



## Middlesex County Workforce Investment Board Meeting

**Tuesday, October 28, 2014, 9:00 AM**

Present: Gloria Aftanski, Manuel Biagas, Roseann Bucciarelli, Janice Fishbein, Lorrie Ginegaw, Dawn Lystad (as designee for Brian Loughlin), Maryann Lovas, Henrietta Wilson (as designee for Angela Mackaronis), Naomi Vliet (as designee for Laura Morana), Susan Pasternack, James Perry, Julie Piano, Joseph Picone, Ginny Romeo, Jill Schiff, Kathy Shaw, Michelle Suskind, Timothy Timberlake, Bernice Proctor Venable  
Staff: Kevin Kurdziel, Nina Rios-Rivera, John Ross, Melinda Walton  
Guests: Anthea Williams, Sean McDonald, Jeanne Zwingli

---

1. **Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance** ..... Jill Schiff
2. **Roll Call** ..... Jill Schiff
3. **Welcome and Introductions** ..... Jill Schiff
  - a. Compliance with Open Meeting Act.  
Notice of this meeting was made pursuant to the Open Public meetings Act, NJSA 10:4-10
  - b. Approval of Minutes of the July 29, 2014 Meeting. Motion to accept the minutes as written was made by Kathy Shaw and seconded by Henrietta Wilson. A vote was called and it was unanimously decided, with no abstentions, to accept the July 29, 2014 minutes as written.
4. **Chairperson's Report** ..... Jill Schiff
  - a. Ms. Schiff introduced the WIB Director, Kevin Kurdziel, and handed the meeting to him for a few minutes to introduce himself. Mr. Kurdziel welcomed back all those he had already met since he started in August and gave a brief background of his experience in Workforce Development which included 24 years in Essex County with the One Stop, as a family service worker, and with Essex County Community College, Goodwill Industries, and with Prisoner Re-entry. He finds both the Office of Workforce Development and the Workforce Investment Board to be a good situation left to him from Jane Brady. This WIB and its committees are very active and serves the residents of Middlesex County well. He thanked the Board members for their time and efforts and told them he is open to new ideas and to not hesitate to call him for anything.
  - b. Ms. Schiff then introduced Julie Piano as the new One Stop Manager taking over from Adrienne Keaton who retired in September. Ms. Piano was previously the Deputy Manager of Operations in New Brunswick with the One Stop.
5. **One Stop Report** ..... Julie Piano
  - a. Performance Matters.

- i. Adult/Dislocated Worker. We met or exceeded our goals for Program Year '13 and by serving 172 clients so far since July, we are meeting or exceeding our goal of serving 654 clients for the Program Year '14
- ii. Learning Link. We have served 55 clients in New Brunswick and Perth Amboy out of our goal of 198 for Program Year '14 so are on target here also. We are seeking a full time instructor for the Learning Link in New Brunswick who will hopefully be in place by December 1. In the meantime, thanks go out to Mary Smith from Employment Services for handling coverage for now along with two part-time instructors.

**6. Committee Reports**

- a. Youth Investment Council ..... Susan Pasternack
  - i. Our calendars are being distributed to all 9<sup>th</sup> graders in Middlesex County. A copy is in each meeting packet.
  - ii. Recruitment and enrollment for Program Year 2014-15 had a slow start partially due to new HSE requirements and staff changes. But, it was slow last year at this time and we caught up and had 170 enrollments which was 98% of the planned goal.
  - iii. We have been informed verbally that we passed the Summer Work Experience Audit and are awaiting notification in writing.
  - iv. We will have four Industry Tours this year; October 8 at Parkside Industries, thanks to Joel Bettinger, December 16 to PSE&G thanks to Kirk Lew, and two more to be planned for the spring. A question was asked as to how many youth are on each tour because maybe some other Board members would be able to accommodate if it is not too large a group. It is a manageable number, usually one busload. Bernice Proctor Venable was pleased to note that Transportation, Distribution and Logistics was included because it is a "hot area."
  - v. High School Equivalency testing still has some issues with reporting of scores in a timely manner but 14 Youth have passed this year; 3 were from the last program year but received notice of passing in July. We plan to have a graduation ceremony next spring for all those who have passed since the last ceremony in January 2014.
  - vi. ITAs. We have 18 Youth enrolled in training programs. Jill Schiff asked what kind of training programs they were in. The information will be supplied to her
  - vii. MCWAG. We are currently serving 10 youth. Two have finished and have job offers of a Physical Therapy Assistant and a Teacher's Assistant and four more are being interviewed and will enter the program in mid-November.
  - viii. Middlesex County College Work Readiness Program is only at 80% of planned enrollment but have added a third cycle that will increase the enrollment number.
- b. Literacy Committee ..... Gloria Aftanski
  - i. The Literacy Committee goals may have to be adjusted in accordance with some of the new WIOA regulations.
  - ii. Timothy Timberlake reported that they are seeing a 50-55% pass rate with the new HSE which is better than they expected. However, there will be a new test being used in January that may be more difficult. The classes for preparation are almost full.

