

Union County Workforce Development Board of Director's Meeting
May 15, 2019 at 9:00am
Holiday Inn Clark, 36 Valley Road, Clark, NJ 07066

Board Members Present:

Juan Carlos Dominguez, J.J.J. Distributors **(Chair)**
Gloria Durham, Qunnection Management **(Vice Chair)**
Gary Pfarr, IBEW **(Secretary)**
James R. Brady, The Savior Group
Krystal Canady, Gateway Family YMCA
Gwen Ryan, Union County Vocational Technical Schools (Janet Behrmann)
Dr. Margaret McMenamin, Union County College (Dr. Lisa Hiscano)
Stan Robinson Jr., SHR Marketing, LLC
Charles Gillon, Division of Social Services
Richard Malcolm, Ironworkers Local #11
Salvador Garcia, MAS Development Group (Gail Delgado)
Glenn Nacion, Trinitas Regional Medical Center
Teresa Soto-Vega, PROCEED

Board Members Absent:

Paul Belardo, KML Carpenters
Tina Earley, Elizabethtown Gas
Edward Faver, NJ Div. of Vocational Rehabilitation Services
Edwin Gomez, Barcode Elizabeth
Toni Patti, Two Tony's Pizza
Richard Capac, Crowne Property Management
Donna Dadinski, Wakefern Food Corporation
David Moskowitz, NJLWD, Employment Services, One Stop
Mark Bocchieri, Verizon New Jersey
Matthew Caruso, Kean University
Danny Robertozzi, Linden School System
Erich Peter, Union County Economic Development Corp
Dr. Kamran Tasharofi, Union County Healthcare Associates

Guests:

James Horne, Jr., United Way of Greater Union County
Isaias Rivera, Union County College
Gisela Bernal-Castro, American Job Center
Raji Ramachandra, New Jersey Department of Labor
Scott Kuchinsky, Plainfield Public Library
Julio Sabater, Workforce Advantage
Allison Millan, International Rescue Committee
Michael McLean, NJDOL
Carolee Marano, Community Access Unlimited
Oswaldo Marango, NJDOL Youth

County of Union:

Amy Wagner, Deputy County Manager, Director, Department of Economic Development
Sergio Granados, Freeholder
Debbie-Ann Anderson, Director, Department of Human Services
Antonio Rivera, Director, Workforce Development Board
Lisa Bonanno, Deputy Director, Workforce Development Board
Elton Armady, American Job Center
Jeffrey Jackson, One Stop Manager

Call to Order and Welcome

The meeting was called to order by Workforce Development Board (WDB) Chair, Mr. Juan Carlos Dominguez at 9:10 AM

Flag Salute

Open Public Meetings Act

Ms. Lisa Bonanno read the Open Public Meetings Act Statement.

Roll Call

Ms. Lisa Bonanno conducted the Roll Call.

Approval of the March 13, 2019 Minutes

- a. A motion was made by Richard Malcolm and seconded by Glenn Nacion. The motion carried.

Budget & Expense Report

- a. Thomas McCabe, Accountant provided the Board with budget and expense updates.
- b. Mr. McCabe addressed the Program Year 2017 WIOA budget update as of April 30th, 2019 as well as the Program Year 2017 WFNJ as of December 31st, 2018. Tom stated that in the month of April transfers were made from PY 18 to PY 17 to take advantage of free balances. These transfers were in the WIOA budget. There was \$343,000 transferred in the Adult line and \$243,000 in Dislocated Workers.
- c. At this point WDB Director Rivera asked to speak. He stated that the reason why the Youth column had a large amount to be expended is due to the fact that FIFO accounting had not been used for Youth as of yet. We will be transferring from PY 18 to PY 17. We will dramatically reduce the unexpended \$447,000 that remains in that category. Additionally, we have expenses for April, May, and June that have not been billed yet. We still have back billing as well as current and future expenses to dramatically reduce the balance of Youth WIOA funds to be expended by June 30th, 2019.
- d. Mr. McCabe then addressed the PY 18 budget and expenses. All figures may be found on the google drive link that was provided to all WDB Board Members.
- e. Director Rivera added that the balance to be expended as of June 30th will increase as we continue to transfer expenses from PY 18 to PY 17. It is not that we are not spending monies in 2018. It is that we are transferring expenses from PY 18 to PY 17. This means that starting now we need to make investments in the community. We need to put people into training as well as to be sure that services are provided and be very aggressive so that we spend down the dollars that remain.
- f. Mr. McCabe concluded by addressing the PY 18 WIOA and WFNJ budgets.

