



## **YOUTH COUNCIL**

### **MINUTES**

**Tuesday, November 10, 2009**

**11:30 a.m.**

**Merrimack Valley Workforce Investment Board**

**439 South Union Street**

**Lawrence, MA 01843**

#### **Youth Council MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Howard Allen, Janet Allison, Christine Bradshaw, Tom Casey, Lisa Coy, Brad Howell, Megan Shea, Steven Noroian, Linda Piergeorge, Cal Williams, Ed Warnshuis

#### **MVWIB Youth Council MEMBERS ABSENT:**

Ed Fitzgerald, Kristine Blum, Linda Cote, Howard Flagler, Jason Pimentel, Bill Blanchette, Irene Chalek, Tricia Snow, Michael Strem, Gina Bozek, Bob Mazzone, Steve O'Brien, Barbara Richards, Vinnie Ouellette, Marianne Vesey

#### **GUESTS PRESENT:**

Arthur Chilingirian, Beverly DeSalvo, Maureen Lynch, Amy Weatherbee

#### **MVWIB STAFF PRESENT:**

Mary Kivell, Fred Carberry, Deborah Andrews

#### **I. Call to Order and Introductions**

While awaiting the arrival of Youth Council Chairman Cal Williams, Deborah Andrews called the meeting to order at 11:30 a.m. Introductions were made around the table

#### **II. Approval of October 14, 2009 Minutes**

Deborah then called for a motion on the minutes of the October 14, 2009 meeting.

**Motion by Megan Shea seconded by Howard Allen to approve the minutes of the October 14, 2009 Youth Council meeting as submitted. Motion passed.**

Cal Williams apologized for being late and said that he wanted to take a moment to congratulate Arthur Chilingirian and the staff of ValleyWorks Career Center for outstanding performance.

#### **III. Program Updates**

##### ***a. ARRA and YouthWorks***

Deborah Andrews went over the Summer Youth Update as of week ending 10.23.09 which Amy Weatherbee and Tracy Myszkowski provide. She said that there are 547 enrolled in federal ARRA, 190 YouthWorks and 21 EOPSS/Byrne Jobs in Methuen for a total of 758. There are 165 worksites with 339 contracts for a total of 936 worksite slots. The percent of worksites with youth is 85%.

Deborah said that we had a lot of private sector involvement this summer and plan to keep the companies engaged.

### ***b. Connecting Activities***

Deborah said that we are getting \$75,000 which is around the same amount we received last year. This is not very much money but we are working on many levels. We have a counselor that works with Lawrence, Haverhill and Methuen High Schools. We have a seacoast partnership that holds career fairs and internships. We are working to get in to schools with curriculum beginning in grade 9. In 10<sup>th</sup> grade a career fair, in 11<sup>th</sup> grade internships and job shadowing as well as brokering placements. In 12<sup>th</sup> grade we sometimes help get jobs and will continue our connection with the summer jobs placements to leverage business participation.

Cal Williams said that this takes him back to the 90s when UPS and all the area businesses went into all the schools over three days. The key was working with the chamber.

Deborah said that she welcomed any ideas and Janet Allison said that she would provide Deborah with some contact information for Mr. Harrington and O'Shea at the Center for Labor Market Studies at Northeastern University, who have a lot of demographic information.

Fred Carberry talked about some teacher externships that the North Shore WIB has modeled and agreed to come into Newburyport. In the past, we have subsidized a week in a business for teachers who then brought their experience back to the classroom. North Shore WIB places teachers for the summer with companies who pay them \$800 per week.

Deborah then talked about a recent Massachusetts report called "Making the Connection: A Report of the Massachusetts Graduation and Dropout Prevention and Recovery Commission." It states that approximately 10,000 Massachusetts youth drop out each year and that these youth are more likely to be dependent on others to get by. Less likely to have a job, marry and vote in elections. They are also more likely to spend time behind bars and depend on public assistance.

Deborah said that the Governor's target goal is that at least 90% graduating high school prepared for postsecondary education by 2020 recommending that we commit to reducing the dropout rate by half over the next 5 years. The plan to go from 3.4% to 1.7% by 2014 uses early identification, effective prevention, interventions and recovery; responsive reforms and budget priorities; and increases compulsory age from 16 to 18.

Ed Warnhuis talked about an active dropout prevention initiative beginning in 9<sup>th</sup> grade. He said that at some point it may be useful for the Council to know what they are doing. They have 110 freshmen, who were identified as at risk in 8<sup>th</sup> grade, participating.