- c. **Executive** ..... Jill Schiff  
 Most of the Executive Board meeting information was sent ahead to members in the announcements and no action was taken on anything. Below is what was discussed:
  - i. Job Fair on September 30 in South Brunswick had approximately 50 employers represented and served 425 job seekers.
  - ii. Woodbridge is starting a Veteran’s hiring initiative which is privately funded with a donation from Paul Sansone, Sr. from Sansone Automall. More information is available at their website [www.woodbridgeveterans.org](http://www.woodbridgeveterans.org).
  - iii. Our staff is currently attending many Chamber of Commerce events in order to market our Business Services.
  - iv. Kevin Kurdziel has been meeting with many WIB stakeholders during his first two months as Director.
  - v. The Office of Workforce Development has convened a Marketing Committee to develop a new marketing and outreach plan. Anyone from the Board is welcome to be part of it.

- 7. **Business Development Unit** ..... Nina Rios-Rivera
  - a. The Business Development Unit (BDU) Report is included in the meeting packet.
  - b. The BDU has a new Business Representative assigned to it, Anthea Williams, who will be the lead person in Perth Amboy recruitments. It has continued to provide services to businesses and job seekers seeking to start new businesses.
  - c. There have been five Entrepreneurship Seminars and about 15 Library presentations are scheduled over the next three months. We had a successful job fair at the end of September in South Brunswick.
  - d. Jobs 4 Jersey (J4J) – more employers are using self-entry so job orders have dropped even though the jobs are in the system and there is a slight drop in recruitments.
  - e. Some WIA graduates are not using the services of our job developer even though outreach is done. We are assessing and will be trying social media as another way to connect.
  - f. BDU staff participates in many events with other organizations and library presentations started again in October. This will be an important part of the new WIOA.
  - g. The BDU anticipates being a Middlesex affiliate of the new Hispanic Entrepreneurship Center as part of a regional grant by January.

- 8. **New County Website** ..... Kathy Shaw
  - a. The site will be live in November. A sample will be shown at the upcoming quarterly County meeting. It uses Share Point Technology and will be more streamlined. Social media will be a part of it, and it will be easier for the public to find information and translation can be turned on with a click of the mouse.
  - b. Office Directors will be the points of contact and there will be two main content managers and one at each Department level
  - c. Mr. Kurdziel will email the Board when it is live.
  - d. Bernice Proctor Venable noted that marketing the Workforce Investment Board is a challenge. How do we let people know we exist? Many do not know what a Workforce

Investment Board or Office of Workforce Development does. Jill Schiff also wanted to know how we could reach those who do not use social media. We hope to at least be able to direct them to the website. Kathy Shaw responded by saying we are building a presence in social media with email, Constant Contact, Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn etc., using simpler printed brochures to drive people to the website for more information and working on a way to have the capability to give immediate “live” answers to questions posed on the website.

e. Mr. Kurdziel explained that the Office is forming a new Marketing Committee which will help with getting the word out by creating a better, more consistent “branding” of our Office. Nina Rios-Rivera is the Chair but there is no time frame set yet. The next meeting is November 20 at 9:30 AM. Anyone from the Board is welcome to attend and a notice will be sent to them ahead of time.

9. **Director’s Report** ..... Kevin Kurdziel

- a. Since he started on August 4, Mr. Kurdziel has been meeting with many of the WIB stakeholders and he thanks Jill Schiff and the rest of the Executive Board for their help and support.
  - i. Middlesex County College – Dr. Joanne LaPerla-Morales and Dean Roseann Bucciarelli. The college is one of a consortium of community colleges to receive a TAAACCT Grant to provide training in the Health Care fields. It will have a connection with the One Stops. There is a meeting at Bergen Community College next week with the WIB directors and Mr. Kurdziel will report on it at the next Board meeting.
  - ii. Middlesex County Vocational and Technical Schools – Superintendent Brian Laughlin. They are open to further collaboration and a strong partnership and finding innovative ideas and funding opportunities.
  - iii. Other County WIB Directors from Bergen, Essex, Camden, Morris have all been welcoming and helpful and offered guidance.
  - iv. Middlesex County Board of Social Services – Angela Mackaronis. We work closely with them on many issues and anticipate that continuing.
  - v. New Jersey Talent Networks – Meeting with the most of the directors of the Talent Networks. Some have been appointed to appropriate WIB Committees and will be playing a more active role. One point of agreement is that Logistics, Transportation and Distribution is a tremendous area for growth.
  - vi. GSETA and SETC regular meetings.
  - vii. Plans to meet with Catherine Starghill of the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development about goals and hopes to meet with Jim McGreevey, Executive Director Jersey City Employment and Training, to discuss prisoner re-entry programs.
  - viii. Mr. Kurdziel would also like to acknowledge our Freeholder Director, Ron Rios and Freeholder Kenneth Armwood for their support. He thanked Kathy Shaw for bringing him on board.
  - ix. The New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development has reorganized the WFNJ Opportunities Unit bringing a group of departments together under one head.

