



YOUTH COUNCIL

MINUTES

Wednesday, January 13, 2010

11:30 a.m.

Merrimack Valley Workforce Investment Board

439 South Union Street

Lawrence, MA 01843

Youth Council MEMBERS PRESENT:

Howard Allen, Tom Casey, Lisa Coy, Brad Howell, Ed Fitzgerald, Linda Piergeorge, Megan Shea, Michael Strem, Marianne Vesey, Cal Williams, Ed Warnshuis

MVWVIB Youth Council MEMBERS ABSENT:

Janet Allison, Christine Bradshaw, Kristine Blum, Linda Cote, Howard Flagler, Jason Pimentel, Bill Blanchette, Irene Chalek, Gina Bozek, Bob Mazzone, Steve O'Brien, Steve Noroian, Barbara Richards, Vinnie Ouellette, Tricia Snow,

GUESTS PRESENT:

Ann Shaw, Amy Weatherbee, Odanis Hernandez

MVWVIB STAFF PRESENT:

Mary Kivell, Fred Carberry, Deborah Andrews

I. Call to Order and Introductions

Youth Council Chairman Cal Williams called the meeting to order at 11:40 a.m. Introductions were made around the table.

II. Approval of November 10, 2009 Minutes

Cal then called for a motion on the minutes of the November 10, 2010 meeting.

Motion by Megan Shea seconded by Tom Casey to approve the minutes of the November 10, 2009 Youth Council meeting as submitted. Motion passed.

III. Program Updates

a. ARRA

Deborah Andrews went over the Summer Youth Jobs Update for the week ending 1/8/2010. She noted that we are almost at the end of the money for both ARRA youth who were extended and Byrne Grant youth who will be out of funding early February. There are 165 employers who participated.

Mike Strem asked what kinds of jobs the youth participated in. Lisa Coy said that there were both public and private sector jobs. Most of the Career Centers have historically placed youth in public sector jobs. Lisa said that we decided to place youth in public, private and non-profit sectors and they worked in dentist offices, metal crafters, auto care, manufacturing, hospitals and public service agencies.

b. Byrne Grant Update

Lisa said that we are running out of Byrne funding because the youth enrolled in the Byrne grant have been showing up and working 30 hours per week. Usually, there is some attrition and absenteeism. We have had 15 youth hired by their employers out of the 80 that were extended in ARRA and the 40 in the Byrne grant (out of 120 total). As the time nears when youth will lose their subsidized jobs VWCC has counselors advising them on GED training, Job Corps opportunities and Career Center Services.

Cal Williams suggested reaching out to board members who may be interested in hiring these now experienced older youth.

Deborah said that ValleyWorks did a great job getting employers. She said that Ann Shaw, Lisa Coy and her staff along with Matt Qualter should be recognized for their hard work. She also noted that there was a Recognition Breakfast held for employers at Northern Essex Community College and attended by 45 employers and staff.

Cal wondered if the summer jobs program will be funded this year. Amy Weatherbee said that we don't know yet, but that there is a lot of discussion on summer jobs included in WIA reauthorization talks. She said that there are many people advocating for stand-alone summer employment for youth.

Deborah also reported on a 10th Grade Career Fair that was held yesterday at Northern Essex Community College for students from Newburyport, Triton and Amesbury schools. There were sessions on more than 30 career areas. Youth from Newburyport, Triton, Amesbury High and their alternative high school, and Georgetown High attended.

c. Connecting Activities

Job Shadow Day

Deborah then said that Job Shadow Day will take place on February 9th. Lisa and her staff have 35 youth from Lawrence and 25 from Haverhill currently participating. Ann Shaw has identified several employers willing to take a student.

Mike Strem then raised the issue of liability for employers who host these students. Lisa Coy explained that parents sign a waiver to release ValleyWorks from liability and they also sign a release for the school.

Fred Carberry said that the waiver could include the business and should also include the MWIB. Discussion followed on the issue of liability and the fact that cities have sovereign immunity. Fred wondered if the schools have umbrella policies to cover students.

Cal Williams said that we will look into this issue to determine the question of liability for businesses and asked for anyone who has information around this issue to share it with the Youth Council.

Howard Allen said that general liability is more umbrella coverage and is usually tied into the lease of space.

Ann Shaw noted that VWCC conduct interest surveys of students participating in Job Shadow Day in order to get a better match between businesses and youth, which influences attendance.

Mike Strem asked if there are any internships and Lisa Coy said that there is funding through Connecting Activities for internships. Deborah indicated to Mike that Newburyport High School, which is near his business, has a very large annual internship program. Mike indicated he has participated in that program in prior years.

Teacher Externships

Deborah said that, in the past, we funded three externships for 30 hours a week at a business. Due to the fact that Northern Essex has had cut backs and lost staff, we will be rolling it out later this year. We are working with Cambridge College and will be meeting today. We would like to offer three externships by February to allow teachers to use February vacation if they want to for their internships. Deborah said that she is holding the announcement to the schools until information is finalized.

