



YOUTH COMMITTEE

MINUTES

**Wednesday, December 13, 2017
Merrimack Valley Workforce Investment Board
255 Essex Street, 4th Floor
Lawrence, MA 01840**

Youth Committee MEMBERS PRESENT:

Howard Allen, April Lyskowsky, Tom Raiche, Lisa Remington, Ellen Weinhold

MVWIB Youth Committee MEMBERS ABSENT:

Elizabeth Bennett, Michael Bevilacqua, Francisco Brea, Irene Chalek, Beverly DeSalvo, Brad Howell, Sonia Morales, Ed Warnshuis, Katherine Sweeney, David Tagliaferri, Cal Williams

MVWIB Staff Present:

Rafael Abislaiman, Cristy Gomez, Corina Ruiz

Guest Present:

Linda Rohrer, Jackie Romero, Daniel Halloran

I. Call to Order & Introductions

Rafael said Chairman Williams was sick with the flu and wished everyone a happy holiday and thanked them for their commitment. Rafael said Ellen Weinhold would chair the meeting in Cal's place.

Ellen Weinhold called the meeting to order at 11:47 a.m. Introductions were made around the table.

II. Approval of the October 11, 2017 Minutes

Ellen called for a motion to approve the minutes of the October 11, 2017 meeting.

Motion by Howard Allen, seconded by April Lyskowsky, to approve the minutes of the October 11, 2017. Motion passed unanimously.

III. Guest Speaker

Rafael Abislaiman introduced Dan Halloran, Lawrence YMCA Executive Director. Dan said he worked for NECC twice for a total of 21 years and for the United Way of Massachusetts for two years in between. He then went to work for Middlesex Community College for two years before joining the Lawrence YMCA. He has been coaching basketball at the Boys and Girls Club of Lawrence for 17 years.

Dan talked about the different programs at the Lawrence YMCA. The Single Residency Occupancy (SRO) program strives to provide safe and affordable housing to formerly homeless men. The SRO program is funded by the Dept. of Housing and Urban Development. Millie Dominguez is the program case manager.

Dan said their biggest profit is child care. The YMCA received a state grant for 1.4 million dollars to expand. The daycare is no longer on the first floor, it is now located upstairs. The classrooms have been expanded to be able to accommodate more children. They currently have 65 fulltime children and are looking to grow and have a toddler program.

Dan spoke about the Adelante program. The program has 44 7th and 8th graders and 2 instructors. The Adelante program provides opportunities for students to further their education. Students are prepped for entrance exams and prepared for the process of applying to boarding, parochial, private, and public high schools/academies. In addition to studying, they learn great skills such as public speaking and critical thinking. These students are hard achievers and hard workers. Dan said the Adelante program provides scholarships to eligible 8th graders who will be attending boarding, parochial, and private high schools; 50% of the funding comes from the YMCA budget and the other 50% is raised.

The Y-Scholars program is a four-year college readiness program focused on low-income college bound teens. It provides college readiness, promotes academic achievement, and career development programming.

The Lawrence YMCA also has a music clubhouse. The clubhouse offers a comprehensive music curriculum for youth ages 10-18, where they are taught guitar, drums, piano, vocals, and studio production with the end goal of completing live ensemble performances and recording.

The YMCA has a partnership with Lawrence Public Schools to offer enrichment programs as part of the LPS turnaround plan established by Receiver/Superintendent Jeff Riley. Dan is working with Northern Essex Community College to run an intermural program at NECC. Also, NECC students receive free membership to the Y.

Other programs offered include Youth Basketball League (YBL), YMCA Youth & Government, and swimming lessons.

Dan is in the process of fundraising. The YMCA needs 5.2 million for renovations, of which, 2.6 million has been raised to date.

Dan concluded by saying that he worked with Cristy on the Summer YouthWorks program and is working to revamp the Smart Hoops program to incorporate academic support aside from basketball.

Jackie Romero asked who she could contact about the various programs and Dan said Cody Ross. Jackie talked about a United Way program in Lowell that would be beneficial to Lawrence youth.

IV. Program Update

Cristy Gomez thanked Dan Halloran for hosting summer YouthWorks workshops at the Lawrence YMCA free of charge.

Cristy gave an update on the youth programs. The MVWIB received more funding for Connecting Activities which will fund VWCC Youth Counselor Rosina Medina part-time. Rosina visits Haverhill High School twice a week and will start visiting Greater Lawrence Technical School in February. Through Connecting Activities and AMP It Up!, students have been on company tours to Casa Systems, Landmark and Straumann to familiarize them with the advanced manufacturing field.

The Amp It Up! grant ends December 31st. The MVWIB submitted another application to provide different activities and is waiting for a positive State response.

Cristy said the MVWIB was one of the five regions awarded YouthWorks Year-Round by the Commonwealth Corporation. We partnered with Haverhill High School to certify 20 students in CompTIA A+. The program consists of two cohorts each receiving 80 hours of after school technology classes and 20 hours of Signal Success Workshops. The contract will end in May 2018. The grant pays for books, stipends and snacks. Rosina is also working with this group and is visiting Haverhill HS weekly. Haverhill HS-Access 21 program is providing transportation to the students. Linda Rohrer added that she recently visited Haverhill HS and was impressed with their lab. Cristy said the instructor is very knowledgeable and speaks seven languages. Rafael said the professor would be a good candidate for a teacher externship.

Lisa said they've almost exhausted WIOA youth Individual Training Account (ITA) slots. WIOA prioritizes work experiences for both in-school and out-of-school youth and mandates that a minimum of 20% of local area funds go towards work experience. The focus is aimed towards improving the educational and employment outcomes for youth. Rafael added that youth will receive both individual and group services.

Lisa talked about the Tech-Hire program, which is an addition to the CNC training program. Participants need a high school diploma and most need to be between the ages of 17-29. For this cycle, 10 slots are mentioned by people 29 and younger and 2 slots are filled by 30 year olds. VWCC has had several informational sessions and they anticipate filling all the slots. Linda added that it has been challenging but believes they will have a good class. Jackie Romero asked what CNC stands for and Lisa said Computerized Numerical Control. It's basically learning to operate a computer to program it for precision. This training is available to anyone in the Merrimack Valley and does not require income eligibility.

Lisa briefly mentioned a welding program that will be available in the near future as well as the Mass manufacturing at UMass Lowell. April asked what will be excused on a CORI and Lisa said that any particular questions about CORI exemptions should be made to Elizabeth Bennet at Greater Lawrence Technical School, where the training will take place.

V. Partner's Information

April said the Lawrence Family Development, Inc. will have the grand opening of its SISU Center located on Canal Street, Lawrence. SISU stands for resilience and determination. April will be sending the youth committee an invitation to the grand opening.

VI. WIOA Update

Rafael briefly mentioned that the City of Lawrence Budget Director is again seeking to include the MVWIB in City department fiscal procedures. He will keep the committee posted.

VII. Other Business

No other business.

VIII. Adjourn

Having no further business Lisa Remington made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Tom Raiche. Motion passed and the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Corina Ruiz

Corina Ruiz
Recorder