

MINUTES

INTERAGENCY MIGRANT WORKER POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING

June 8, 2004

The quarterly meeting of the Interagency Migrant Worker Policy Committee was held at 10:00 a.m. on June 8, 2004 at the Virginia Department of Labor and Industry. The Chairman, Commissioner C. Ray Davenport, who called the meeting to order, and the Policy Committee Administrator, Betty B. Jenkins, were present.

In attendance were the following:

Kenny Annis, MSFW Board Representative
Ron Thompson, Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles
Sam Lupica, Virginia Workers' Compensation Commission
Perida Giles, Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services
Jack Turner, Virginia Employment Commission
Maricel Quintana-Baker, Virginia Department of Business Assistance
Shannon Bramblett, Virginia Department of Education
Jeff Nelson, Virginia Department of Medical Assistance Services
Michelle Castellow-Rivera, Virginia Employment Commission
Don Boswell, Virginia Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control
Jane Brown, Virginia Department of Social Services

Ms. Jenkins distributed the minutes of the March 23, 2004 Migrant Worker Policy Committee meeting and the April 7, 2004 MSFW Board meeting and other information.

Commissioner Davenport welcomed members and invited them to introduce themselves. He then requested a motion to approve the minutes from the March 23, 2004 meeting; Mr. Boswell moved the minutes be approved and Mr. Annis seconded the motion. The minutes were approved as presented.

Mr. Annis commented that Telamon reported on funds for migrant housing and indicated they would be using straw bale construction. However, Mr. Annis said that he could not find information stating Virginia had approved use of straw bale construction. He also spoke of apple growers shutting down in the Winchester area and the lack of Virginia support of the AgJOBS Bill.

Commissioner Davenport advised that the legislation transferring the MSFW Board and the Migrant Worker Policy Committee from DOLI (Department of Labor and Industry) to the Virginia Employment Commission was signed by Governor Warner and is effective July 1, 2004. Commissioner Esser will assume the duties for both the Board and Policy Committee and plans to meet with DOLI to affect a smooth transition, added the Commissioner.

Regarding Mr. Cagan's letter to Secretary Woods of Health and Human Services, the Commissioner stated that he had forwarded his letter to Secretary Woods and has contacted her office several times.

Mr. Nelson commented that Governor Warner had provided backing for the FAMIS program and Mr. Annis felt Virginia has done a good job promoting FAMIS.

To a question on the initiation of Legal Presence by DMV, Mr. Thompson responded that the transition has been straightforward and DMV has been pleased with the progress.

Concerning legal presence, Mr. Annis explained that under the Life Program family members could be brought to the U.S. if a job was secured. He added that those trying to attain legal status are vulnerable and often become victims of scams. Ms. Castellow-Rivera cited the case of a woman, who now has been charged, buying Tennessee license plates and selling them to workers on the Eastern Shore.

Dr. Bramblett stated that the Department of Education now has applied for consortia funding with Agriculture, Industry and Migrant Education (AIM). She discussed Project Mathematica for migrant children which moves with the student. She said VDOE is participating with other agencies to dual-enroll children for Head Start and Summer Education on the Eastern Shore. She added that migrant children are eligible for services regardless of their legal status. She discussed a comprehensive needs assessment committee her agency is forming and asked for volunteers from the Policy Committee.

Commissioner Davenport inquired how many agencies represented at the meeting offered Web site and other materials in Spanish and the majority attending the meeting responded positively for their agencies.

Ms. Brown reported that DSS is planning a meeting for dialog on work force development of the foreign-born and is hoping for a minimum of 100 participants. There is no formal agenda. The dialog is scheduled for June 29 in Richmond. Participants should include public agencies, community and faith-based organizations and other groups who work with or have contact with the foreign-born work force. She indicated lodging and meals will be provided and she will be forwarding additional information for Ms. Jenkins to distribute.

The next Interagency Migrant Worker Policy Committee meeting is tentatively scheduled for 10:00 a.m. on Tuesday, September 14, 2004.

The next MSFW Board Meeting is tentatively scheduled for 10:00 a.m. on Wednesday, July 28, 2004 in House Room 2, State Capitol.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:45 a.m.