



YOUTH COUNCIL

MINUTES

Wednesday, August 12, 2009

11:30 a.m.

Merrimack Valley Workforce Investment Board

439 South Union Street

Lawrence, MA 01843

Youth Council MEMBERS PRESENT:

Howard Allen, Brad Howell, Megan Shea, Steven Noroian, Linda Piergeorge, Barbara Richards, Cal Williams

MVWIB Youth Council MEMBERS ABSENT:

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

GUESTS PRESENT:

Arthur Chilingirian, Barbara Zeimetz

MVWIB STAFF PRESENT:

Deborah Andrews, Mary Kivell, Fred Carberry

I. Call to Order and Approval of June 10, 2009 Minutes

Youth Council Chairman Cal Williams called the meeting to order at 11:40 a.m. and called for a motion on the minutes of the June 10, 2009 Youth Council meeting.

Motion by Megan Shea seconded by Howard Allen to approve the minutes of the June 10, 2009 Youth Council meeting as submitted. Motion passed.

II. Update – American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) – 2009 Summer Jobs for Youth/YouthWorks

Cal said that he wanted to begin by congratulating and thanking Arthur Chilingirian and the staff of ValleyWorks and DGA for their hard work this year on the summer youth employment.

Deborah Andrews said that she has sent out an ARRA youth update as of this past Friday. She explained that we set a goal of 905 and currently have 606 youth enrollments on worksite or enrolled in a project. Total wages earned to date are \$276,176. Deborah mentioned that YouthWorks, which is state funded, is being cut by 50% for next year. Originally, it was planned that we would expend 100% of the funds this year but the Planning Committee voted to approve carrying money into next summer.

Deborah continued stating that the In School Youth YouthWorks Program was originally slated to end on August 28th. We requested and the state has approved a waiver to allow the YW program to end on September 4th. The ARRA Out of School Youth (ages 18-24) have been extended from September 30th through March 31st or until the money is depleted. In school youth funded through the ARRA monies can work part time (following child labor laws) until September 30.

Arthur Chilingirian also said that there is a third program for the city of Methuen which is a public safety grant that is scheduled to end on December 31st.

Fred Carberry asked what date next year's summer program would begin and Chili said April 1st.

Deborah continued with the Youth Update noting the five worksite projects that are providing 112 slots and also the expenditures as of 7/31/09.

Arthur Chilingirian said that as of today there are 700 summer youth enrollments.

Fred Carberry said that WIA is being reviewed by Congress for reauthorization. There is a possibility that summer youth employment will be made a permanent part of WIA.

Cal Williams asked about kids without barriers and whether there were talks on expanding eligibility under WIA reauthorization.

Brad Howell said that there are a number of underserved youth with disabilities as the supports are not in place for them. Although he supports expanding services to youth, he wonders if there is less a chance of youth with disabilities being served. Brad noted that people with disabilities have the highest unemployment and underemployment.

Megan Shea said that often folks without the first employment chance don't fare well.

Linda Piergeorge talked about the fact that there were a lot of referrals from her agency that did not get served although she fully understands that it was an extremely cumbersome undertaking. She did say that there was a lack of feedback but that the two youth from Mass Rehab that are on site are working out fabulously. Chili said that he is a firm believer in communication and that they have learned operational lessons from this experience. There was also a suggestion that the youth may not have followed up with the paperwork or attending the orientation.

Barbara Zeimetz asked whether youth with disabilities need to meet the income barrier. Chili said that they are considered a family of one. He then talked about two cases this year where one was successful and one wasn't, perhaps because supports are not in place.

Deborah Andrews reported that Governor Patrick reported that 10,000 youth are working. This was his goal and we are the third highest region in the Commonwealth.

Arthur Chilingirian talked about the Byrne Grant that will serve youth in the city of Methuen through December 31st.

Deborah also reported that we had a couple of site visits from the GAO which went well. She also said that staff from Commonwealth Corporation are coming for site visits tomorrow.