WDB Director's Report

- a. 2019 Local Area Strategic Plan Update
- b. Board Action Required.

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- c. Director Rivera began his report by addressing the Summer Youth Employment Pilot Program administered by the state. We will be receiving \$315,000 for the program which runs from March thru September. We received a letter dated February 28th which stated that we were to receive the funding. However, we did not receive the letter until April 1st. Because this is a state run program we do not have to use traditional funding deployment. We already have a contract with the United Way to serve youth. We merely need to modify the contract to include the funding for the Youth Employment Program. We will have a budget for the program available for the next board meeting for board approval. This will allow us to start the new fiscal year on the right note. We will know what resources are to be allocated where. Director Rivera also indicated that he has already received inquiries from potential employers for the program. He added that it is important to give these youth the opportunity to gain new skills. Most of the \$315,000 is to go right to the youth. \$220,000 will go directly to wages. The goal is to pack all the funding directly to the youth. There are additional youth dollars which the United Way is currently funded for. The grant money is to enroll one hundred youth into the program. However, any additional youth wishing to join the program will be accommodated by funding already in place. The goal is to not turn away any eligible youth that can benefit from the program.
- d. Director Rivera then addressed the Strategic Plan that was put into place two years ago. We have spoken about the plan on numerous occasions. Some of what we will speak of will be a repeat of previously enacted sub-strategies. We are required to update the plan. We have allowed members of the community to give opinions. We have engaged staff and partners to see what some of the relevant changes that need to take place. There will be changes voted on today. There will be more changes to come as this is a living document. There are many changes expected in the job sector. There will be a greater emphasis on manufacturing as more returns home due to the issues involving China. We need to adapt to the changes that will come.
- e. WDB Director Rivera addressed the six goals that may be found in the meeting folder link to the Google Drive. These are the goals that pertain to the updated strategic plan.
- f. Director Rivera and Debbie-Ann Anderson both commented that they are waiting to hear from the state regarding issues with the budgeting process as it pertains to technology.
- g. Director Rivera stated that we may purchase the required software without the state's approval. He added that is possible because that we are able to purchase up to \$150,000 under Federal Guidelines. The State guidelines are a little stricter. However, we don't wish to get into a tug of war with the state.

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- h. Freeholder Granados was concerned as to the worst that could happen if we purchase the software without state approval.
- i. Director Rivera reiterated that the purchase would be allowable. He added that because it is a large expenditure, we should get approval from the state. However, the state has been non-responsive to our request.
- j. There were additional questions regarding the cost and who would be the preferred vendor.
- k. Some board members stated their concern that Union County would be an outlier amongst counties if we made the expenditure without state approval.
- l. Other board members expressed concern that without the new software there will be communication breakdowns.
- m. Director Rivera reiterated that the board must approve the updated plan and the Freeholder Board needs to approve it by June 30th. We will be voting on the current draft. There then needs to be a 30 day public comment period and then the Freeholder Board vote.
- n. A motion was made by Crystal Canady to approve the updated plan. The motion was seconded by Teresa Soto-Vega. The motion carried.
- o. At this point Freeholder Granados stated that he, along with Chairman Dominguez wanted to deliver a resolution honoring Gary Pfarr. Freeholder Granados stated that this was in honor of Mr. Pfarr's retirement. He specifically thanked Mr. Pfarr for his longtime involvement and good works in the County of Union. Freeholder Granados then read the resolution. He added that Mr. Pfarr has made many contributions to labor in the County of Union. He added that he was grateful for Mr. Pfarr's assistance with current laborers as well as the next generation. Gary is truly dedicated. He has made a lasting impact on the residents of Union County.
- p. Chairman Dominguez offered praise for and thanks to Mr. Pfarr.
- q. Mr. Pfarr thanked individual board members for their work and wished the entire board continued success in the future.
- r. Freeholder Granados issued praise to the WDB for the work that it has done. Additionally, he spoke of specific work that the County is doing in Terminal One at the airport.
- s. There was a motion by Crystal Canady to accept the Local Area Plan Strategic Update. It was seconded by Teresa Soto-Vega. The motion carried.