They include On the Job Training, 55+, SNAP and Prisoner Re-entry Programs. The Prisoner Re-entry Program is targeting Middlesex County and Mr. Kurdziel hopes to meet with them next month. The age of youth to be covered by WIOA regulations has been increased to 24 which will probably now include some on parole that we can now serve in our youth programs.

- x. The Middlesex County unemployment rate of 6.1% is not the highest percentage in the state, but our 27,000 people is the highest number of people and does not include those who have dropped out of the workforce or who have exhausted benefits and are no longer counted. We have 63.7% labor market participation but 70% is considered good. There is an economic turn-around but it created a change in job markets and we hope to serve as many Middlesex County residents as possible.
- xi. The Office of Workforce Development has created a new position and will be hiring a new Programs Services Monitor to help oversee both our programs and the training providers. We hope to have this person in place by January. Jill Schiff asked if there was enough work for a full time employee and Mr. Kurdziel said that in addition to monitoring all our sites and vendors they would also be able to assist the fiscal unit with some of their work and that there was enough in the budget to cover the position. It was also announced that we have a new Deputy Manager of Operations, Diane Seavers, in New Brunswick to replace Julie Piano who moved up to be the One Stop System Manager. Diane has worked in the Office of Workforce Development and is now returning here.
- xii. The new WIOA regulations are being written and should be out by January and in place by July. We do not expect a lot of changes. They will no longer require a Youth Investment Council, but ours is very strong so we will be keeping it in place. The Federal regulations recommend some regionalization of WIBs but that may not be necessary in New Jersey. However, that could be up to the Governor. We will probably have more information in January and will have a booklet to distribute with the new regulations. As always, we are open to suggestions, questions and criticism.

**10. Membership** ..... Kevin Kurdziel

- a. We are currently short two private sector members on the Board and asked if any of the Board members had suggestions for candidates to let him know.
- b. Nina Rios-Rivera said the Governor or the Department of Labor can mandate more categories on the WIB which adds to the number of members in general and to the amount needed to reach the required percentage. However, we do not know how this will affect us yet. Addressing the regionalization, Ms. Rios-Rivera explained that we used to be with Somerset and Hunterdon Counties but even if we are not merged with other counties, regional planning will be needed. Mr. Kurdziel explained that this will probably move us away from required percentages for WIB membership categories but rather will set the actual number of members from each sector. Ms. Rios-Rivera added that the majority will still need to be from the private sector.

## 11. Public Comments

- a. Sean McDonald, Middlesex County VoTech, introduced himself to the Board and said he had a background in Transportation, Distribution and Logistics and was formerly with the Department of Education in Career Technology Education. Raritan Valley Community College in partnership with the Department of Education has it as part of the curriculum and they will be looking at some of these models. The Advanced Manufacturing Program in their East Brunswick location needs more connections and any assistance from Board members along the lines of “advisorships,” equipment, etc. is appreciated. They are working hard to get their secondary students prepared for either post-secondary education or employment and industry support is needed.
- b. At the last meeting, Jill Schiff had requested some financial information about the WIB budget from the Office of Workforce Development comparing expenditures from last year and this year and what was budgeted and what was available and this was supplied to her at this time. If anyone would like a copy, please let her know.

## 12. Adjournment

- a. There being no more business, the motion was made to adjourn by James Perry and the meeting was adjourned.

## Handouts

### ***Emailed ahead of time:***

- Agenda
- Minutes of July WIB meeting

### ***In packet:***

- Agenda
- WIOA Summary Sheet – Key Improvements from Current Law
- MCOWD Contracts Written Pie Chart
- 2014 School Matrix
- MCOWD Placements Report (Charts by Occupation and Industry)
- Performance Measures
- MCOWD WIA and WFNJ Data

**The next meeting of the Workforce Investment Board will be January 27, 2015.**