



Workforce Development Board
County of Middlesex

Operations and Planning Committee Minutes

July 25, 2019

Present: Lisa Balewitz, Meredith Blount, Laila Caune, Lillian Cortes, Surelis DeLima, Eileen O'Donnell, Barbara Armstrong, Tasha Hogan, Natasha James-Waldon, Bill Neary, Melissa Bernstein, Sabrina Sullivan, Roxan Teleck, Tracey Montani, Poo Lin, Miriam Plumer, Francisco Velez, Gwendolyn Wiggins.

Staff/Guests: Hilda Alonzo, Sandra Ciccone, Shamara Gatling-Davila, Kevin Kurdziel Carmen Mercado, Diane Seavers and Martin Schamburger

- 1. Welcome and Introductions Diane Seavers
a. Diane opened the meeting by introducing herself and asking everyone to introduce themselves.
2. Approval of Minutes from April 25, 2019 Meeting..... Diane Seavers
a. Carmen made the first motion to approve the minutes and Sandy seconded the motion. No opposes.
3. Update: Middlesex County Workforce Development BoardKevin Kurdziel
a. The last Workforce Development Board meeting was on Tuesday, July 23, 2019. During that meeting, the board approved the budget for the current program year, which started July 1, 2019.
b. The funding for this year will remain relatively flat. An additional \$100,000.00 was received this year over last year's budget.
c. In terms of county wide updates: You've probably all heard of Destination 2040.
d. In Kevin's new role, he is working a lot in Economic Development and the education side of it.
4. Presentation Easter Seals.....Barbara Armstrong
a. The Easter Seals Senior Community Service Employment Program (Formerly Senior Community Service Program).
b. The eligibility factors from the Department of Labor are: Homeless or Risk of being homeless, limited English proficiency, low literacy, veteran or spouse of a veteran, documented disability,

living in a rural area, registered and used One-Stop services but was unable to find employment, low employment prospect, severe disability/frail, age 75+, old enough to collect social security but are not due to not having enough points, and living in an area with persistent unemployment.

- c. When people enter the program, an assessment is done to identify any computer skills and what the person is interested in accomplishing. They then work together to help the participants reach their goals. An Individual Employment Plan (IEP) is then created.
- d. The funding for this program has been cut drastically.

5. **Presentation: Coming Home. Inc.**..... Eileen O'Donnell

- a. Coming Home is the non-profit corporation formed by Middlesex County and the United Way of Central Jersey to create a true system to end homelessness in the County. We build coalitions and foster collaborative strategies and public-private partnerships among local government, affordable housing developers, social service providers and others. Collectively, our mission is to rehouse individuals and families as quickly as possible and to provide connections to community resources to enable them to sustain their new homes.
- b. COORDINATED ENTRY AND ASSESSMENT PROCESS: Coming Home administers the process whereby all persons experiencing homelessness enter the system of helpful providers through one door by calling 211, whose needs are determined using a uniform assessment tool, and who are prioritized for available resources based on a collaboratively agreed upon prioritization scoring to determine the person's severity of needs and length of homelessness.
- c. USING DATA TO DRIVE CHANGE: Coming Home is the clearinghouse for homelessness data in the County. We administer the County's Homeless Management Information System (HMIS), which facilitates the coordinated provision of services to all seeking them. We are the Point-in-Time (PIT) coordinator for the County. We train volunteers and agency personnel in the administration of the PIT survey; conduct an analysis of the data gathered and develop an action plan in response to such analysis. We lead our community's participation in the Built for Zero Initiative of Community Solutions, a national organization, helping communities end homelessness. This endeavor is helping us fine tune our data measurements and define discrete goals, along with performance measures, to achieve in workable timeframes.
- d. SOCIAL SERVICE NAVIGATION: Coming Home provides direct case management to persons in the community experiencing, or at risk of, homelessness and entering the system through the 211 Homeless Hotline. With limited funding, we can provide temporary, emergency hotel/motel placement when the shelters are unavailable. The same fund can also be used, if possible, to assist clients in establishing themselves in permanent housing, through the provision of 1 ½ months' rent. The latter approach clearly leads to a much better outcome for the client and is how we strive to use the funds.
- e. We also launched a 2-year pilot program in 2019 whereby the two New Brunswick hospitals of Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital (RWJUH, part of Barnabas Health) and Saint Peter's University Hospital, fund the cost of two social service navigators employed by Coming Home to address the health related social needs of their high ER utilizing patients in need. The navigators of this Social and Health Services Integration (SHI) Program reach out to the patients identified by each hospital and do their best to address any identified needs of food insecurity, housing instability and breakdown of social support networks and connect them to other benefits, services and opportunities that they, with the clients, have identified as beneficial to increase the clients' levels of self-sufficiency.

6. **Local/Regional Plan Update**..... Diane Seavers

- a. Shamara, Diane and Kevin updated the local and regional plans. They are available for review on the county website and the WDB website.
- b.

7. **One Stop Partners Resource Directory**.....Martin Schamberger/Diane Seavers
 - a. Hard copy of the Partner Resource Directory is being updated. Once the agencies update the information, it will be emailed to the partners. It will not be printed for distribution. All updates should be completed prior to the next meeting in October.
 - b. The Services Locator is still available online via the county website.

8. **One Stop Committee Membership Update**..... Martin Schamberger/Diane Seavers
 - a. All members should identify and make Martin aware of any designees/alternates that might attend a meeting on your behalf.

9. **Old/New Business**.....
 - a. Middlesex County Office of Workforce Development, Middlesex County College, Woodbridge Township and Mainstream Recovery applied for and received a grant from the Sate of NJ through the Department of labor and Workforce Development. The Opioid Recovery Employment Program-Pathways to Recovery Initiative.
 - b. The Recovery Employment Solutions Education and Training (RESET) Program is a grant funded initiative that will provide job training, education, and supportive services to at least 100 Middlesex County residents impacted by opioid use.

10. **Future Meeting Topics**.....
 - a. A presentation from Keep Middlesex Moving should be scheduled for a future meeting.
 - b. NAMI is also interested in presenting at a future meeting.

11. **Announcements**.....
 - a. Coming Home Inc. is hosting a Masquerade Ball, Gala on October 19, 2019. Eileen will email details of the gala.

12. **Networking/Adjournment**.....
 - a. Meeting Adjourned

NEXT MEETING: THURSDAY, OCTOBER 24, 2019 – 1:30PM

Middlesex County College: 2600 Woodbridge Ave -, Edison, NJ 08817 Crabiell Hall