



Workforce Development Board
County of Middlesex

One Stop Partners Committee

Thursday, July 27, 2017-1:30PM

Location: New Brunswick One Stop Career Center
Middlesex County Office of Workforce Development
550 Jersey Ave. New Brunswick, NJ 08901
WIOA Conference Room B

Meeting Minutes

Staff: Kevin Kurdziel, John Ross, Barbara Heyward, Sandra Ciccone, Lori Miranda, Susan Rauscher, Shamara Gatling_Davila, Claudia Dorsch

Attendees: Eric Diamond, Yamillet Febo-Gomez, Patricia Foster, Myrna Garcia, Poo Lin, Phyllis Boulenger, Miriam Ruiz, Silva Saa, Roxane Teleck, Timothy Timberlake, Tracy Montani

- I) Welcome John Ross
Everyone present: went around the room and introduced themselves.
- II) Approval of Minutes: June 22, 2017 John Ross
The minutes of Thursday, **June 22, 2017**, was presented. Kevin Kurdziel and Sandy Ciccone abstained from voting. the minutes were unanimously approved.
- III) Update from Middlesex County One Stop
 - a) Introduction of One Stop Operator Kevin Kurdziel/Craig Schlosser
 - Craig not here yet
 - b) Workforce Development Board Meeting (7/25/17)-----Kevin Kurdziel
 - The Workforce Development Board has some standing committees one of which is the One-Stop committee so moving forward this year is making sure that a member of the board chairs each committee. Therefore, at some point, we would be transitioning the leadership of this Board from John to a member of the Board whoever that board member may be no later than September/October. Does everyone know what the role of the Workforce Board is? The role of the Workforce Board is to serve as an advisory committee on behalf of the Freeholders to local workforce area to, and it is made up of the majority of private sector local business members which are 51% and the other percentage is made up Organized labor which is 20% and the remainder is our other One-Stop Partners in government agencies. The role of the is to provide advice and advise in issues related to local workforce areas we have several committees such as Economic & Business Development Committee, Literacy Committee, One Stop Disability Committee, Governance Committee, and an Executive Committee which is made up of the Board Officers. However, these committees have been established and assembled to provide information on driving the Boards agenda for any given program year that necessarily was not always done in the past but was moving more and more towards that where it's less staff driven committee and more member driven with the assistance of staff, and that is one of Shamara's role as Program Analyst for the Workforce Board. Also, you will see in WIOA the law talking about Workforce Board as a governing body but NJ has not entirely gone in that directions yet, and the governing body is another way of saying it helps set policies. The board does have the ability on the advice of its committee to make recommendations that would affect the services we provide the board also approve our budget, which they just did in the last meeting on Tuesday, and you will have a presentation on the budget from Claudia in just a few minutes. The way it works is that the Board approves the Budget and then the budget either before or after in this case before hand went to the

Board of Freeholders for just the insertion of funds into the County Budget, but the board members approve the actual budget line items. Going back to the Committees real quick not only made up of Workforce Board Member but also members of the community as yourself or collaborating agencies and we also have the Youth Advisory Committee. We recently elected a new slate of officers for the first time in several years we have a new chairperson coming on board Jill Shift who has been our chair for 7 to 8 years is stepping down as chair but is remaining on the Board and Gabe Lavigne who is the chairperson of our Youth Advisory Committee is assuming the role as chairperson and Amy Bellisnao who is the current Vice Chair will remain as Vice Chair and Ingrid Couhinto will be the recording secretary for the board that will be our new slate of officers for the new program year. A few ideas of what the board votes on during the meeting

(1) Policy resolution

- (a) Local area to be able to designate 10% to adult and dislocated worker funding for transitional jobs. Transitional Job basically service a special population for example: WorkFirst, TANF, someone coming out of the criminal justice system, or any other special population that is identified by the local area and what that transitional funding CAN DO is pay a person's salary for up to 3 months and unlike the OJT if the person does not get hired at the end of the 3 months so be it but at least they received the training and experience. Therefore, we are not currently running the program but maybe at the end of the program year we could offer it if funding is available.
 - (b) 2017-05 – Demand Occupations here in our local area
 - (i) *Advanced Manufacturing; Financial Services; Health Care; Life Sciences; Retail, Hospitality & Tourism; Technology; and Transportation, Logistics & Distribution. The reason why we set that policy and identify those demand occupation is that those are the areas that we will be funding this year.*
 - (c) 2017-06 Establish a new process for appointing members to the Board
 - (i) Which just formalizes the process really in the past its been a very informal process where a name could be submitted to me directly and then we would submit to the Board and now one change we made is that before someone is appointed to the Board it has to get conditional approval from our executive committee the executive Committee upon their approval would then submitted to the freeholders for the full appointment by the board and then the person would be sworn in on the next freeholders meeting.
 - (d) 2017-____ - Youth Wage Policy
 - (i) We changed the wages up to 12.00 an hour
 - (ii) We also established criteria for our needs base support, which is additional support, based on the client's needs.
 - (e) 35th Annual GSETA Conference – Garden State Employment Training Association they will holding the annual conference in Atlantic City October 5, 2017 and its going to be more Exhibit space this year and workshops.
 - (f) Finally, Diane wanted me to pass along that the Notice of Grant Opportunity for the Talent Network is out on the streets and Proposals are due next week.
 - (g) New Marketing Material – The new County Branding Workforce Development goes mobile TEXT Workforce 56512 to receive information on recruitment.
- c) County Jail Project.....Kevin Kurdziel
- Pre Apprenticeship Program- HOOP Houses to grow vegetables. We are very close to receiving 75,000 grant from the state department of labor, which will be attached to the Pre-Apprentice Program, as well as moving some funding from the youth program since the project will include 18–24 ex-offenders.
- d) PY-2017 Budget Review.....Claudia Dorsch

