### Legislative-Executive WorkFirst Poverty Reduction Oversight Task Force

1/6/2020 9:00 AM-12:00 AM

John L O’Brien Building / JLOB Hearing Room B

504 15th Ave SW, Olympia, WA 98501

# Minutes *(for review and confirmation at next meeting, February 2020)*

1. **Welcome and Introductions**

*Meeting convened by Senator Hans Zeiger and Dept. of Social and Health Services Secretary Cheryl Strange*

**Quorum met by task force members (or designee) in attendance as follows**:

*Rep. Michelle Caldier, Sen. Jeannie Darneille, Sen. Manka Dhingra, Erin Frasier, Rep. Christine Kilduff, Diane Klontz, Daisye Orr, Tim Probst, Nicole Rose, Maria Siguenza, David Stillman, Cheryl Strange, Sen. Hans Zeiger.*

**Guest Presenters & Additional attendees**:

*Cecil Daniels, Sarah Garcia, Drayton Jackson, Susan Kavanaugh, Alexis Marx, Alison Mendiola, Sharon Pesut, Lori Pfingst, Babs Roberts, Julie Watts, Suzy Young.*

*Co-chairs began the meeting by reiterating the goals of the Task Force and reviewing the meeting agenda – noting full agenda and importance of staying on schedule.*

1. **Task Force Business**
	* **Confirm prior meeting minutes**
	* *Minutes confirmed as written.*
2. **Five-Year Strategic Plan Review**

