



Workforce Development Board
County of Middlesex

Quarterly Meeting – October 25, 2016

Present:	Amy Bellisano, Roseann Bucciarelli, Sergo Corvil, Alan Fialka, Dan Frankel, Gabriel Lavigne, Melyssa Lewis, Poo Lin, Sean McDonald (as designee for Brian Loughlin,) José Montes, Joseph Picone, Miriam Ruiz, Jill Schiff, Kathy Shaw, Tim Timberlake, Bernice Proctor Venable
Staff:	Kevin Kurdziel, Baden Almonor, Julie Piano, Sandra Ciccone, Shamara Gatling-Davila, John Ross, Diane Seavers, Fernanda Vello, Melinda Walton
Guests:	Amanda Levandowski, Karen Parry, Roxanne Teleck

Call to Order with Pledge of Allegiance and Roll Call

Welcome and Introductions

- The notice of this meeting, pursuant to the “Open Public Meetings Act” NJSA 10:4-10 has been complied with and shall be entered into the minutes of this meeting.
- A motion was made by Bernice Proctor Venable to accept the minutes of the July 26, 2016 as written and forwarded to the members by email ahead of the meeting. It was seconded by Roseann Bucciarelli, a vote was taken, and passed and the minutes were accepted.

Chairperson’s Report

- The WIOA Final Rules were published at the end of August. They can be found via the Federal Register or on the USDOL website.
- Our Local Workforce Board Plan that will be submitted to the State Employment Training Commission on December 15th. Once a draft of the plan is completed, it will be published on the county’s website, seeking public comment for 30 days. Once the SETC approves the plan it will be submitted to the US DOL for final approval, early next year.
- We worked with our regional partners in Monmouth, Ocean, and Mercer counties on preparing a regional workforce plan that was submitted to the SETC on October 3rd and will be available for public comment along with the local plans from each county.
- I encourage everyone to sign up for a WDB sub-committee. The subcommittees are an important part of our board, by assisting with the establishment of policies and making recommendations to the entire membership.

Director’s Report

- Our Regional WDB Plan was submitted to the SETC on October 3, 2016 and we are now working on our local WDB Plan which must be submitted to the SETC on December 15.
- Each Board member is asked to join one of the sub-committees. Participation on these committee’s is crucial to the direction that we set for this board moving forward. Most committees meet quarterly and members who don’t sign up today will be assigned to a committee.
- Members were thanked for sitting on this board. The policies set forth by this board positively impact the lives of many county residents.

- The staff of the Office of Workforce Development were acknowledged as being on the frontline, working with our constituents every day to establish career pathways, develop high quality partnerships with businesses, and provide great customer service. Members of the Leadership Team will start to attend some of the Board meetings.
- At our next meeting, we will provide you with an overview of WIOA, the organizational structure of the One-Stop and Office of Workforce Development, and sort through some of the alphabet soup thrown at you at every meeting.

Personnel Update

- Nina Rios-Rivera has retired and Diane Seavers will be replacing her as the Deputy Director of the Board as well as the Office of Workforce Development.
- Sandy Ciccone has started as the Career Services Supervisor for Youth.
- Baden Almonor is now the Regional Chief for Central Region of New Jersey.

Regional and Local WDB Plan Submission

- The Regional and Local plans are very similar and, as reported earlier, the Regional Plan was submitted on October 3 and the Local one will be submitted on December 15
- The revised State plan is available on the SETC website.

Career Connections Launch

- On November 21, Acting Commissioner Aaron Fichtner will be at our One Stop for the launch of the new website “Career Connections.”
- He also plans to attend our January meeting. He has come up through the ranks of the Dept. of Labor and has a particular interest in workforce development.

Building High Quality Business Partnerships

- This is the concept that drives the workforce system in Middlesex County and it represents a strategy change. We need to establish relationships with employers and get their input on what we do with training.
- An Employer Advisory Committee should be established to help us plan this. We need to know, “If we train, will you hire?” Bernice Proctor Venable reminded everyone that there was a Business Outreach committee that emphasized these goals and hopes that the new emphasis on customer service will help this get off the ground again. Employers and Businesses are our main customers.
- We will be working closer with the Talent Development Centers toward having businesses interested from the beginning of the process. While not promising jobs, at least promising interviews upon completion of training.
- Our job fairs will now be smaller and more industry targeted and we will see if we can “vet” job candidates before-hand so employers can ask to meet with specific candidates.

New WDB Members Needed With all the changes, the Board now needs to add six new members from the business segment. If anyone has any suggestions, let us know and we can reach out and invite them to a meeting.

WDB Committee Sign-Up

- There is a chart of the standing and current ad hoc committees in the meeting folder and sign-up sheets are available for after the meeting.
- We are currently a part of the JFK Hartwick Interface Committee but will probably be restarting our own Disabilities Committee. The first meeting will be in 2017 and a chairperson (a current WDB Board member) can be elected or appointed by Jill Schiff as Chairperson of the Board.

Board Committee Reports

Youth Advisory Committee (Gabriel Lavigne)

- ELITE (Entry Level Internships and Training) operates out of the Perth Amboy location unless New Brunswick is more convenient for the client.
- Contracts were awarded to Middlesex County College (Edison and Perth Amboy.) The program year was changed to September-August. HSE is offered in six (6) cycles from (4) per year to shorten waiting time and aid in the retention of recruited youth.
- Placing young adults in work-based activities continues to be a challenge. We are looking at enrolling young adults from the prisoner re-entry initiative in pre-apprenticeship programs.
- Financial literacy will be made a core activity of ELITE program.
- The Youth Transportation contract was awarded to Amaker & Porterfield and Youth Industry Tours will re-commence shortly.

