to teach youth carpentry skills and provided free job training. She identified that the business was located on East 6<sup>th</sup> Street in Wilmington, DE and that youth as well as adults were accepted, age 15 years old and up. She supported previous comments that identified the need for funding and identified programs that existed to support the infrastructure of a program like WDEP. She also supported previous comments regarding the need to implement such programs with youth as well. She identified judicial records as a barrier to obtaining a job.

Mr. Jeffrey Bradley explained his personal situation and how such a situation caused barriers to obtain a job and how he would not qualify for many positions based on several factors, such as owing child support and not having a driver's license.

Ms. Cannon commented that revoking someone's driver's license for owed child support was not best path forward.

Ms. Wiggins shared a personal story regarding the various people she came in contact with in the community. She explained that she witnessed people with entry-level job skills that cannot obtain a job. She continued to explain that the (WDEP) program would help such community members receive an opportunity for a job. She also identified youth opportunities that are needed to give youth optimism and halt the cycle of crime.

Mr. Mahkies Booker identified that the standards and structure to be accepted to Delaware Skills Center must change in order to reach a broader network of individuals. He continued to explain the issue where capable candidates are disqualified from acceptance due to factors such as not having a high school diploma or GED. He also expressed that other programs should be examined as options.

Representative Mulrooney explained that the Delaware Skills Center was just one option of a possible partnership.

Mr. Krupanski summarized Mr. Booker's point and stated it was well taken.

Mr. Booker further expressed the need to change the direction of such standards to provide more opportunity for jobs immediately rather than enforcing several requirements that act as barriers.

Senator Marshall identified that Mr. Booker's point was valid and that there was a need to reach people from all walks of life that are ready to do a public works project and earn a paycheck. He continued to summarize the WDEP concept again.

Representative Mulrooney identified the need to also provide options for further and more specific training for participants in order to provide advancement and not have participants work a day, earn a pay, forever. He identified the Delaware Skills Center again as a possible partner for this effort.

Mr. Booker reiterated that the current system has too many requirements and was setting people up to fail. He identified the need to revitalize the whole system. He also provided a personal example of a friend's experience obtaining a job that identified the problems he discussed.

Mr. Dwight L. Davis identified the City-County pardon of innocence project and explained the over 15 years of assistance to Delaware residents to prepare petitions to pardons. He stated that Delaware was a corporate state, and that there are more artificial corporations registered than people, and that politicians pay attention to corporations. He suggested that an opportunity comes to a prepared mind and urged community to stop asking for jobs. He mentioned President Obama and opportunities for citizens with businesses to contract with the federal government. He identified that Delaware receives federal dollars to support job growth. He also identified the rights of citizenship at both federal and state levels. He stated that WDEP was not rooted in law. He also suggested incorporation for individuals in order to gain purchasing and acquisition power and become an employer. He suggested that



creating businesses would provide employment opportunities and urged individuals to do so. He also identified a connection between slavery and having a criminal background in an employment setting.

Mr. Brahmin Jackson discussed the potential of the WDEP program in developing people's self-confidence as well as their monetary situation. He also identified the needs for case management and human services throughout the State to support the program. He supported previous comments that addressed the WDEP Pilot Program, maintenance of the program to ensure sustainability, and further education as well as certification so that participants can advance and grow.

Mr. Krupanski thanked all those who made comments and Task Force members for sharing their comments and thoughts. He identified that this was a complex issue and also identified the valuable information discussed during the meeting. He explained that the Task Force needed to gather more information and summarize it to further influence discussion. He identified a common theme that there were a lot of people struggling and in need of employment opportunity, and he stated that something must be done to address the situation. He further expressed the need to think differently and make changes in order to appropriately address the situation. He concluded by identifying the next WDEP Task Force meeting on October 28<sup>th</sup>, 2015 at Legislative Hall.

Mr. Bellamy asked if there was anyone from the community on task force.

Senator Marshall stated that they want community members involved throughout the whole process. He expressed a personal story and identified the need to get back to basics and fundamental necessities.

Mr. Krupanski adjourned the meeting at 12:01 pm.