Deborah said that what we want to do is orient externs to the 21st century workplace and have them bring back what they learn and incorporate it into curricula, particularly in science, engineering, math and technology.

Fred Carberry spoke about an expanded externship program that was done in our region through the North Shore WIB. He would like to try to implement a similar program for our region. He asked Mike Strem from Strem Chemicals, Inc., who hosted one of the North Shore WIB externs to talk about the program.

Mr. Strem said that a science teacher from Swampscott participated in an eight (8) week externship at his company. He said that the first two weeks were orientation. This proved to be a very successful venture and he also invited Mary Sarris, North Shore WIB Executive Director, to attend a Chemical Society meeting to explain this externship program.

Howard Allen said that they had two externs with one stronger than the other. The idea was to design a teaching model applicable to 10th grade and then plug in real world scenario to the Mass state curriculum.

d. P21 grant with NECC – roll-out career maps at next WIB meeting

Deborah said that one element of the P21 grant with NECC was the development of career maps for the Dental certificate and associate degree program in nursing. This will be presented by Northern Essex at the next MVWIB meeting, which will be held on Tuesday, January 26 – 8:30 a.m. at Whittier Regional Vocational High School. She invited Youth Council members to attend.

e. WIA

Deborah reported on the WIA Youth second quarter outcomes. Total customers are 65% of plan and Deborah said that new participants will increase when the RFP is contracted. Average exit wages are 118% of plan. Participant characteristics show 85% female and 15% male.

Megan Shea asked if we would have any ITA money left. Deborah said that we have another RFP and are looking to serve males.

Deborah said that there is approximately \$156,000 budgeted with \$92,000 obligated.

Deborah said that the 2010 Out of School Youth RFP is due February 1st and we are hoping for some strong proposals for education and skills training with employment outcomes. Megan Shea asked about the budget for youth training and Amy said that the Youth Council and Planning Committee agreed to a 70% OSY/30% ISY split for group training. The Youth Council will review staff recommendations for funding at the February Youth Council meeting. The YC will send funding recommendations to the Planning Committee for approval.

IV. Update – Proposed NAWB presentation in collaboration with NECC

Deborah said that she has been working with Dr. Lane Glenn from Northern Essex Community College and Andy Sum from the Center for Labor Market Studies at Northeastern on a proposal for NAWB. Fred said that this is built on Dr. Glenn's "Where the Boys Aren't" and proposed methods to address this problem. We also have submitted nominations to NAWB for awards and will keep the Council apprised of our progress.

V Update – Race to the Top statewide proposal

The Race to the Top is a statewide proposal to the federal government for funding to adopt standards and assessments that prepare students to succeed in college and the workplace and to compete in the global economy; building data systems that measure student growth and success, and inform teachers and principals about how they can improve instruction; recruiting, developing, rewarding, and retaining effective teachers and principals, especially where they are needed most; and turning around our lowest-achieving schools. Applications are due January 19th and Massachusetts has done a wonderful job.

The Boston PIC prepared the application and we were asked for input. We signed onto the PIC's additional, stronger component for dropout prevention. The Commonwealth recently released a study on the drop-out problem and some solutions in MA. Also, instead of penalizing school systems for high dropout rates they recommend providing competition and the resources to help with prevention and recovery initiatives. The recommendation was for the state to include the a strong drop-out prevention and recovery component in the RTTT proposal.

Ed Warnhuis spoke about a drop out task force at Lawrence High School and summer program to transition a-risk eight graders to high school. He said that things are happening there and they have a partnership with Raytheon for students after school.

Deborah said that we also added youth with special needs to the proposal. There was mention of merit based pay for teachers which may be an issue for the teachers' unions. Also noted was the fact that some of the teachers' unions were willing to come to the table to discuss this.

VI. Youth Workforce Solutions Act

Deborah talked about a bill called the Youth Workforce Solutions Act that has been submitted by Representative David Torrisi and others for a better alignment of the workforce and education systems. They are looking to increase funding levels in many existing programs and provide funds to local districts to develop alternate routes to a diploma or equivalent.

Fred Carberry said that there is a public hearing today on this bill and we are being represented by the WIB Association speaking on this bill and the Workforce Competitive Trust Fund.

Deborah then referred to a recent article on a green initiative for technical schools and said that Greater Lawrence Technical School is developing the curriculum to train teachers about the curriculum.

Cal Williams then asked if members had any questions or comments and Megan Shea said that she wondered if anyone had any comments on the administration changes in Lawrence.

Fred Carberry said that he has had discussions with Mayor Lantigua and chief of staff Lenny Degnan regarding the structure but that no definitive decisions have been made. He said that he has stressed the fact that we are a regional entity and that the Mayor of Lawrence is the Chief Elected Official of the MVWIB.

Cal thanked everyone for their participation and said that he is looking forward to a good year.

VII. Adjournment

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

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Kivell

Mary Kivell
Recorder