



Workforce Development Board
County of Middlesex

Reentry Employment Committee
September 19, 2017 – 9:30 AM

Present:	Amy Bellisano, Julio Briones, Ileen Bradley, Roseann Bucciarelli, Luis Fernandez, Barbara Koonz, Melyssa Lewis, William Lim, Miriam Ruiz, and Kathy Shaw (via phone)
Guest & Staff:	Anthony Capece, Tracy Cangrano, John Koufos, Austin Morreale and Janet Whelan Shamara Gatling-Davila, Kevin Kurdziel, Diane Seavers

- 1) Welcome/Introductions** **Kevin Kurdziel**
 - a) Kevin Kurdziel greeted those in attendance and asked everyone to introduce themselves.

- 2) Review & Approval of Minutes from Previous Meeting** **Kevin Kurdziel**
 - a) There were no questions/concerns about the minutes, so Roseann made the 1st motion to approve and Kathy Shaw the 2nd.

- 3) Workforce Board Updates** **Kevin Kurdziel**
 - a) Gabriele Lavigne is the new chairperson for the Middlesex County Workforce Development Board. Jill Schiff, the previous chair, will remain on the board as a member. Amy Bellisano will remain the vice chair. The newly inducted Secretary, Ingrid Coutinho, is no longer on the board as a result of her resignation from Job Corp.
 - b) Someone will be voted on and appointed in the near future by the bylaws committee.

- 4) PY 2018 Budget** **Kevin Kurdziel**
 - a) The funding for Program Year 2018 has been reduced by \$1.2 million. No cuts were made to staffing positions. The ordering of office supplies and traveling for conferences will be reduced. The county is optimistic at this point for flat funding come October. With a new Governor, as of January, the county is hopeful a relief will come by way of state funding.
 - b) If the need arises, other grants will be reviewed for considered.

- 5) Building a Partnership with NJ State Parole Board** **Kevin Kurdziel**
 - a) A partnership between the Middlesex County Office of Workforce Development and the State Parole Board is crucial in bridging the gap of ex-offenders to One-Stop Career Center services such as resume writing, recruitments and job matching. There is an open invitation for someone from Parole to sit on this committee.
 - b) A great partnership has been formed between the Middlesex County Office of Workforce Development and the Middlesex County Jail warden.
 - c) Transportation to the local One-Stop Career Centers is a barrier for some ex-offenders and non-offenders as well. Transportation has been as issue for quite some time for parts of Middlesex County. A meeting was held with the Lieutenant Governor on how to improve transportation. Collaboration between public and private businesses is needed because the cost is too much for the county to take on. Looking into methods like Uber and Lyft might be an option as well.

- d) Conditions on landing approvals should be considered. In order for a new company to move into a location, there should be an agreement as to the amount it will contribute to the public transportation in that area. As in the past, the transportation issue is to be continued.

6) Status of Middlesex County Jail Pre-Apprentice Program

Kevin Kurdziel

- a) Kevin has received verbal approval for \$76,000 in funding for the Pre-Apprentice Program. The request is still waiting with the fiscal officer for review. Having this Hoop House year-round ASAP collaboration at the county prison will not only serve as horticulture and agriculture training, but networking connections within the industry.
- b) Golf courses are a great link to employment post-incarceration.
- c) PSE&G and NJ Transit also hire tree trimmers to clear the way of poles and debris off the tracks.

7) Marketing our Reentry Services

Kevin Kurdziel

- a) The Middlesex County Office of Workforce Development would like to have marketing material similar to the brochures for employers and job seekers, but catered to the reentry population.
- b) Some suggestions for the brochure, from those in attendance, include: Services provided in the One-Stop Career Centers, listings of external/community partners, a flow-chart of county resources, electronic searchable database of services, create a Hub and send monthly information to all partners, a set of know your rights facts on the brochure or back of a business card attached to the brochure, and add a Reentry link to guide by cell for easy access to resources, job fairs and recruitment events.
- c) Kevin would like to eventually have a dedicated Reentry Team located within the One-Stop.
- d) Representatives from Neighbor Core attended the meeting and discussed the services and assistance they provide to the Reentry population.

8) Business Services Reorganization

- a) In an effort to eliminate duplication of work the Business Resource Center through employment services will be responsible for visiting employers and OJT contracts for the state. The Middlesex County Office of Workforce Development Business Development Unit will now spearhead the in-house recruitment events.
- b) A new person has been hired for the Business Development Unit. She is expected to start in November.

9) Metrix Software

Diane Seavers

- a) Metrix was recently purchased with freeholder approval. The program offers about 5,000 courses and about 150 of those courses can lead to credentials. There are no prerequisites to take the online courses. Intermediate computer skills and high speed internet is needed to fully take advantage of Metrix. Those interested will have to complete a two-page application, so they can be added into our database system. The approval of Metrix is pending for the July Middlesex County Freeholders meeting. November 1, 2017, is an expected start date for the program. Each license is valid for six (6) months. Each person will have a total of six (6) months to complete an online course that has been started. This online training has unending potential. The program will be marketed to clients needing the training, staff development and also to our community partners. The details on where testing will be held for the Nationally Recognized Credentials from the particular online trainings is still being worked out. Two current options are a computer room inside the One Stop Career Center or using Certiport for testing.
- b) The length of each course varies. This would be a great tool for those currently incarcerated. They will have additional training which can be used when they are released.
- c) Metrix will also be used for our staff development.
- d) Hoping to have full implementation by November 1, 2017.

10) New Business

- a) Middlesex County Job Fair was hosted on September 14, 2017. Approximately 150/160 people were in attendance.

11) Upcoming Events

- a) The Veterans Job/Services Fair will be held on November 2, 2017 at the Sayreville VFW.

12) Adjournment

- a) Diane Seavers made the 1st motion and Barbara Koonz the 2nd to adjourn the meeting.

The next meeting of the Reentry Employment Committee will be Tuesday, December 19, 2017.