- We received all of our funding notices for PY 17. We received significant cuts in all of our grants with the exception of the Workforce Learning Link:
 - Adult – we were cut by \$257,117 or 17.7%
 - Youth – we were cut by \$367,390 or 20.6%
 - Dislocated Worker – we were cut by \$204,974 or 9.2%
 - Work First New Jersey – we were cut by \$359,707 or 16.5%
- Workforce Learning Link – we received \$407,000 for PY 17 versus \$212,000 for PY 16 however, this is a separate grant that can only be used for a select group of clients and the only salaries that can be charged to this grant are for those staff that works directly for the learning links and their supervisors. As per the state, we can only spend \$1,000 per client enrolled in the learning link. Therefore, in order to spend the full \$407,000, we must serve 407 clients.
- Overall, including the Learning Link grant, we were cut \$994,188 or 12.3%. Not including the Learning Link, we were cut \$1,189,188 or 15.1%.
- Due to the cuts, we will be taking the following action in order to minimize the impact to our clients;
 - Reduce amount spent on supplies and overhead. All supply requests must be approved by myself first, and then the director. Items that might have been approved of in the past will not be for the upcoming year. We are also reducing professional development costs as well as memberships, subscriptions, dues, etc.
 - Eliminate most conferences. Staff will not be attending the annual NAWB and NAWDP conference as well as other conferences. The annual GSETA conference, which is held each fall, had 11 employees attend last year. This year only 6 are slated to attend.
 - Staff Salaries – Three positions are being created. An existing employee whose current position is being eliminated is filling one position. Another position is being filled at a full time level to replace the previous employee that was part time. The third position is new. No other new hires or promotions are planned for PY 17.
 - Youth Stipends – currently those youth in an ITA receive a stipend of \$20 per day while they are in training as well as having their bus/train passes paid for. We are eliminating purchasing the transportation passes and instead those youth in training will use their stipends.
 - Mileage reimbursement for youth that travel to schools more than 20 miles from their home – This is being eliminated. The stipend they receive will be used for transportation.
 - We will be writing less ITA's in PY 17 than in PY 16. I will be asking the state for additional funding mid-way through the program year if I feel we are going to fall short of serving every client eligible. We also are anticipating less clients due to the decrease in the unemployment rate.
 - We will be looking to de-obligate, as many old ITA's as possible from PY 15 and PY 16. We are anticipating a very tight and lean year where every expense will be examined closely.

e) Heldrich Center/TANF.....John Ross

- **The Heldrich Center** has been charged by LWD/DFD with conducting a study on the current status of WFNJ/TANF. This study will be extensive and include all aspects of the system. The Study will include input from key informants through the system including State and County personnel, WFNJ participants, Vendors and Employers. A review of best practices both within New Jersey and throughout the Nation is a priority. The study commenced in June 2017 and is due to conclude in December 2017. The final deliverable will be a 30-page blue print for the future to be submitted to the incoming Administration in 2018.

f) Functional Realignment.....John Ross

- Despite severe reductions in funding in PY 2017 funding from WIOA and WFNJ, the Office of Workforce Development will assume case management responsibilities of the General Assistance and SNAP populations prior to the end of the calendar year. In Perth Amboy, there will be one promotion and reassignment of duties to provide the desired Case Management Unit with three (3) case managers. In New Brunswick, a bi-lingual seasonal employee will be hired so that the case management unit in New Brunswick is similar in size and capability as in Perth Amboy.
- Training will begin in mid-September in Perth Amboy and full assumption of the caseloads is anticipated by November. Training will begin in New Brunswick in October and full assumption is anticipated by December.

g) Learning Link Review.....John Ross

- The **Learning Links** are being reviewed in both New Brunswick and Perth Amboy by staff of the Office of Workforce Development. It is anticipated that through such a review, the following will goals will be achieved:
 - Ensure that the available resources currently available are utilized by both Learning Links to improve the scope and quality of service.
 - Identify the path for WFNJ participants to more fully benefit from the Learning Links in accordance with prevailing regulations.
 - Identify the curriculum necessary to serve additional participants as well as the resources that would be procured.
 - Develop a marketing strategy to inform citizens in Middlesex County of the availability of services through the Learning Links.

h) Labor Market Update.....John Ross

➤ **Labor Market Information:**

• United States:	4.4%	June 2017	+ .1%
• New Jersey:	4.1%	June 2017	Unchanged
• Middlesex County	3.8%	May 2017	Awaiting June information

i) Business Resource Center-----Barbara Heyward

- We have had total of (4) recruitments for Amazon (Cranbury location) recruitments starting June 23, 2017 and will end on July 28, 2017.

