



YOUTH COUNCIL

MINUTES

Wednesday, May 13, 2009

11:30 a.m.

Greater Lawrence Educational Collaborative

464 Broadway

Methuen, MA 01844

Youth Council MEMBERS PRESENT:

Linda Cote, Lisa Coy, Brad Howell, Barbara Richards, Megan Shea, Tricia Snow, Steven Noroian, Linda Piergeorge, Ed Warnshuis, Cal Williams

MVWIB Youth Council MEMBERS ABSENT:

Howard Allen, Janet Allison, Kristine Blum, Christine Bradshaw, Tom Casey, Howard Flagler, Steve O'Brien, Vinnie Ouellette, Jason Pimentel, Bill Blanchette, Irene Chalek, Gina Bozek, Ed Fitzgerald, Bob Mazzone, Michael Strem, Marianne Vesey

GUESTS PRESENT:

Amy Weatherbee, John Mara, Stephen Burnham, Christy Cosme, Ann Shaw

MVWIB STAFF PRESENT:

Deborah Andrews, Mary Kivell, Fred Carberry

I. Introductions

Chairman Cal Williams called the meeting to order at 11:45 a.m. thanking John Mara, GLEC Executive Director, for hosting today's meeting.

Introductions ensued and then Cal asked John Mara to say a few words. Mr. Mara said that Greater Lawrence Educational Collaborative (GLEC) represents students from 15 school districts in 21 communities - from Lowell to Hamilton-Wenham and all the way to Salisbury and back. They have 300 students with satellite sites in Ipswich and Salisbury. Students range from 6 to 22 years old. Mr. Mara said that GLEC provides services that school districts can't. They also provide services to 36 adults.

Steve Burnham is the Program Director/Principal for the Collaborative Alternative School and said that they work with traditional at risk youth, SPED and students on IEPs to teach them in alternative ways in such fields as culinary arts, carpentry, dovetailing vocational training as most students go from GLEC into the workforce.

Deborah Andrews then spoke about a Transition Job Fair scheduled at the Haverhill Citizen's Center, 10 Welcome Street for June 9th from 3:30 – 7:00 p.m. She said that we are looking for vendors and clients and suggested having a table at the event and bringing youth. Deborah said that there will be speakers talking about Chapter 688 planning and advocates on site.

Lisa Coy mentioned that drop-outs often are not aware that they lose SPED services when they drop out of high school. This is a way for them to find out about accommodations. Flyers will be going out in the next few days to administrators, parents, and students.

Megan Shea suggested posting the job fair in the newspaper as there are many parents who need information on the transition services from high school.

II. Approval of Minutes

Cal Williams then called for a motion on the minutes of the April 8, 2009 Youth Council meeting.

Motion by Megan Shea seconded by Brad Howell to approve the minutes of the April 8, 2009 Youth Council meeting as submitted. Motion passed.

III. Update - American Recovery & Reinvestment Act (ARRA) 2009 Summer Jobs for Youth

Deborah Andrews reported that the ARRA federal youth funds require that we dispense 60% this summer. She said that we have been working hard to increase the number of youth served. Through YouthWorks (state funding), we hope to serve 200 youth in Lawrence and Haverhill with 10% in Methuen and Salisbury. With the additional influx of \$1.4m in stimulus money we can serve youth up to age 24 from July 6, 2009 through August 21, 2009 and the older youth through September 30, 2009 at \$8 per hour. Paychecks will be issued through the City of Lawrence with coverage for liability and workers comp concern insurance.

So far we have 213 jobs through employer outreach. With 200 state funded and 700 federal funded positions, we need private sector and municipalities to take youth. There is a requirement that unions must concur and that youth cannot replace a laid off worker. There are also income eligibility guidelines.

Cal Williams said that he hopes that members of the Youth Council can assist in finding summer jobs.

Steve Burnham said that GLEC is hosting a Career Day later in May and will promote the summer youth program to employers at that time.

Deborah said that this is a fully subsidized placement and that all that is required is that it is an authentic work experience with the outcome of work readiness.

Lisa Coy said placements could be basic task oriented. John Mara said that he believes that SPED students are automatically eligible and Lisa said that youth should apply at ValleyWorks who will then determine eligibility and interests and match them with employers.

Ann Shaw, ValleyWorks Business Services Rep, said that she has been recruiting for one month with great results. Employers realize that youth are our future and acquiring skills builds self esteem and can often lead to a full time offer.

