



YOUTH COUNCIL

MINUTES

Wednesday, January 17, 2007

11:30 a.m.

ValleyWorks Career Center

439 South Union Street

Lawrence, MA

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Cal Williams, Megan Shea, Sr. Gwynette Proctor, Linda Piergeorge, Vinny Ouellette, Tom Casey, Tom Cuddy, Steve O'Brien, Ed Warnhuis

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Ed Anderson, Melissa Hogan, Erin Kelly, Dave Konjoian, Jeff Marcoux, Jenny Pickett, Cindy Mejia, Erin Kelly, Janet Allison, Bob Mazzone, Fred Shaheen

GUESTS PRESENT:

Amy Weatherbee, Ed Fitzgerald, Jim Carlson, Brad Howell, Gina Bozak, Susan Leger-Ferraro, John Niles

STAFF PRESENT:

Fred Carberry, Chris Shannon, Mary Kivell

I. Approval of Minutes

Cal Williams called the meeting to order at 11:40 a.m. and said the first order of business is the minutes of the November 9, 2006 Youth Council meeting.

Megan Shea made a motion to approve the minutes of the November 9, 2006 Youth Council meeting. Ed Warnhuis seconded the motion and motion passed.

II. Review of Little Sprouts OSY Program for 2nd Round Funding

Amy Weatherbee said that Little Sprouts was funded last January 2006 and we are looking at performance to fund an additional year. She distributed a sheet with performance data as of 12/31/06. She said that there have been some issues with late enrollments mentioning the starting time of the program and that a number of youth left over the summer months. For two months nothing was occurring. She said that this teacher training program also requires nine months of employment time for credentialing. This is a thick, lengthy program and Amy said that she is still trying to get the final outcomes. Some students are in the process of scheduling the test and getting their GEDs. Amy said that a better recruitment with smaller numbers and a broader base of employers might work better.

Chris Shannon said that looking at re-funding we would possibly like to see a different schedule and prep training. We are looking to possibly recommend changing the amount of hours for staff from 10 to 15, GED from 20-25, and changing the Lead Development Coordinator to an Intensive Case Manager from 8 to 25 hours. Also, expanding education and a broader employer base. We would also like to limit recruitment to 15 and see if that results in better outcomes.

Amy said that she wanted to make sure the Youth Council had this on their radar and she would bring back additional performance data once she locks it down.

III Approval of Funding Levels for In-School Program ('07-'08)

Amy Weatherbee explained that John Niles said that the Youth Council requested general information on the RFP process, budget and history which she is preparing for the February meeting. Amy explained that there would be a full round of for Out-of-School youth (OSY) which will be coming up for review in May and June at the end of the Fiscal Year and another cycle beginning July 1st.

Amy distributed a sheet on Planning Funds stating that there is \$684,205 for group funds with \$512,391 currently obligated leaving a \$171,813 balance for group programs, which she recommended allocating towards In School Youth (ISY) programs to begin late spring. There is \$100,000 remaining for Individual Training Accounts. In the past, the Youth Council and MVWIB Board had recommended a 70/30 split for OSY/ISY. There had been concerns and challenges for the ISY programs in the past.. Amy said that moving forward, ISY RFP design will be geared only towards seniors not going on to post secondary education.

Chris Shannon reasoned that this recommendation is based on the desire to not duplicate services already provided high school students through the MVWIB,

VWCC and the schools themselves and that looking forward at the new common measures necessitated targeting at-risk seniors for legitimate outcomes.

Amy said that we will know the new allocations in April or May. We are looking at the In-School RFP now and will also be taking a strong look at the Out-of-School RFP as part of a thoughtful process. We would like to put out an ISY RFP with up to \$120,000 in funding available to fund 2 or 3 possible programs with an occupational skills component.

Chris explained that although the Board had recommended the 70/30 split in an effort to be pro-active, the feds are now moving in the same direction, requiring Youth Councils to prioritize OSY programming.

Amy explained that there is a comprehensive procurement policy in place. They provide technical assistance. They blanket area training providers and anyone interested in bidding. They hold a bidder's conference, there is review process, and then recommendations are presented for approval to the council. This will be explained in depth at the next Youth Council meeting.

Chris said that we are looking for representation across the Merrimack Valley so more youth are being served and we are also looking to involve the schools.

Sr. Gwynette Proctor said that, having been through the bidding and review process, it is a great system.

Motion by Tom Casey seconded by Linda Piergeorge to set aside \$120,000 for In School Youth Programming. Motion passed.

IV. Approval of In-School Youth RFP and Program Content

Amy Weatherbee went over the RFP recommendations which were distributed to members for the In-School Youth Programs explaining they will target at-risk seniors, ages 16-21. The program design calls for a student/teacher ratio of 12/1 and a program that that operates a maximum of 12 months with an additional 3 months for employment placement. Required components are drop-out prevention strategies, work experience, leadership development, guidance and counseling, support services and follow-up services.

Amy also said that we are looking for employment competency prior to work experience and financial literacy training. Programs will be required to implement and utilize the Massachusetts Work Based Learning Plan. Occupational skills should target critical and emerging industries and result in a nationally-recognized credentialing. Recruitment would begin in late Spring and programs would start on or after September 2007. Programs must demonstrate

strong employer connections. ValleyWorks youth counselors should have access to students two hours per week and she outlined allowable final outcomes.

Motion by Ed Warnhuis seconded by Vinny Ouellette to approve the In School RFP as presented. Motion passed.

V. Out of School Youth Program ('07-'08)

Amy said that the Out-of-School Youth Program design is contingent on funding and will be developed at a later date.

VI. Review and Approval of Timeline for ISY RFP

The next item is the review of the timeline for the In-School Youth RFP. Amy went over the proposed dates for technical assistance, bidders' conference, review period, etc. Discussion followed as to when the Youth Council would need to meet in April to review the recommendation and be comfortable with the material presented. The Proposal Review Date was amended to April 2nd and the Review Period amended to begin April 3rd.

Chris Shannon noted that we would probably have additional council members by that time and discussion followed on the date for the April meeting. The consensus was to change the April meeting date to April 18, 2007.

Motion by Megan Shea seconded by Tom Casey to approve the timeline as amended. Motion passed.

VII. WIA Youth Performance Update

Amy Weatherbee addressed the youth performance as of the second quarter stating that there are concerns with recruitment. She noted that there are less kids coming to the Career Center as a whole.

Megan Shea talked about the weekly welcome sessions which are held in Lawrence and Haverhill where youth are made aware of all services at the Career Center.

Amy said that she would be presenting performance to the Youth Council on a quarterly basis. She noted in the Quarterly Performance Report given to Youth Council members that the average entered employment rate is \$9.29/hr.

There was discussion on alerting folks about youth recruitment and Chris Shannon said that she would send notification to the WIB board as well as the Youth Council and others on programs that are looking to recruit youth.

Chris Shannon then referred to the meeting schedule that was distributed and asked if council members wanted to keep the August meeting date. It was

agreed to eliminate the August meeting date from the meeting calendar. Chris then said that we are looking at having the meetings at different locations and asked if anyone would like to host a meeting to let her know.

Chris Shannon then thanked John Niles for the time he has devoted to her and this council and said that he is available to answer any questions or concerns by phone (617.727.8158) or through his e-mail jniles@commcorp.org.

Amy said that the WIB is looking at updating the local MVWIB Blueprint and will be presenting it to the Youth Council on critical and emerging industries.

IX. Adjournment

Having no further business Steve O'Brien made a motion to adjourn seconded by Tom Casey. Motion passed.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Kivell
Recorder