*Babs Roberts, DSHS*

* *Overview of the plan. While we want the 5 and 10 year plans to align, they should not be carbon copies due to time line, specification of intergenerational poverty for children and families and WorkFirst, there will be some differences.*
	+ *This report refines programs and policy like TANF and SNAP and provides some additional detail for children and family supports over next five years. We have request legislation around some these recommendations. This body wants a copy of the PRWG (Advisory Committee) 10 year report (should be completed by next week). Suggestion that the LEWPRO report is “informed” by the PRWG (Advisory Committee) 10 year report*.
		- *Reviewed the E3SHB 1485 task assigned to this group: Reduce ACEs and reduce intergenerational poverty. We have approved the PRWG as an advisory community.*
		- *This report includes information from PRWG (Advisory Committee) 10 year report but also includes recommendations from DSHS.*
		- *When we last talked there were six strategies, but some of these strategies were becoming very heavy and needed their own recommendations, there are now eight.*
* ***Discussion:***
	+ *We need to include that meeting basic needs are a basic human right. How the barriers of federal government changes (i.e. to SNAP) need to be factored in. Things we thought we could rely on that are now being dismantled by federal policy changes. We have a state obligation to help those on the furthest margins. We know that investing in programs like food also supports farmers, communities and jobs.*
	+ *What is missing is stating that we are intentionally removing barriers in policies and practices.*
	+ *Prioritization- The report is not recommending any recommendations over others but some are foundational so time lines will help us figure this out.*
		- *Follow up question- should this group be giving opinion on prioritization? When giving feedback on this report it would be great to get notes on prioritization.*
		- *PRWG (Advisory Committee) has a great detail of knowledge and passion about poverty, feels the Advisory Committee 10 year plan is extremely comprehensive, it does not prioritize anything but gives a broad rich menu to integrate work.*
	+ *Are intersectionality/intergenerational poverty addressed in these strategies? Do we need to break that out?*
	+ *Advisory Committee 10 year report is doing poverty work to make these recommendations to us, and we are focusing on the ones that relate to intergenerational poverty. Include ACEs scores (child with a parent who is incarcerated) and how different systems interact with each other and causation.*
		- *Discrepancy in legislative members between the two groups – this would be where any discord in the recommendations may come from. There are only a few members from the Task Force in the Advisory Committee.*
			* *We have opportunity to do more and maybe identify those who might be missing from this group to inform this work.*
		- *Poverty reduction workgroup worked with the steering committee did a deep dive on foster care system and the criminal justice system to learn more. This has informed Advisory Committee recommendations.*
		- *Wording – “supporting all elements” can we change this to “informed by all elements”.*
	+ *Steering Committee- When working with the steering committee how did we make sure that we were not just have a token person representing these folks?*
		- *The steering committee formed using funding from Gates Foundation and Commerce with statewide action network to work with those living in poverty right now. SPAN worked to develop the steering committee. They meet separately from the group, come up recommendations and present them to the Advisory Committee which includes a number of people’s perspectives. Also looked at having the steering committee group be the decision making body.*
		- *Report should show the dynamic way this group formed that includes deep dives with confidence and competence with an addendum to talk about this report.*
		- *Should we have a list of those that were a part of the poverty reduction workgroup? Would like to highlight the steering committee.*
* *STRATEGY 1: Acknowledge, understand, and take action to undo structural racism and the effects of historical trauma in state policy, programs, and practice.*
	+ *The why is the cause and consequences over poverty and this is experienced most profoundly around the country but even more in Washington state by people of color and indigenous people. Reducing poverty requires us to address structural racisms. This work needs to be centered.*
	+ *This recommendation is first on purpose. Must point out the urgent needs, basic needs and then long term system restructuring- spelling out the differences and explain why this is foundational in the work.*
	+ *Missing the short and long-term aspect that is in the Advisory Committee 10 year report.*
	+ *Report should point out the fragility of these systems, nothing in the safety net is assured.*
		- *Washington plays a pretty active role at federal level and try to work as a leadership model for others. Possibly frame this as a problem statement with data points to demonstrate?*
		- *Report should include a brief problem statement including fragility of program and the challenges we are facing and those living in poverty.*
			* *Wants a piece into the future, and how nimble we are to address those who are living there.*
			* *How will those living in poverty learn to trust us? SNAP shutdown last year to make sure we did an early issuance but had folks hanging without food.*
	+ *Report needs to talk about humans, not just “those people. Need to humanize these value statements presented first.*
		- *1 in 4 people in Washington are living in poverty, this is not a small number of people.*
	+ *We could highlight some of these changes like hiring people of color and some other change management like what ESD and others are doing.*
	+ *This is a chance to include past bills and agency request legislation which would address some of the recommendations. (Add to Appendix C).*
	+ *Can we look at historic legislative ideas on this? This was changed to a health impact statement to broaden and capture some of the racial inequity. Our state government should have a process to address policy impacts (legislation). There was a lack of political will to pass it calling out racial inequity specifically.*
* ***Strategy 2 Make equal space for the power and influence of people and communities most affected by poverty and inequality in decision-making****.*
	+ *2.1 Institutionalizing a decision making body made up of those in poverty.*
	+ *It should include lived experience stories. Link to the mid-way report from the Advisory Committee should be included. Want to continue to use these after the report is submitted.*
	+ *2.2 Truth and reconciliation might be helpful to include some for an example. Need to change wording to active and not passive, agency “will” or “shall”. As a Task Force they can have more weight to hold accountable.*
		- *At the last Advisory Committee meeting they talked about expanding this recommendation, we might need to look at this too. To include all those who have experienced historic racism.*
	+ *2.3.b Remove passive voice. The language used by the Advisory Committee was soft as recommendations, thinking this report should be more active.*
		- *Zeiger is recommending that the legislators get together in the next few weeks to speak as legislators around prioritization. Do we need to subtract or add based on what is legislatively possible. The group agreed they would do this.*
		- *Stillman is asking DSHS to create a scorecard for what we’ve done or things that we have been doing within DSHS or legislators.*
* ***STRATEGY 3: Invest in equitable income growth and wealth-building among people with low incomes.***
	+ *Request that report is reviewed by Stephanie Bowman to make sure this language is dynamic enough to include what Asset Building Coalitions are doing right now.*
		- *For example those who are not getting their EITC up to 5,000 and date back 3 years.*
	+ *Maybe this report should be more about what the policy changes are needed and not really the recommendations.*
	+ *Remember who the audience of this report is, outline who was contacted or who we discussed this with for folks who weren’t in this meeting.*
	+ *Financial literacy- most folks do what their parents and neighbors did, things like payday loans etc. Not sure how robust Strategies for Success program is with ESD. Can we be sure financial education goes hand in hand with any financial assistance? Recommendations should include financial education in our schools.*
	+ *Expand 3.4.a STS and explained Financial Education under there. 3.1.a and 3.1.c could be combined.*
	+ *This report has requirement of greater specificity on policy’s and laws.*
		- *The Advisory Committee includes a large number of agencies, non-profits, employers that have the big picture. What is worth replicating is the voice of people.*
		- *This group agreed there should be alignment, (no conflict) to stay around same strategies and pulling some recommendations over into this report. The other thing we have heard is this is a legislative report not the governor’s report.*
		- *Who was the steering committee and how it was formed.*
		- *Need to enhance the language on what the problem is.*
		- *Feeling that we should adopt the spirit of the work but feels that there still needs to be work around adding some legislative work adding those in and prioritizing.*
	+ *Missing a positive strength based aspects of those living in poverty. Need to include other positives not only communities but how they have been resourceful and just need to help to reach potential. Want to lift them up not frame them as a drag on society.*
		- *Need to call out more reasons why audience should care about this. Unemployment compensation has a 4 to 1 return on investment, food has 5 to 1.*
	+ *This report doesn’t seem comprehensive of aged populations, fixed income, unable to change course. Talk about people who can’t increase their income. State’s culpability in reducing pensions.*
		- *We need to touch on individuals (ABD) standard of need, this could be expanded on- need feedback from this group.*
	+ *OK with have a reporting with less in it, but wants to have a vision of value statement and we want to continue our work to be more specific. Wants to do more of a higher level review. Key comments, with a laser focusing on those on the steering committee.*