Lisa Coy then talked about Ann's commitment and how she is the right person for the job. She thanked her for her efforts.

Brad Howell asked about how transportation is being handled.

Lisa said that it is up to the youth to get to the job. They have been focusing on companies on bus routes but that some employers are picking up the youth. They will also be working to develop jobs in the Newbury, Amesbury and Salisbury.

Linda Piergeorge mentioned taking a client to fill out an application in Haverhill but no one could help. Lisa explained that someone had called in sick but that she has trained another individual in the meantime. Steve Noroian said that he has been getting good help with the application process.

There was discussion on income guidelines and Lisa Coy said that ARRA eligibility is 70% of the poverty guideline. Also, that a youth on a 504 plan, IEP, foster care, food stamps, or cash welfare are eligible.

Linda Cote asked about the number of hours and Deborah said 20 – 30 hours per week.

Amy Weatherbee said that we are talking to municipalities separately and looking at worksites in the schools, possibly funding a school employee who has the summer off as a supervisor, looking to boost these positions in Haverhill and Lawrence. We are also looking at community groups to clean up parks if there is a supervisor. We need to spend this money by September 30th.

IV. Work & Learning Grants

Deborah said that if anyone wants a copy of the RFP to let her know. The grant is due June 1st and staff will review the proposals and then the Youth Council will review the ratings and recommendations for approval to send to the Planning Committee for final approval.

Deborah said that the next Youth Council meeting is June 10th and anyone who is submitting a grant will need to recuse themselves, because that is where proposal recommendations will be reviewed.

After bids are awarded, Amy and staff will negotiate the contracts with vendors.

Amy said that group programs need to include a learning piece. Linda Cote asked about worksite liability and Amy said that is covered under the City of Lawrence who issues the paychecks.

Deborah said that there should be educational enhancement and work on foundation skills. Amy said that there needs to be an education or learning experience tied to work. For example, youth could be doing computer based learning in the morning and developing a marketing brochure in the afternoon. They could also research a topic and make a video to showcase the project.

Discussion followed on whether agencies could design a program for specific youth and Amy said that as long as the youth are eligible and the proposal meets the criteria, that is allowed.

Cal Williams said that this is a terrific opportunity for employers.

Deborah said that we need to be able to measure what the youth learn in the programs. We use the MA Work Based Learning Plan for that purpose.

Amy said that they have sent RFPs to 350-400 entities and there is a link on the MVWIB website to a number to call for the RFP.

V. FY2009/2010 Out of School Youth Procurement RFP

Deborah asked Amy to report on the OSY Procurement. Amy said that the 09/10 OSY Procurement though WIA didn't get spent. We have been working on feedback from vendors to help with the summer programming. Federal guidelines require we allocate 80% of our WIA Funds by June 30, 2009, or our funds could be at risk. We have had a lot of dislocated workers impacted by TRADE funding, which brought in a lot of training dollars but are under expended and now we have this influx of ARRA money. There is approximately \$144,000 in training dollars and lag for staff. System monitors are scheduled to come in a few weeks. We don't want to release a WIA OSY RFP until we meet with vendors.

There was discussion about partnering with intergovernmental agencies or agreements with the Commonwealth which are not subject to 30B regulations.

Amy said we could send a letter asking for interest in developing OSY program as we are specifically trying to increase our vendor pool and offer more viable options for young men.

Megan Shea talked about Whittier Regional Vocational High School and the fact that DESE curriculum is available.

Linda Cote said that perhaps there could be discussion with Lawrence Regional Tech HA to explore offering an afternoon program. There is a nationally recognized program after which participants are eligible to sit for national certification.

Amy also mentioned that the FY10 WIA allocation has not been released yet.

Amy said that we could take \$250,000 and look at trying to build a pilot program with intergovernmental partners. We can have layered programs around work readiness, employability, and leadership development.

Fred Carberry said that we are looking to open possibilities with intergovernmental agencies.

Motion by Megan Shea seconded by Brad Howell to authorize up to \$250,000 of the FY'09 allocation to enter one or more agreements with vocational partners to come up with an occupational skills program. Motion passed.

VI. Adjournment

Having no further business Megan Shea made a motion to adjourn seconded by Lisa Coy. Motion passed.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Kivell

Mary Kivell
Recorder