



YOUTH COUNCIL

MINUTES

Wednesday, June 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, Lisa Coy, Ed Fitzgerald, Brad Howell, Megan Shea, Tricia Snow, Steven Noroian, Vinnie Ouellette, Linda Piergeorge, Ed Warnshuis, Cal Williams

MVWIB Youth Council MEMBERS ABSENT:

Kristine Blum, Tom Casey, Linda Cote, Howard Flagler, Jason Pimentel, Bill Blanchette, Irene Chalek, Gina Bozek, Bob Mazzone, Steve O'Brien, Barbara Richards, Michael Strem, Marianne Vesey

GUESTS PRESENT:

Amy Weatherbee, Michael English, Arthur Chilingirian

MVWIB STAFF PRESENT:

Deborah Andrews, Mary Kivell, Fred Carberry

I. Introductions

Chairman Cal Williams called the meeting to order at 11:44 a.m. and introductions were made. In addition to Youth Council members, Amy Weatherbee introduced Michael English a Summer Jobs for Youth Site Monitor, who also served on the Proposal Review Committee.

II. Approval of Minutes

Cal Williams then called for a motion on the minutes of the May 13, 2009 Youth Council meeting.

Motion by Megan Shea seconded by Howard Allen to approve the minutes of the May 13, 2009 Youth Council meeting as submitted. Motion passed.

III. Recommendations for Proposal Funding for Summer Youth Work & Learning Grants

Deborah Andrews said that we received several proposals from different areas. She said that meeting participants are required to sign Conflict of Interest documents. Ed Warnhuis mentioned that he is not a paid employee of Lawrence High School, who submitted a proposal, and there was discussion on what would constitute a conflict of interest. Amy Weatherbee said that if anyone here has any direct affiliation to bidders, they cannot participate in the discussion and vote. Mr. Warnhuis did not participate in the discussion or vote on the funding of the proposals.

Deborah said that we received eleven proposals but one was not accepted for review because it did not meet the minimum requirements. A rating sheet and recommendation/comments sheet was distributed to the Youth Council and Deborah said that four staff from the WIB and ValleyWorks/DGA comprised the review team. Deborah also stated that DGA fiscal department has also reviewed and rated the proposals for compliance with budgets and meeting minimum requirements.

The first proposal was from the Boys and Girls Club of Greater Lawrence for a Counselors in Training program. Requested slots are 14. The use of Work Based Learning Plan and teaching work readiness is clear. Not clear is the training to be provided for being a 'counselor.' There are concerns that staff are also the counselors for other children and should not be fully funded with ARRA grant. The staff recommended funding the program if we receive clearer information on the counselor training provided and a significantly reduced budget with a reduction in staff being charged. This program is recommended for funding contingent upon successful budget negotiation and staffing reduction.

The next proposal is from Lawrence Public Schools for Transitions to High School for Grade 8 At-Risk Students. Requested slots are 90 for a total funding of \$3,200. This program has an academic component geared to tutoring and small groups for reading and math skills, a life skills component through an Upward Bound type course, "Project Adventure." The staff recommended funding the program but will need more information on field trips to job sites, colleges, and on the scheduling of the program.

Proposal number three is from Community Action, Inc. for People of Destiny in Haverhill, MA. This program has a very comprehensive design with 40 slots. It is a 30 hour a week program for seven weeks. The occupational areas include CPR/First Aid training and certification and Volunteer Substitute Teacher (VAST) training which is unique. CAI has experience both in academic and occupational skills areas. The staff is recommending funding this program with budget negotiation.

Community Action, Inc. also submitted another proposal for People of Destiny for the Newburyport and seacoast area for 10 slots. This is the same as the Haverhill program and we were pleased to see the program being offered in this region, which is at the other end of the MV, where we rarely offer programs. Staff recommends funding this program with budget negotiation.

The Psychological Center submitted a proposal for Work and Life Skills Training in Lawrence for +-50 participants. This program is presented one day a week for four hours per day. It is not a full project but a life skills workshop design which would be a good component incorporated into a fuller program. The staff did not recommend this program for funding.

The Salisbury Senior Center proposal called Sharing through Service: Making It Happen with 7 slots. The request for youth workers was submitted with no budget for components, supervision, etc. The staff recommends the Salisbury Senior Center utilize the Worksite Application method to become a worksite for youth.

Hoops for Hope submitted a proposal titled Hoops for Hope Youth Sports Coach, Referee, and Facilitator Program for multiple sites. The request is for 30 slots. Although the program has a strong history of providing summer services to youth in our area, it was weak in terms of provision of information on the components and actual design. There were also concerns about three sites and rotating youth through different sports. The staff did recommend funding, contingent on the following: reduce to only Basketball, reduce staffing accordingly, and provide stronger information on the curriculum and a more comprehensive schedule with clear goals related to the WBLP and potential certification.

