



**Planning/ Career Center Committee
Meeting Minutes**

Tuesday, April 17, 2018

8:00 a.m.

255 Essex Street, 4th Floor
Lawrence, MA 01840

Members Present: Juan Yepez, Chairman
Ron Contrado, Abel Vargas

Members Absent: Andrew Herlihy, Bob Wescott

Staff Present: Rafael Abislaiman, Susan Almono, Corina Ruiz

Other: Linda Rohrer

I. Approval of Minutes of the March 20, 2018 meeting

A quorum being present, Juan Yepez, called the meeting to order at 8:10 a.m. and then called for a motion on the minutes of the March 20, 2018 meeting.

Motion by Abel Vargas, seconded by Ron Contrado, to approve the minutes of the March 20, 2018 meeting as submitted. Motion passed.

II. Performance Summary as of March 20, 2018

Rafael said we are generally at or above expectations but that employer referrals and entered employment are lower than planned.

III. Budget Update as of March 20, 2018

Rafael said there are no significant budget surprises. NECC is a bit behind schedule but they will catch up and leave less to carry-into next year. Linda added that she tried to be conservative because the FY19 allocations are uncertain. Rafael said Linda is right, WIOA funding is declining. We've stayed above water because we successfully apply for non-formula grants.

Abel asked if we can carry-in funds from previous years and Rafael said that formula funding is for two years so what we don't use in year one we can use in year two. Other, non-formula grants are for specific periods as indicated in their contracts. Abel asked if there can be carry-outs for longer than two years and Rafael said yes but only for non-formula funds when we successfully apply for extensions in contract end-dates.

IV. Grants Update

Susan said the last STTEP cohort, which was funded by a WCTF grant, just graduated and received their CDL-B licenses. One of the participants just got a job with Lucan fence making \$30/hr. An EPA grant program will start at the end of May to replace WCTF. With the EPA grant, the MVWIB will continue the work done with the WCTF funds and continue CDL training. The only difference is that besides the CDL training, participants will also receive tanker, hoisting and hazmat endorsements. The EPA grant will train a total of 30 participants.

The RECP program works with guys who came out of jail. The first cohort had six participants and five are working. One of the participants was hired by SPS New England. Juan asked what type of ex-offender and Susan said they are coming out of the state jail system. Susan said parole screens the participants and they are mostly ex-offenders who had been jailed for longer than five years. Susan said those who have been incarcerated longer seem to be ready for this type of program. There was further discussion about the program and the participants served.

Rafael said the Commonwealth has recognized our good job and that, with this effort, the WIB is responding to past Planning meeting conversations stating that we should job train more men. He said that the success of our RECP program is in part due to Matthias personality. Susan added that Matthias is acting as a coach and has been trained as one. Unfortunately, the VWCC cannot do Matthias' level of coaching because they work in volume.

Susan said the feds have released new funding to serve ex-offenders. The WIB may apply with the state and that we would like to work with UTEC and SISU.

Susan mentioned the WCTF Learn to Earn Initiative. The MVWIB will train Head-Start parents in CNC. A total of twenty four participants will be trained. Jobs after training are expected to be \$16.50/hr to start. Rafael added that the goal of this program is to connect public assistance recipients with jobs or better jobs and also to minimize Massachusetts benefits cliff effect where it sometimes pays more not to work or to not work much.

Susan said the summer YouthWorks is starting and that it will provide subsidized employment for 229 youth.

Susan said there's a small Amp It Up grant that will fund three teacher externships for Methuen high school.

Rafael added that this MVWIB helped change which kids get assistance from YouthWorks and workforce funds. Mayor Lantigua wrote numerous letters to the NE MA delegation in support of helping low income kids who didn't have significant barriers and the policy was changed.

Susan said there is another grant addressing the opioid crisis that is due in July. We will apply to job train those who are helping address the crisis. Abel said we should work with Lazarus House in Lawrence. Rafael added that working on this grant has been an eye opener. He has been shocked by what he's learned in conversation with leaders at Lawrence General Hospital and the Lawrence Police Department.

Juan said that addicts who are administered NARCAN should be admitted into a treatment center and Rafael said there aren't enough beds. Rafael said that some addicts arrive at facilities and they're denied treatment because there's no space. Susan concluded by saying that they will look at different ways to either work with the homeless or to train counselors and Linda added that another category may be families affected by death of a family member. Juan said that Governor Baker is committed to helping addicts and has increased the budget to do so.

V. Career Center Report

Linda said she is very pleased with the candidate chosen as the newly hired ValleyWorks Assistant Director. His name is Richard Egan and he will start on April 23rd.

A new USDOL National Emergency Grant will serve people that evacuated from Puerto Rico as a Result of Hurricanes.

- Outreach:
 - Information/Outreach sessions each Friday morning at ValleyWorks
 - Outreach flyer sent to organizations serving evacuees to promote Friday information/outreach sessions
 - DTA sending letters to all evacuees receiving public assistance
 - Met with evacuees at La Quinta Hotel (temporary housing provided by FEMA) on April 12th
 - Will present at Mayor's ESOL Taskforce meeting on April 26th
 - Information/Outreach sessions at Family Resource Center (530 Broadway) May 2nd, 9th, and 16th

Linda is working with Marquis Victor at Elevated Thought to create a community-inspired piece of artwork to be displayed throughout ValleyWorks. There will be a stakeholder group comprised of program participants, partners, and staff will inform the theme of the installation. The project will be completed sometime around the end of June.

Linda said that apprenticeships will begin at Magellan Aerospace within the next couple of weeks. There will be 10 apprenticeships of incumbent workers and group leaders. One will be a new hire and hopefully from one of the NAMC programs. Rafael said he was very pleased to hear this news.

Linda said they are screening for Raytheon. So far they have screened 42 candidates over the last 2 weeks and made 26 referrals. The positions are Assembler C and Test Operator B.

The Advanced Manufacturing Training in CNC is going well. The training is taking place at NECC and GLTS from January 16, 2018 – June 15, 2018. They lost 2 students and will hopefully graduate 10. Right now they are doing job readiness/job search activities at ValleyWorks this week. The new cycle will be in Quality Training and will run for six weeks; May 21, 2018 – June 28, 2018 in NECC Haverhill. They are in the recruiting phase now.

Linda mentioned the following events:

- Clipper City Job Fair occurred on April 10th at Elks Club in Newburyport with 26 employers present. The jobseeker turnout was not as expected.
- There will be a job fair at Lawrence High School on April 26th
- In June there will be a Multi-Industry job fair at NECC Technology Center

Linda gave an update on the Industry Sector Team Development. Staff received training from CoWorks staffing agency on sourcing and vetting. Linda is working on setting up training given by NECC faculty on trends and skill requirements in priority industries.

Linda said she will work on the analysis of occupational training by industry and will provide findings of results at the next meeting. Rafael said Varsha may be able to help.

VII. Other Business

Rafael said the next quarterly meeting will be in Amesbury at CI Works. We will be voting on a WIB chair and will be looking for a chair for this committee.

Ron asked if the WIB or VWCC has done an education program on educating kids or helping them figure out what they want versus going straight to college after high school. Rafael said that NECC does that and that we do it via Connecting Activities. Susan added that the Lawrence High School has hired a career pathways person who is also working on that.

VIII. Adjourn (vote required)

Having no further business Ron Contrado made a motion to adjourn the meeting seconded by Abel Vargas, and the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Corina Ruiz

Recorder