Deborah Andrews noted that with WIA reauthorization, remaining in school could be a positive outcome. The WIB has been advocating for that.

Fred then directed folks to the MVWIB website to the dropout report mentioning page 24 of the report. This talks about a coalition where school districts are required to participate where dropout rates are above a certain threshold. The Youth Council will be convening these meetings in our region.

Megan Shea said that she thinks back to Andy Sum's report on continued unemployment of minority youth due to a number of reasons including not getting jobs or examples from parents.

Tom Casey said that it seems that the LHS program is working and he is pleased to see that.

Ed Warnhuis also talked about a partnership with Raytheon where 10 LHS students are mentored every Thursday after school. Janet Allison said that children rise to the level of expectations. Howard Allen said that young people are bright and eager to learn. Ed said that not all youth will go the work route or post school route but can chose either or both.

Amy Weatherbee spoke about the summer program funding with ARRA money which the Youth Council approved that allowed connecting this program over the summer. This was the first time we had a good connection with workforce development systems and school to curb dropouts.

***c. P21 grant with NECC***

Deborah said that under the P21 grant to increase communication between agencies and students, Northern Essex Community College (NECC) placed someone in the Career Center. Also, the P21 grant provided for career mapping which will be presented at the next MVWIB meeting on January 26<sup>th</sup> at Whittier Regional High School.

***d. RFP Updates***

Deborah said that we have been researching ISY best practices and have decided to stick with juniors and seniors. The RFP will require education, occupational skills and a work component. The priority will be focused on critical and emerging industries identified by the WIB. Deborah said that they will be meeting on Thursday to finalize the RFP.

Fred Carberry reported that the RFP for WIA eligible adults, older workers, and older youth (18 -24) will be released on Monday.

**IV. Employer Partnerships**

Deborah talked about the STEM initiative at UMass Lowell which has had its' funding cut to \$40,000 for next year. It is doubtful that they will be able to hold a summit this year. She did say that the Governor is committed to STEM and the Lt. Governor also supports the Race to the Top state application for readiness which will be awarded to some Career Centers.

Janet Allison said that the Race to the Top is a federally funded national program with the first round being awarded nationally to 5 or 7 urban areas. There will then be another round for less money.

Deborah said that fewer and fewer youth are interested in science and technology. There is a check off on the MCAS test for students interested in science and technology and the numbers are going down.

Fred talked about a teacher externship at an aerospace business where the teacher brought back information to the classroom and did a presentation.

Beverly DeSalvo talked about Raytheon taking 6 or 7 seniors in telecommunication internships with 2 or 3 getting full time paid experience.

Ed Warnshuis talked about students at Lawrence high who are working at a high level in calculus and tested at an average of 3.1 nationally.

Howard Allen spoke about the need to combine technology and training at the high school, undergraduate and graduate levels. He noted that companies like Raytheon have a graying workforce and we need to continue to stimulate interest in those jobs.

Janet Allison said that there is a lot going on and the need to connect.

Amy mentioned the need to update the resource map and trying to connect with 211.

Deborah said that there is a lot of information missing on the Merrimack Valley. Christine Bradshaw said that Job Corps has students studying advanced computer technology and technology interns who earn a \$50 stipend per week. She said that she would check to see if this would be possible as part of work based learning.

## **VI Potential NAWB Presentation**

Deborah mentioned that working on a presentation for the annual NAWB conference and will keep council members updated.

## **VII. Other Business**

Tom Casey said he is glad to hear the trades mentioned as only 80% of graduates go to college. He said that the trades is a great opportunity to earn a living and do away with the underground economy of hiring unqualified people to perform trade jobs.

Janet Allison said that national research indicates that if you don't go to college you need to go somewhere and get some training.

Howard Allen then relayed his own employment history and journey to becoming a graduate professor and said it is very important to have accredited programs.

Brad Howell said that his observation is that if Ed's program is working it could be a model to duplicate and replicate.

Howard Allen then talked about a venture software company that earned \$100,000. A class decided to dig in and look at the company. The end result was that, in discussions with the clientele, they found they needed to change their sales and marketing strategy and in a few months the company made \$3M. All it took was looking at it with a new set of eyes.

Amy said that also speaks to Ed's point. The resource mapping has more to do with the Youth Council getting a broader sense of available resources and not just WIA.

## **VIII. Adjournment**

**Having no further business Janet Allison made a motion to adjourn seconded by Ed Warnhuis. Motion passed.**

Respectfully submitted,

*Mary Kivell*

Mary Kivell  
Recorder