

Atlantic Cape May Workforce Development Board

Atlantic Cape May WDB
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Atlantic Cape May Workforce Development Board Business Development Committee

Atlantic Cape May Office of Workforce Development
2 South Main Street, 2nd Floor
Pleasantville, NJ 08232
April 15, 2016 at 11:00 a.m.

MINUTES

Members Present

Joe Kelly Stephanie Koch Jean McAlister Elaine Williams

Staff Present

Stacy Forman Rhonda Lowery

MEETING MINUTES

Call to Order/Approval of Minutes

The Business Development Committee (BDC) of the Atlantic Cape May Workforce Development Board met on April 15, 2016 at the Atlantic Cape May Office of Workforce Development, 2 South Main Street, Pleasantville, NJ 08232. Joe Kelly, Chair called the meeting to order at 11:11 a.m. The previous meeting minutes were approved (Stephanie Koch 1st; Joe Kelly 2nd).

Partner Updates

Jewish Vocational Human Services

Stephanie Koch reported that JEVS has been in operation since 1941; historically been a job placement program. Since then, the agency has expanded to serving many populations in a variety of different programs in both Philadelphia and New Jersey. Ms. Koch reported that she's been a Workforce Development Board (WDB) member for two years, initially working as a consultant, but during her tenure on the board transitioned into her role with JEVS. She stated the agency serves Atlantic County, citing the HireAbility grant at Camden County College, serving individuals with disabilities. Ms. Koch added that the agency operates a career strategies program in Cherry Hill for low income adults and a transition program with ACSSSD to assist youth with disabilities aging out of the school district (if funded, starts October 2016). In North East Philadelphia, the agency operates vocational programs at ORLEANS Technical College specifically in the building trades. The school hopes to start IT and Culinary programs in the near future. Elaine Williams asked about transitioning youth with disabilities from special services schools to DVRS services; doesn't occur until after graduation. Ms. Koch replied yes, but this particular partnership allows JEVS access prior to graduation to assist youth, parents and other care takers prepare for the transition.

Atlantic Cape Community College

Jean McAlister reported that the college continues to see low/decreasing enrollment in the Culinary Arts degree program. She believes the decrease has more to do with the economic conditions of the area; lower pool of candidates and less interest in training through the workforce development system. Ms. McAlister cited the Utility Line Locate

program; in spite of a 100% employment placement rate, the college continues to have to postpone program start dates. Mr. Kelly asked why. Ms. McAlister replied that the class needs 10 students to be economically feasible and there appears to be less interest. Ms. Kelly replied that with those employment statistics, one would think there would be a wait list. Stacy Forman stated that there could be specific math skills required to perform the job. Mr. Kelly added that the issues in general are 1) there are not enough resources, 2) there may be preliminary academic training needed and 3) ACNEG trainees are not as committed, because the motivation was continued ABT benefits, not the actual industry valued credentials. Mr. Kelly continued that maybe a request to the NJLWD is warranted requesting a reallocation of ACNEG funds to focus on industry specific pre-requisites to training wherein an employer is willing to hire. Ms. Williams stated that ACNEG eligible job seekers were displaced from high paying jobs and they had no interest in earning lower wages; can't sustain their families.

Ms. McAlister spoke about the library system and grant funds to offer access to New Jersey Career Connections in areas such as: resume development and job search. Rhonda Lowery added that NJ Career Connections will replace Jobs4Jersey. NJLWD mentioned that library partnerships were a means to ensure resumes get posted to the site and career pathways were communicated. She added that some tables from the One Stop are being reallocated to the libraries. Ms. McAlister added that bringing services right into the communities limits barriers such as transportation. She continued that the college continues to work on K-12 alignments. A new program with Cape May County Technical School allows up to 25 credits towards a degree at the college.

Ms. Lowery spoke more on the concept of livable wages. Mr. Kelly asked Ms. Lowery to speak about Cape May County. Ms. Lowery reported that Cape May has made the decision to separate from Atlantic County. Cape May is in the process of joining the Cumberland/Salem WDB area effective July 1, 2016. Ms. Lowery added that the Committee will focus on Atlantic County effective that date. She commented that the two counties are geographically different; Cape May is more similar to other areas.

Atlantic City Jobs Partnership Program

Mr. Kelly spoke about the pilot program and year-to-date results were discussed (YTD: 500 placement rate); overall the pilot design works. Mr. Kelly stated the pilot project is completed. He stated that the Atlantic City Chamber of Commerce has requested additional funds from NJLWD. Mr. Kelly suggested that there were three key areas of success: 1) getting the information to the employer community, 2) partnering with the workforce development system to connect job seekers with employers and 3) the grassroots effort of face to face interaction with employers. He added that a missing component is still job retention case management. There is a need to provide case management immediately upon placement to remediate issues that result in employment termination or employer dissatisfaction. Mr. Kelly stated that this model is a challenge, because it doesn't fit well with the current NJLWD structure. He added that Ms. Lowery has been more agreeable to the concept than others.

Ms. Lowery stated that WIOA is employer driven with performance measures in placement, retention and quality partnerships. The work of this committee is critical. Ms. Lowery stated that in working with employers, the WDB must use good data and identify skills gaps... She stated that capturing and recording accurate data will be important moving forward. What isn't being done that we can fix to cultivate the workforce? Ms. McAlister commented that while Darleen Blocker was a job developer she had increased numbers of employer partners (about 80 OJT's written). Ms. Lowery replied that she didn't think the number of contracts written was that high, but that Ms. Blocker did a good job with the subsidized employment program a few years back. Ms. Lowery stated that the Jobs Partnership pilot was a good way to assess how the model can work. Now that the group knows it works well, it's important to find an entity to perform this function in the long term. Mr. Kelly encouraged members to email ideas on how agencies can work together and how assessment and training can target the marketplace. He added he prefers thoughts about employer engagement strategies; not asking for more resources, just trying to get good data and redirect funds to fit the market place. Mr. Kelly stated that the Chamber has proposed a Work Fair concept wherein a portion of subsidized funds are shifted and provided to employers so they may pay a livable wage, instead of the minimum wage.

Old Business:

There was no old business.

New Business:

There was no new business.

Adjournment:

The meeting adjourned @ 12:03 p.m. The next meeting has been tentatively scheduled for **July 15, 2016 at 11:00 a.m.** Date and time adjustments will be emailed to members in advance of the meeting. Mr. Kelly asked that members confirm their intention to attend meetings in the future via email after receiving any given meeting notice.