Recruitment numbers are as follows:

- June 23rd, 2017 – 29 candidates attended and applied
- June 30th, 2017 – 14 candidates attended and applied
- July 7th, 2017 – 34 candidates attended and applied
- July 14th, 2017 – 31 candidates attended and applied
- July 28th, 2017 –
- Total as of July 17, 2017 (108) with one more date to go.

- Amazon (Integrity Staffing) has also had additional recruitments with other counties and has attended numerous Job Fairs, and has had online candidates applying for the Cranbury location.

Amazon will be having the actual hiring event in August and have reserved a hotel banquet room in Cranbury for the interviewing process of all candidates chosen to interview. I have been told they will disclose the number hired for the Cranbury location after the event from our efforts here at the Middlesex County Office of Workforce Development.

Amazon (Integrity Staffing) recruitment events for the Edison warehouse location will start August 11th in New Brunswick and every Friday until the required number of positions are filled.

- FedEx

- We will be doing more recruiting events for FedEx starting in August; dates will be disclosed later for expansion of the Edison and Keasby locations.
- Estimated position opening (not seasonal) are:
- 350 fulltime positions
- 700 part-time positions
- They will be increasing rate of pay to be competitive with wages of Amazon
- Upcoming Business:
- ABJ Drones – new and upcoming technology field

j) Youth Update.....Sandra Ciccone

- As of June 30, 2017, there were one hundred seventy-one (171) enrolled in the young adults' program - Entry Level Internships Training and Employment (ELITE). Enrollments were in various activities such as Work Experience, High School Equivalency Preparation, Basic Skills Remediation and/or Post-Secondary Education (Occupational Training). 28 youth passed their High School Equivalency (HSE) exam and obtained their diploma.
- Youth participants attended three Industry Tours. The first tour was to the Healthcare Talent Network Apprenticeship Week at Rutgers Campus in Piscataway. The second tour was a presentation and tour of the NJ Carpenters Union and Apprenticeship Training Facility in Kenilworth. The third was a presentation and facility tour of the Sunny Delight Plant in Dayton. The tours were educational, informative and well received.
- The Financial Literacy workshops continued and were well commended in the program. To date, 10 sessions have been provided to the youth with a full financial literacy curriculum scheduled for upcoming program year 17.
- Work-based learning activities (Work Experience, Pre-apprenticeship, Apprenticeship, On-the-job training, Internships) have been set up with several businesses in Perth Amboy such as the Perth Amboy Recreation Department, Raritan Bay Medical Center, The Law Offices of Kenneth L. Gonzalez and Associates, LLC., and our own MCOWD office. 17 youth were placed in a Work Experience this program year. These work-based learning experiences provided the youth the opportunity for on-the-job training in specific industries as well as learn and put to practice acceptable, preferred soft skills in the workplace. In certain instances, these have resulted in gainful employment for the youth.
- The HSE Graduation will take place on August 16, 2017, 6:30 pm at Middlesex County College Parkview Room located in West Hall.
- MCOWD exercised its option to renew the terms of the current contract with Middlesex County College for the High School Equivalency (HSE) Program. The College will run the High School Equivalency (HSE) Program for this upcoming year, which begins on September 1, 2017 and will end on August 31, 2018.

IV) Work First NJ Update.....John Ross/Roxane Teleck

- The Board of Social Services and the Office of Workforce Development continue to examine the monthly TANF Denominator Reports to identify what can be done to address the Participation Rate in Middlesex County. The most recently issued Report indicates some success as the Rate has improved to 27% after lingering in the 18% to 24% area for several years.

V) Literacy/ High School Equivalency.....Tim Timberlake

- Started summer program. 3 days a week. Nice having fewer people in the building. Send some students to the high school for the summer. Has 6 new immigrant ESL classes. 171 graduates for the year. Numbers down. Classes are down. People are not sticking to it. Small evening classes.

Trying to do some outreach to increase numbers. Youth Corps had 43 graduates. 83% passed H.S.E. Fantastic teacher there this year.

- Working on A.B.E. grant. Included MCC as a partner and Literacy New Jersey.
- Individual Educational Training to align with 7 sectors
- DOL says NBALC will not be able to use Metrix because of online nature of training for NBALC grant.
- Will have a dedicated teacher for ESL, Civics,

VI) Old/Other Business, Announcements

- Garcia happy to be party of the group
- Job Fair on Old Bridge on September 14
- Vet job and service fair Nov 2 in conjunction with Veteran's Day

VII) Adjournment

**The next meeting of the Middlesex County One Stop Partners Committee
will be cancelled August 24, 2017.**