American Training, Inc. proposal is called StarWorks and targets people with disabilities. It is 26 hours per week and has a mix of Basic Education Enhancements, occupational skills exploration and employability skills. The WBLP is integrated in the leadership development and employability skills component in a comprehensive way. American Training, Inc. has experience both in academic and occupational skills areas, and has experience with disadvantaged youth. The staff recommends funding this program

The next proposal was from YMCA of North Shore/YMCA Haverhill for YMCA Summer Youth Employment at Camp Tricklin' Falls, E. Kingston, NH for 18 slots. This project has a strong organizational background and experience working with youth, however, the program overview and components describing the program were very weak. The management did not match the budget and the major budget cost was for over \$14,000 for transportation to and from the camp. The program also did not follow the RFP and presented 40 hours of time per participant. The staff did not recommend this for funding, however, did recommend that there be discussion with the YMCA about applying as a worksite.

The final proposal for consideration is the Greater Lawrence Community Boarding Empowerment Academy for 20 slots. The Empowerment Academy ties academic/college preparatory skills with projects and work experience. There is 24 hours of paid (stipend and work) time but an additional 8 hours a week (2 per day) geared to recreation and lunch break in partnership with Project Bread for the lunch. The management plan, educational curriculum, and staffing need clarification. The staff recommended this program for funding, but there were also outstanding pieces of information not provided to the fiscal department. Amy Weatherbee said that she is having trouble getting information from them. Discussion followed on contacting the Boating Program with a timeline for submission of fiscal documents. Janet Allison suggested putting the request in writing so we would have a written record.

Motion by Megan Shea to move forward with the funding recommendations, subject to contract negotiation, as presented. Howard Allen seconded the motion and motion passed with Ed Warnhuis abstaining.

Fred Carberry said that we received a substantial amount of proposals with substantial quality and will serve 185 youth through them.

Amy said that the next step is for the recommendation to be brought to the Planning Committee for approval this coming Friday.

IV. Update on Programs

Deborah Andrews reported that there was a Transitional Fair attended by 20 vendors and 50 participants. Haverhill Mayor Fiorentini, Fred Carberry, and Arthur Chilingirian attended and Deborah said that Lisa Coy and Dave Souza did a nice job putting it together. Deborah said that we have over 600 worksites for summer jobs, some with multiple jobs.

Chili said that we are getting close to the 1,000 number and that a lot of the private sector is looking for older youth. We are getting a lot of younger youth but are putting an ad in the newspaper as the WIA regulations require a baseline of 30% OSY.

Deb said that the Business Service Reps are doing a fantastic job of connecting with employers.

Lisa Coy then spoke about the demographics stating that we now have 7 summer counselors on board. We have received 1,059 applications for the stimulus money and 230 for Youth Works. Staff is working flexible schedules to meet with youth and complete paperwork such as finalizing work permits and W-2 forms. The next step will be matching the kids.

Chili noted that not all the applicants are eligible under WIA regulations.

Linda Piergeorge asked how the match is determined. Chili said that this is the first year that we can serve this number of youth. The private sector wants older youth. The application asks what they want to do and we limit placements to the area they are from. Chili said that if they have the soft skills, dress properly and say the right thing they will be hired. He said that we have the flexibility to move the youth if they don't work out at a specific worksite.

Cal Williams asked if the Youth Council could have a spreadsheet with the summer numbers updated weekly.

Deborah also talked about the \$250,000 OSY reserve and the issue that was raised at the last meeting about whether we could use these funds instead of ARRA money, but that is not feasible.

Amy Weatherbee said that under the federal regulations these funds must be procured on a competitive basis. We are currently in the middle of a systems certification and since we are not at 80% we are hoping that we would be put on a corrective action as opposed to having the funds taken back.

V. Other Business

Cal Williams mentioned that ValleyWorks Career Center was recognized at a recent Merrimack Valley Chamber of Commerce Small Business event with a Business Assistance Award. Also, Raytheon and X-Ray Imaging received awards from American Training at their recent event.

Christine Bradshaw also said that there would be a bus tour from Job Corps next week and any interested parties should contact her.

Fred Carberry said that the next quarterly meeting of the MVWIB would be held on June 23rd at Whittier Rehabilitation beginning at 7:30 a.m.

VI. Adjournment

Having no further business Ed Warnhuis made a motion to adjourn seconded by Brad Howell. Motion passed.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Kivell

Mary Kivell
Recorder