



# YOUTH COUNCIL

## MINUTES

Wednesday, May 11, 2011

11:30 a.m.

Merrimack Valley Workforce Investment Board

439 South Union Street

Lawrence, MA 01843

### **Youth Council MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Howard Allen, Michael Strem, April Lyskowsky, Steve Noroian, Donna Rivera, Cal Williams

### **MVWIB Youth Council MEMBERS ABSENT:**

Janet Allison, Tom Casey, Irene Chalek, Howard Flagler, Kristine Blum, Lisa Coy, Beverly DeSalvo, Ed Fitzgerald, Brad Howell, Linda Piergeorge, Heidi Riccio, Megan Shea, Barbara Richards

### **MVWIB STAFF PRESENT:**

Deborah Andrews, Rafael Abislaiman, Odanis Hernandez

#### **I. Call to Order**

Youth Council Chairman Cal Williams called the meeting to order at 11:55 a.m.

#### **II. Approval of April 13, 2011 Minutes**

Cal then called for a motion on the minutes of the April 13, 2011 meeting.

**Motion by Howard Allen seconded by Steve Noroian to approve the minutes of the April 13, 2011 Youth Council meeting as submitted. Motion passed.**

#### **III. Legislative Funding Update**

Rafael Abislaiman said that he recently received a TEGE notification from the federal government with recommendations for workforce development funding for next year. He noted that there is some confusion in the wording on the FY'12 allocation presented as the first quarter. This is pretty good news overall if it is level funding with a possible small decrease of 5-10%. He did say that there has been nothing in the media and he doesn't know if this has been approved by either branch of congress.

Deborah said that her understanding is that this money could be part of the continuing resolution which was passed for 2011. Since the 2012 budget has not been finalized yet, but we received allocation information, it is very confusing. Ralph said that this could be presented to the state as a tool for full year planning and Donna Rivera said that they could give the full year at the beginning which would be very unusual. Ralph said that the most cuts to funding are at the state level, with the regions level funded or slightly lower.

#### **IV. Department of Labor Monitoring**

Rafael reported that we were expecting to be monitored in the next couple of weeks. Last week the state head of DCS cancelled the monitoring visit to Lawrence, as well as another WIB in the south and one in the western part of the state. We expect that this is a postponement but don't know when the monitoring will occur. In any event, we are prepared to be monitored. Ralph said that we are monitored by the state annually and this is a federal monitoring. Usually it is very detailed and up to six people are here for several days.

Deborah said that she was pleased to again report that the youth program was monitored by DCS with no findings. We just need to adapt some policies. Cal Williams said that he is happy to have reported on this at the quarterly board meeting.

#### **V. Program Updates**

- **YouthWorks**
- **Connecting Activities, Externships, Construction Career Day**
- **WIA, Individual Training Accounts**

Deborah reported that the YouthWorks Program has been funded for \$6m. This program is labor intensive with a short turnaround time. Last year there was \$8m and this year it was cut to \$4m but then increased to \$6m. The allocation is 75% of last year, when we served 240 youth. This year our goal is to serve 180 youth and Ralph referenced an article in today's Eagle Tribune announcing YouthWorks. We will receive \$230,000, with Boston receiving the bulk of the funding. Deborah said that the applications were in the meeting packets and Donna Rivera asked about the deadline to sign up. She said that they are checking to see where a summer youth may be needed at GLFHC. Deborah said that she should notify us as soon as possible so we can match youth with their interests.

Rafael explained that the eligibility this year allows that 85% of kids need only meet income eligibility. Deborah said that the other 15% must meet an additional barrier. Discussion followed on the eligibility and the process for applying with Deborah stating that Matt Qualter is the Youth Counselor and in addition to completing the application youth must meet with a youth counselor. April Lyskowsky questioned that 15% with additional barriers were put in a smaller pot to be selected. Rafael explained that in the past it was required that, in addition to being poor, youth must meet an additional

barrier. Many youth who are poor also have additional issues. When we look at the youth unemployment for Hispanic and Black youth is at 85% our goal is to get people into jobs they can keep. This gives poor kids an opportunity for a job that may lead to additional employment. Donna Rivera said that helping kids who are focused and are also poor get jobs lets them know that if they are doing the right thing they too can get a summer job.

Cal Williams asked about outreach to Methuen and Deborah said that Matt Qualter has communicated with Methuen throughout the year and the Mayors also have the information to disseminate.

Deborah then reported on the WIA programs beginning with the OSY Education and Food Service 1<sup>st</sup> cycle. Nine enrolled and 8 earned OSHA and ServSafe Certification Seven were placed in training related jobs; two are enrolled in post secondary school and one entered the military. The second cycle, with 15 planned participants has 8 enrolled. Seven have earned OSHA certification and 4 are retesting for GED. One has attained his GED and internships begin this month. The OSY Education and Medical Assistant program has 8 enrolled with 6 of 8 in need of their GED. Four have attained their GED and all have CPR/1<sup>st</sup> Aid Certification with 4 completing internships. There are two entered employments; one training related.

Deborah said that we are working on the Connecting Activities application for 2012 although funding has not been approved and we don't know what 2012 funding will be. In the past, we have received \$75,000/yr, which Deborah said is not enough for the amount of work involved in the programs. She also said that the outcomes are great.

Howard Allen then reported on the two externships, both which have been completed. He said that one teacher was at Strem Chemical and the other at UPS. Both enjoyed the externship. Howard Allen mentioned the possibility of having a photo opportunity inviting the teachers' classes for a tour to showcase the worksites. It would be great PR for other businesses to see. Howard said that we would like to start a program that would be self funded. Deborah said that she is grateful to UPS and Strem Chemical, as well as to Howard and Cal for their participation this year.

## **VI. Other Business**

Cal Williams said that now that we are a 501©3 he wondered if we are looking at grants. Ralph said that we have applied for mostly federal grants and will be looking at foundations. Howard Allen said that he has a list of foundations. He said that fortunately both Strem Chemical and UPS put \$1,050 in the externships pot this year but there is not enough traction for additional voluntary funds yet. We need publicity and could get more participation from high schools if we ran an externship program in the summer or teachers could job shadow on weekends. Discussion followed on a previous externship program that ran for eight weeks for 40 hours per week but the outcomes were vague. Mike Strem said the longer term externship was a good

experience, but wondered what it did for the classroom in the long run. Howard Allen said that his model is all about deliverables. He said that he would like to continue working with pro-active participants to explore how to sustain this initiative.

**VII. Adjournment**

**Having no further business April Lyskowsky made a motion to adjourn seconded by Howard Allen. Motion passed.**

Respectfully submitted,

*Mary Kivell*

Mary Kivell  
Recorder