



Workforce Development Board
County of Middlesex

Business Engagement Committee Minutes

May 2, 2019

Present: Roseann Bucciarelli, Dan Frankel, Barbara Heyward, Poo Lin, Brian Sant'Angelo, Marc Schweitzer, Timothy Timberlake, Bernice Venable, Joanne Vogel and Anthea Williams.
Staff/Guests: Shamara Gatling-Davila, Kevin Kurdziel and Diane Seavers

1. Welcome and Introductions .....Kevin Kurdziel

a. Kevin opened the meeting by introducing himself and asking everyone to introduce themselves.

2. Approval of Minutes from May 2, 2019 Meeting

a. Bernice made the first motion to approve the minutes and Marc seconded the motion. No opposes.

3. Business Engagement Team(BET) Report .....Barbara Heyward

- a. Kevin announced the most recent statistics from the Department of Labor: NJ has an unemployment rate of 4.1%, the United States has an unemployment rate of 3.8% and Middlesex County has an unemployment rate of 3.5% (about 15,000 people and 3rd highest for the state). This is a decrease from the 4% Middlesex County had the previous month.
b. For the last quarter of 2018 and January, February and March of this year there were 39 recruitments in which 477 people attended.
c. The Business Engagement Team has placed a total of 55 people in employment, during this time, that competed their I.T.A.
d. The Business Engagement Team now hosts mini job fairs due to the amount of companies that now seek assistance for recruitments. It was reported that 2 people that are among the reentry population were hired with Sunoco from the mini job fair that was held in Old Bridge. Sunoco has career pathway opportunities for those that do well to move up the ladder.
e. The BET is also involved in a community project. The Federal Government wants the Housing Projects residents evaluated that are on Section 8/low income. DVR, 55+, and Veteran representation was at the community event. Fifty people were hired from the event held in Edison and seven senior citizens were placed in the 55+ program. State Side Affairs published an article in regards to the great outcome.
f. The purpose of the evaluations is to determine the need or lack thereof for the people currently receiving rental assistance/section 8. This could result in more referrals to DVR and 55+ program.
g. Sunoco, HMS Host, KISS Industries, Realreal (which had to have two recruitments due to the large number of people attending in Perth Amboy; 734 attendees. The amount of people hired were 384 some of which are among the reentry population. About 25 new employers have contacted the Business Engagement Team since January 2019.
h. Outreach has started with churches and other religious organizations
i. Talent Path Tree House Learning, is looking to recruit 20 people (ideally women) for tech jobs in Piscataway. Recruitments are being held in: New Brunswick, Perth Amboy, Youth Core Program and Displaced Homemakers in Milltown. Fifty-seven people signed-up to attend the recruitments. There is a ten-hour curriculum that is completed prior to the next step. The six-months paid training for those that pass the background screening and are chosen. Afterwards, there will be on-going follow-up.
j. Salesforce will continue to be used by the Business Engagement Team and the Stateside Business Unit in an effort to reduce duplication.

4. New Committee Chair .....Kevin Kurdziel

- a. The Board has appointed Roseann Bucciarelli as the new chair of this committee. She will co-facilitate with Kevin.
- b. Marc McCormick is the new President of Middlesex County College (MCC). The Office of Workforce Development and workforce Development Board will continue to collaborate with MCC.
- c. The new Department of Transportation within the county is expected to address the needs of the residents.
- d. In an effort to get more board members involved, in August, more people from the Workforce Development Board will join this committee.

**5. Identifying Emerging Industries in Middlesex County.....Kevin Kurdziel**

- a. A project for this committee is going to be identifying emerging industries. After identifying the industries, contacts/connections need to be made with employers. The goal would be to add employers of the emerging industries to join the Workforce Development Board.
- b. Kevin handed out a report of emerging industries. Distribution and Electronic Commerce were the top two. Distribution speaks to the warehouses in the county and ecommerce includes businesses like Amazon and Realreal.
- c. Biopharmaceutical is still growing in the county as well. Business services is broad, but also listed as a growing sector. Other areas to keep a close watch for are: Certified Public Accountants, temp agencies and security guards.
- d. Future reports can include the top businesses hiring in that particular industry.
- e. Often, companies go to the municipalities for assistance with expanding their business and the municipalities rarely know to refer them to the correct department so more marketing is needed.

**6. Devise Strategy for Recruiting New Board Members (Private Sector).....Kevin Kurdziel**

- a. An event like a breakfast to introduce the Workforce Development Board to local emerging business industries could be beneficial for gaining new members.

**7. Old/New Business.....Kevin Kurdziel**

- a. Relocating into a more business friendly building is still a priority.
- b. Middlesex County Workforce Development Board has joined partnership with North Jersey Partners. Eleven counties comprise NJP since Union and Middlesex joined.
- c. Middlesex County Office of Workforce Development is still working towards obtaining 501c-3 status. The next step is getting incorporated. With this non-profit status, funds can be raised to cover areas in which WIOA funding does not. Some of the funds can also be used to work with small businesses.
- d. North Jersey Partners is in the process of surveying small businesses in NJ to inquire about their needs, awareness of the Workforce Development Boards in NJ and the trends in their industries.
- e. The NJDOL has put \$125,000 into this. Edward J. Bloustein School will oversee the project and Community College will have focus groups to acquire data.
- f. After three years, the Parole Reentry Taskforce will be reestablished. The next meeting is in June.
- g. Grand Opening: Cascades in Piscataway Advanced Manufacturing 12 hours shifts (4 days on 3 days off). They want to add 100 employees over the next year to make a 4th shift (24/7 facility).
- h. Tokiwa Cosmetics located in Monroe had a grand opening. This is the US Headquarters for this company. They have positions from entry level through PHD positions.

**8. Adjournment ..... Kevin Kurdziel**

**NEXT MEETING: THURSDAY, AUGUST 1, 2019 – 9:00AM**  
**550 JERSEY AVENUE, NEW BRUNSWICK, NJ 08901 WIOA Conference Room B.**