American Job Center Report

- a. Elton Armady, Director AJC gave the report.
- b. He began his report by stating how busy the American Job Center has been subsequent to the last WDB meeting.
- c. Mr. Armady's entire report may be found by accessing the link to the google drive that was provided to all board members.

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- d. Chairman Dominguez inquired as to how the outreach for the Summer Youth Employment Program is going.
- e. Mr. Armady mentioned that letters to all of the mayors in Union County have been sent. Additionally all the schools in the county are being contacted. He also mentioned that the AJC is making great use of social media to reach out to the various communities. He also stated that the program has received a number of employer commitments to participate.
- f. James Horne spoke of the United Way's work to make the program a success. They have been in contact with partners as well as potential employers. They have contacted the various municipalities. He further stated that fifty youth have begun the application process. He is optimistic that two hundred youth will ultimately apply. He also stated that the Union County Department of Parks and Recreation has made a commitment to hire fifty youth.
- g. A member of the board inquired if there would be certifications or certificates of completion issued.
- h. James Horne replied in the affirmative.
- i. Debbie-Ann stated that we are making strong use of analytics in our approach. She also stated that there are 11,500 unemployed individuals in Union County. Analytics will enable us to focus on what outreach is needed. She also praised Elton and his team for their efforts at marketing outreach. When we look at the flow, we need to be able to see if we are meeting our outreach goals.
- j. Mr. Armady stressed the importance of branding. When he referred to a success story he mentioned that Plainfield Action Services and The United Way are also providing supportive services. They help provide participants with bus passes, text books as well as other supportive services.
- k. Upon conclusion Mr. Armady asked if the board had any questions.
- l. Chairman Dominguez inquired as to where we are getting our data from so as to improve our outreach to those people.
- m. Elton Armady stated that a lot of the data we receive is from the DOL, both state and federal. It can be county specific. We are trying our best to increase our presence and visibility. The market that we are in shows the state with a 4.6% unemployment rate. There are some people who are long term unemployed. They are not counted in the numbers. It is up to us, in conjunction with Human Services to see how we may be better able to provide services.
- n. James Horne stated once an employer indicates interest in the program, we will send out staff to try and obtain a worksite agreement. It may be immediate, or it may be no later than July 1st.
- o. Amy Wagner stated that the county is sending out letters to all the municipalities to notify them of the program. We will offer them employees if they are interested. We will also ask if they know of any employers who need employees.

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- p. Antonio Rivera spoke next. He stated that in terms of eligibility there are no hard and fast rules. They do need to be at the TANF poverty level. This should not be a bureaucratic process. It is only an eight week program. We can co-enroll with WIOA. You should have control over who you hire. We may need to teach life skills as well as other training.
- q. James Horne stated that part of the initial conversation with an employer will be what role the potential employee will play. The supervisor or mentor will provide some skill training. We find that this works well with the youth that are employed at Trinitas. It is an ongoing process.
- r. Glenn Nacion added that this is all part of the ongoing process at Trinitas. We try to match up the skills and desire applicable to a particular department.
- s. Chairman Dominguez described how his company worked with youth employees. It is a challenge to properly match them up to get the most value out of the program.
- t. There was talk of doing a video interview at the end of the program. It was stated that it would have promotional value.
- u. Gwen Ryan spoke about the Simon Youth Academy. She stated that it was going great guns. The Academy now has thirty students. There is currently a waiting list. June 14th will be the first graduating class. There will be eight students. Many of the students are OSY.
- v. Amy Wagner thanked Gary Pfarr for all his contributions to the county as well as the WDB.

Old Business

- a. None

New Business

- a. None

Public Comments

- a. Carollee Marano stated that she was really pleased that she had twenty five interns working with Community Access Unlimited. She asked how she could make better connections.
- b. Debbie-Ann suggested that she get involved with the Youth Committee.

Adjournment

- a. Stan Robinson, Jr. made a motion. It was seconded by Glenn Nacion. The motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 10:32 AM.

Next Meeting: Wednesday, June 26, 2019, Holiday Inn Clark,

9:00 AM Washington Conference Room

Verbatim dialogue is available through recording.