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* ***Strategy 4 Invest in multigenerational wellbeing of families.***
	+ *Discussed intergenerational poverty with both public benefits and child welfare system. We need to have a focus here, giving babies best possible start.*
		- *Add other benefits to these services, not just reduce poverty but other positive outcomes.*
		- *Report should include paid family leave.*
1. **Public Comment**
* *Julie Watts- Washington state poverty- She wants us to call out attack on public benefits on Federal legislation. She said that the TANF went from one of the best state programs to one of the worst but if we make the changes in this report could address this. The Advisory Committee was a broad group of people who met over a long period of time and deep several deep dives, still didn’t delve into everything. Feels that as this group moves forward, reflect and change there are a couple areas that might need to be included:*
	+ *Immigration and naturalization groups, feel that we could have been more robust in our outreach to identify issues in those communities.*
	+ *Disability including those hidden ones need to be called out more specifically in this work. Aging retirement and long term care didn’t do a deep dive or have a lot of representation.*
	+ *More can be done to include tribal populations, it’s a tough one between state and tribes and include unique barriers.*
	+ *Labor groups and employers could provide more information about what could be done.*
	+ *Didn’t take a deep dive into LGBTQ communities either around unique needs.*
	+ *Concerned originally about including a token person in poverty, but feels they did a great job including voices but didn’t have a population of non-English speaking individuals because the poverty action network didn’t have the ability to provide those services.*
* *Drayton Jackson- PRWG (Advisory Committee) Steering Committee. Thanks for hearing this discussion and work on this topic. It’s reassuring to hear this information. The steering committee went out to a large group of people, it’s starting to get wary, when they take part of a community but nothing actually comes out of this. They are feeling the progress, they see their voices captured in this process. Got a chance to have their stories heard, but also have a chance to make recommendations for change. Understand it won’t happen in one day, and want to make sure something is done with all they work they did over the last year. He’s almost 50, he is second generation TANF recipient and he’s tired. The work done over the last year has been very appreciative. Didn’t just come up with the problems but also came up with recommendations and solutions based on lived experiences. 30 people doing deep dives and hashing it out themselves.*
* *Lori Pfingst- The Advisory Committee included 45 people on the workgroup, 25 on steering committee, big group but still not big enough. We want to do our due diligence meeting with governor on 1/21 and negotiated a 6 month period of engagement to present to folks who were not on the workgroup and get their feedback. This has been an outreach plan in place. We need to update the tone, it’s more than just financial, it benefits everyone who lives in Washington state. They have a communication plan and starting videos from the steering committee, they don’t want to be token people either. Lots of funds used to run this Advisory Committee but they are not getting paid because it effects their benefits.*
1. **Wrap Up**
* *Next meeting – in February.*
	+ *Zeiger said that they will do most of the engagement after this meeting electronically through a survey monkey. He also wants the group of legislators to do a caucus sometime in the next few weeks. This is an evolving plan and can be updated, it doesn’t all need to be done right now. May need to add an appendix of progress throughout the legislative session.*
	+ *Babs and Lori did a review of the 10 year plan from Advisory Committee, it includes a goal statement and we can add that to the LEWPRO report. It also includes more of the case on the “why” for addressing root causes of poverty.*
	+ *Reviewed one pager for strategies 5-8 Want strategy to be more specific #8, future of work taskforce, would like it to be more concrete for everyday Washingtonians.*
	+ *DSHS will send out report to the members for review, to provide feedback and edits.*
	+ *Asking to approval final draft during regular task force meeting in Feb.*