Literacy (Julie Piano for Gloria Aftanski)

- The committee is looking at programs available in the County and how they fill gaps for literacy needs.
 - Collaboration with United Way and UPS and Jamesburg schools for children transitioning from kindergarten to first grade who live in non-English speaking households
 - Services offered by the literacy consortium of the Boards of Education from East Brunswick, New Brunswick, Perth Amboy, and South River.
 - Workforce Learning Link programs
- Exploring effective and viable areas to collaborate services county-wide from various funding streams.
- Will re-evaluate existing literacy goals and how to form them into plans for the new guidelines for Career Pathways.

Reentry Employment Committee (Kevin Kurdziel)

- This committee is looking specifically at the employment segment of re-entry and establishing apprenticeship programs to meet the dual need of job/income and training.
- The Dept. of Labor and the County Warden are pursuing a small program, using youth funding, with landscapers who continue training upon a client's release. Melissa Lewis asked if the youth has to be in a county correctional facility or if someone in other facilities could be eligible. Kevin Kurdziel said that could it be looked at in the future and Julie Piano offered that Youth under those circumstances could be served through our Youth Department.
- Programs like these could also lead to entrepreneurship, which could help stop the "revolving door."

Staff Reports/Ad Hoc Committees

One Stop (Julie Piano)

- The 1st Quarter PY2-16 report with the number of ITAs and Learning Link numbers was in the meeting packet. Our actual level of service is lower than initial projected goal numbers.
- A number of audits of our programs have been done or are pending.
- Training is taking place for Inter-agency referrals and AOSOS with our WFNJ core partners.
- Staff is cleaning up AOSOS records for transition to WIOA accountability.
- Functional Alignment, as part of the combined state plan, will change the way business is conducted with our partners.
- Dan Frankel requested that the Board be given reports that compare statistics to prior years. Mr. Kurdziel concurred and said we were moving toward simplified reports that will include those comparisons and that committees can and should request the type of information reported and how it is presented.

WorkFirst New Jersey (John Ross)

- The WFNJ report for the first quarter of program year 2016 was included in the meeting packet. It contains information the participation in TANF, GA, and SNAP programs. Any changes to participation, etc. are reflected in Public Assistance programs on a delayed basis.
- With the discontinuation of the waiver for the implementation of the requirements of the ABAWD/SNAP it has been challenging identifying participants and level of participation. The One Stops and the Board of Social Services are working together to engage additional ABAWD participants. The “show rate” is at 1/3 and an effort has to be made to improve that and to show that full-time employment is a better option than public assistance.

Economic Development and Business Services (Kevin Kurdziel)

- Mr. Kurdziel is currently managing the unit until November.
- The new, combined position of manager and job developer has been filled and the new person will start in November.
- The report with Unit activities is included in the meeting folder.

Incumbent Worker Training Policy (MCWDB 2016-03) * ACTION ITEM

- This policy will allow use of up to 20% (estimated to be up to \$800,000) of Adult and Dislocated Worker funding for the training of Incumbent workers as allowed by the WIOA of 2014.
- The State has set this up and while we have no plans to use funds for this right now, we would like it in place if needed. A policy for use of these funds will be put in place by the Office and the Board will be notified if we plan to use funds for this. Only if money is determined to be available will we use it for this, other programs will not be cut back.
- We will work with employers to determine what kind of training and how much reimbursement will be allowed and employers will have to supply some funding also. Training existing employees for new job responsibilities could help alleviate layoffs.
- Roseann Bucciarelli advised that other resources, such as grants, for incumbent workers are also available and should be looked at before and in addition to this kind of program.
- A motion to approve this Policy was called for by José Montes and seconded by Kathy Shaw. The vote was called and the motion passed unanimously.

New Business

- Ms. Schiff announced that the Associated Construction Contractors of NJ will again hold a Construction Industry Career Day in May 2017 at the Expo Center in Edison highlighting careers in construction and apprenticeship programs. “It is not a job, it is a career.” This event is open to everyone in the state.
- Mr. Kurdziel announced that the MCOWD was sponsoring a Veteran’s Job and Services Fair in East Brunswick on November 4 which we hope to make an annual event.
- Freeholder Polos is leaving to become Executive Director of the MC Improvement Authority. Shanti Narra is replacing him on the Board of Chosen Freeholders.

Public Comment

- Andrea Levandowski of the State Library and Karen Parry of the East Brunswick Public Library (EBPL) presented information about the roll out of Career Connections at the libraries through a grant and in partnership with the Dept. of Labor.
- The EBPL is setting up a Career Connections Center with trained staff for 25 hours a week, as well as other initiatives to help job seekers such as access to databases and meeting of the Jersey Job Club.
- Amy Bellisano commended using existing resources in local locations and Mr. Kurdziel added that it helps because the libraries can fill in some “off hours” gaps.

Adjournment (Jill Schiff)

- A motion was called for and made by Amy Bellisano to adjourn and seconded by Bernice Proctor Venable.
- The vote was called, the motion passed and the meeting was adjourned.

Handouts:

- Emailed ahead of the meeting:
 - Minutes from the July 25, 2016 meeting
- Emailed ahead of the meeting and in the meeting packets:
 - Agenda
 - WDB Report
 - Performance Report
 - Placement Report
 - BDU Report
 - Policy Proposal MCOWD 2016-03
 - 2017 WDB Meeting Dates
 - Ethics Forms
 - Committee Descriptions

The next meeting will be on January 24, 2017 at 9:00 AM.