III. Other Updates

1. FY 2009/2010 Out of School Youth Procurement

Deborah explained that in light of the fact that we have been so busy with the summer youth, we went to the state and asked if we could carry over the \$250,000. Since we were below 80%, we took the corrective action and are allowed to carry over the funds.

2. Solicitation of vendors for health and other sectors

Deborah explained that in order to identify training needs we are looking to bring employers and vendors to the table to look at manufacturing, green jobs, and health care. Megan Shea mentioned someone who addressed Rotary and was very interesting in relaying green job information. Howard Allen identified that person as John Warner, someone who has worked with him at Cambridge College.

Deborah said that she would like to put a group together and get moving on this item. Fred said that we should be careful not to overextend our welcome with employers as everyone is clamoring about green jobs.

Deborah suggested that the next three meetings be used as a time to gather information on what jobs needs will be going forward.

Chili also noted that it has been difficult to get into the Vocational schools who are major players in workforce development. Deborah said the Greater Lawrence Regional Technical High School has been more responsive recently.

3. Connecting Activities

Deborah reported that we have received a \$75,000 grant this year and that Keith Westrich is coming to help with this grant.

4. P21

Deborah said that the P21 grant is finished and the mapping has been done by Merrimack College.

5. FY'09 Quality Assurance System Monitoring Review

Deborah said that we have had our 2009 monitoring review and most of the questions they asked were for clarification. They specifically asked for clarification on the eligibility requirement on school drop-out verification for each WIA Title I Youth Program customer enrolled in a GED program. She referred to a handout with the state wording for drop-out verification that she asked the Youth Council to recommend to the full board for adoption.

Fred Carberry explained that the state issuance for Title I eligibility was revised and the monitors did not find the verification document in the files. Therefore, the Youth Council needs to vote the recommend to the MVWIB the adoption of MassWorkforce Issuance 09-20 which has the wording regarding school drop-out verification for each WIA Title I Youth Program customer enrolled in a GED program.

Motion by Megan Shea seconded by Howard Allen to recommend to the MVWIB adoption of the eligibility requirements as outlined in MassWorkforce Issuance 09-20. Motion passed.

IV. WIA 2010 Annual Plan

Deborah Andrews explained that the youth portion of the FY'10 Annual Plan consisted of six questions. She distributed the draft document to the Youth Council.

Fred Carberry said that it is a lot to read and digest and the council could vote to recommend approval contingent on input from members of the council.

Cal Williams asked that the document be emailed to the full Youth Council so members can review and provide comment. He said that we would have agreement be noon on Friday.

Megan Shea mentioned that the youth employment information is different from the adult and said that we should also check the numbers. Megan also asked if we are still trying to diversify our training vendors. Deborah said that his still a priority.

Brad Howell asked if we have any system to survey employer regional needs.

Fred said that we have done a general survey of over 1,000 employers and asked about prospective job openings. We did receive some good feedback.

Motion by Megan Shea seconded by Brad Howell to recommend approval of the youth portion of the MVWIB FY'10 Annual Plan contingent on input from members of the Youth Council by noon on Friday, August 14th. Motion passed.

V. Other Business

Deborah said that she has talked with Lane Glenn and our next meeting will be at Northern Essex Community College in Haverhill on September 9th from 11:30 a.m. through 1:00 p.m.

Chili then said that he goes back to JTPA and when that ended WIA was authorized. He said that government is looking at key components such as youth eligibility and year round summer programming. Chili said that the state is gathering information and this is an opportunity for this group to work on some of these changes. He said that Congressman John Tierney is a strong advocate.

Cal Williams then said that he would like to congratulate Chili, Fred and their staff for their work on the summer jobs program.

VI. Adjournment

Having no further business Howard Allen made a motion to adjourn seconded by Steve Noroian. Motion passed.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Kivell

Mary Kivell
Recorder