



YOUTH COUNCIL

MINUTES

Wednesday, November 12, 2008

11:30 a.m.

ValleyWorks Career Center (Merrimack Room)

439 South Union Street

Lawrence, MA 01843

Youth Council MEMBERS PRESENT:

Janet Allison, Kristine Blum, Tom Casey, Linda Cote, Lisa Coy, Brad Howell, Linda Piergeorge, Steve O'Brien, Barbara Richards, Marianne Vesey, Cal Williams

MVWIB Youth Council MEMBERS ABSENT:

Bill Blanchette, Christina Bradshaw, Irene Chalek, Gina Bozek, Ed Fitzgerald, Jeff Marcoux, Vinnie Ouellette, Fred Shaheen, Tricia Snow, Ed Warnshuis

GUESTS PRESENT:

Lisa Gonzalez Welch, Kathryn Ronaldson, Samuel Martin, Jacqueline Gardner, Arthur Chilingirian. Amy Weatherbee

MVWIB STAFF PRESENT:

Fred Carberry, Corina Ossers

I. Approval of Minutes

Chairman Cal Williams called the meeting to order at 11:45 a.m. and asked for a motion on the minutes of the October 15, 2008 Youth Council meeting.

Marianne Vesey made a motion to approve the minutes of the October 15, 2008 Youth Council meeting as submitted. Linda Piergeorge seconded the motion and motion passed.

II. FY'09 WIA OSY CAI Inc. Pre-School Preparation Program

Amy Weatherbee took an opportunity to thank Janet Allison for her participation in reading proposals for the Out of School Youth funding. Amy said that they will be setting up contract negotiations with the vendors and that there is one current program that we need to discuss.

Amy explained how she had worked with Chris Shannon and Nancy Tariot to realign the program and help to get it on track. They used the Summer Youth Works program as a pool for participants, which was not successful. They also looked at a DTA GED Program for Pregnant and Parenting youth. They set a November 1st date for a cohort of six participants and that goal was not reached. They had one or two shadows for a week and that also didn't work out. Amy said that she and Chili, Lisa Coy, and the case manager did a spot review and there were only two people. They scheduled a meeting with CAI, DGA and the WIB regarding the program. At the meeting, Nancy Tariot asked that the program be stopped because of ongoing problems with recruitment and retainment after Herculean efforts by CAI and the Career Center.

Amy then explained that there are four youth, who through no fault of their own will find themselves without a program. She said that she would like to recommend that we bring them back in and re-assess them based on appropriateness.

Motion by Tom Casey to approve the recommendation to allow the participants of the CAI, Inc. Pre-School Prep Program to be reassessed for placement. Janet Allison seconded the motion and motion passed unanimously.

Cal Williams asked how much money would be saved by de-obligating the program. Amy said approximately \$79,000 as we have about \$10,000 in expenditures. We can then come back and look at the pool of money and what is obligated and what is in the ITA account and decide on how to utilize the funds.

Chili said that the problem is that this is the only program that we had in Haverhill with the exception of ITAs and despite the outreach and recruitment it wasn't successful. Brad Howell wondered what the obstacles were and Chili said that he felt that this wasn't the setting the youth wanted. The remediation and leadership skills were up front. This might have been perceived as too difficult. Amy did say that there was interest but it was outside of the age group.

Motion by Tom Casey to approve the recommendation to terminate the CAI, Inc. Pre-School Prep Program and de-obligate the contract. Janet Allison seconded the motion and motion passed unanimously.

Cal Williams then introduced the new MVWIB Chair Joe Bevilacqua and introductions around the table took place.

Joe Bevilacqua thanked members for all they do. He said that as a former college trustee, board member of Commonwealth Corporation, and School Committee member he hears the frustration of why kids don't want to learn. We

have an important challenge as jobs become fewer and education more important to encourage young people to stay in school.

He said that he would like to commend Youth Council Chair Cal Williams who he has worked with for a number of years.

As Chamber President, Joe said that every business is going to need people and there is a point where kids come back and realize that they need the education and skills to get a good job. Joe said that on behalf of the WIB, he wanted to let the Youth Council know what they do is very important and the WIB fully supports the work of the Youth Council. He referenced an ad he heard recently that said "welcome to tomorrow." Joe said that tomorrow is every one of these kids.

III. October Performance Report

Amy Weatherbee said that she reports performance on a monthly basis. She also noted that she has added demographics. Last year the Career Center saw 15,000 with 15% under 21. She explained that the Youth Council had voted to give out of school youth priority. Amy also said that the performance figures are just the start of the year and programs are recruiting and priming the pipeline. There are some programs that are winding down and she expects the attainment rates will go up.

Amy said that the average exit wage is above plan, two youth have gone on to higher education, and the population served is predominately female between 19-21, Hispanic, pregnant and parenting and 76% are basic skills deficient.

Amy then explained that Samuel Martin from Commonwealth Corporation and Jacqueline Gardner from DCS will be here for four to five days conducting monitoring and a review of the programmatic system. Amy also reported on a DOL funding source to pilot a young parent program with Community Day Care Charter School. Because this required an existing program, we had LARE look at this opportunity. They will have a youth job developer on staff, employer mentoring and a job club for employability skills.

IV. Update on NECC Co-location

Arthur Chilingirian reported that he has wanted a college presence in the Career Center for a long time. Through the P21 Initiative, Northern Essex Community College has placed two staff on site, one in the morning and one in the afternoon. So far ten people have been referred to them and there is a possibility that they may be able to conduct financial aid workshops once a month.

Chili said that he would be reporting monthly to Fred and that he is excited to have them on board. He is hopeful that the college will want to continue its presence at the Career Center after the grant.

V. Other Business

Fred Carberry said that he would like to introduce Kathryn Ronaldson from Northern Essex Community College (NECC) Office of Workforce Development and Community Education who will speak about the Northeast Partnership for Hospitality and Tourism.

Ms. Ronaldson said that this grant was a collaborative effort between NECC, Middlesex Community College and North Shore Community College. It is an 18 month project to serve both potential workers and incumbent workers in the hospitality industry. The program uses the American Hotel Lodging Education Fund (AHLEF) Hospitality industry curriculum of 180 hours. It includes ESOL classes, customer service training, industry specific certifications, and career ladders in the hospitality industry.

The goal is to find employment for participants in the hospitality industry and to increase the knowledge of incumbent workers to receive promotions and wage increases. Kathryn said that they are working with the Merrimack Valley Best Western and Simply Elegant Catering and have sixteen participants.

Questions followed regarding course hours and how participants can access college credits. Kathryn said that based on interest and potential, participants would work with a career counselor.

Cal Williams then introduced Lisa Gonzalez Welch from the US Small Business Agency. She said that the SBA is a federal agency with free services for entrepreneurship and how to start or grow a business. Lisa said that there is a section on their website for youth and she would like to reach out to high school and college level youth to raise awareness of SBA services on market research and business plans for small businesses.

Sam Martin from Commonwealth Corporation then said that given the current economy and the possible reductions in funding the formula for distributing funds may change. He said that the Youth Council may want to look at carrying over some of this year's funds.

Fred Carberry then talked about available teacher externship slots. He said that applications were sent out a week and a half ago. There are three slots for one week externships that can be done during school breaks in a private company (developed by the teacher). The teacher then brings back to the classroom what they have learned. There is a \$1,050 stipend for the internship and applications need to be submitted by November 14th.

Cal Williams talked about his experience with externships noting that it is a win/win situation.

Chili then spoke about the Veteran's Job Fair which is scheduled for Friday, November 14th at Northern Essex Community College.

VI. Adjournment

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

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Kivell

Mary Kivell
Recorder