

Public Meeting of the Union County Workforce Development Board
Warinanco Sports Center, 1 Park Drive, Roselle, NJ 07203
9:00AM Wednesday, July 13th, 2022
MEETING MINUTES

Board Members Present

James R. Brady, The Savior Group, (Chair)
Dr. Kamran Tasharofi, Union County Healthcare Associates (Vice Chair)
Dr. Margaret McMenamin, Union College (Dr. Lisa Hiscano)
Teresa Soto-Vega, PROCEED
Gwen Ryan, Union County Vocational Technical School
Juanito Chiluisa, NJ Department of Labor
Edward Faver, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services
Morgan Thompson, Prevention Links
Debbie Ann Anderson, Union County Department of Human Services
Gloria Dunham, Qunnection Management
Kelly Drakeford Ledet, Kean University (Craig Coughlin)
Erich Peter, Union County Economic Development Corp
Stan Robinson Jr., SHR Marketing, LLC
Glenn Nacion, Trinitas Regional Medical Center (Curry Bucu)
Paul Belardo, KML Carpenters
Tina Earley, American Water

Board Members Absent:

Richard Capac, Crowne Property Management
Juan Carlos Dominguez, J.J.J. Distributors
Salvador Garcia, MAS Development Group
Edwin Gomez, Barcode Elizabeth
Richard Malcolm, Ironworkers Local #11
Roshan White, UA Local 24 Plumbers
Krystal Canady, Gateway Family YMCA (Secretary)
Hilary McCarron, Port Authority
Daryl Palmieri, Union County Schools K-12

County of Union:

Amy Wagner, Department of Economic Development
Robert Croom, American Job Center
Perle Almeida, American Job Center
Nasrene Mondol, American Job Center
Pamela Mata, American Job Center
Latoya Bennet, Youth Forward
Antonio Rivera, Workforce Development Board
Lisa Bonanno, Workforce Development Board
Meredith Barracato, Workforce Development Board
Carolina Marin, Workforce Development Board
Gina Tuesta, Workforce Development Board
Tom McCabe, Union County Workforce Development Board

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Guests:

Kristen Broggi, Plainfield Public Library
Scott Kuchinsky, Plainfield Public Library
Nelsa Martinez, The Leaguers Inc
Julio Sabater, Workforce Advantage
Anthea Williams, NJ Department of Labor
Ingrid Macias, NJ Department of Labor
Janea Wilson, NJ Department of Labor
Iesha Armour, NJ Department of Labor
Michael Mclean, NJ Department of Labor
Isaias Rivera, Union College

I. Call to Order & Welcome

The meeting was called to order by James Brady, Chairman, Workforce Development Board, at 9:05AM.

II. Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance to the flag of the United State of America was recited.

III. Open Public Meetings Act

The Open Public Meetings Act Statement below was read by **Carolina Marin** into the record:

PURSUANT TO THE REQUIREMENTS OF N.J.S.A. 10:4-10 OF THE OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS ACT, ADEQUATE NOTICE OF THIS MEETING OF THE UNION COUNTY WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD HAS BEEN GIVEN BY MAILING THE YEAR 2022 ANNUAL MEETING SCHEDULE TO THE NEWSPAPERS CIRCULATING WITHIN THE COUNTY OF UNION AND DESIGNATED TO RECEIVE SUCH NOTICE, AND BY POSTING THE YEAR 2022 ANNUAL MEETING SCHEDULE IN THE COUNTY COURT HOUSE, THE UNION COUNTY WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD WEBSITE, AND BY FILING THE YEAR 2022 ANNUAL MEETING SCHEDULE WITH THE OFFICE OF THE COUNTY CLERK.

FURTHERMORE, ADEQUATE NOTICE OF THE LOCATION OF THIS MEETING HAS BEEN GIVEN BY PROVIDING AT LEAST FORTY-EIGHT HOUR NOTICE TO THE NEWSPAPERS CIRCULATING WITHIN THE COUNTY OF UNION AND DESIGNATED TO RECEIVE SUCH NOTICE AND BY POSTING THE SAID NOTICE AT LEAST FORTY-EIGHT HOURS PRIOR TO THIS MEETING IN THE COURT HOUSE, THE UNION COUNTY WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD WEBSITE, AND BY FILING THE NOTICE AT LEAST FORTY-EIGHT HOURS IN ADVANCE OF THIS MEETING WITH OFFICE OF THE COUNTY CLERK.

THE OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS ACT STATEMENT SHALL BE ENTERED IN FULL IN THE MINUTES OF THIS MEETING.

IV. Roll Call

Carolina Marin conducted the roll-call of the Union County Workforce Development Board members in attendance. Union County employees present

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and guests were acknowledged on the record, as reflected on page one of these minutes.

V. Approval of the Minutes

The minutes of the June 8th, 2022 meetings were presented for a vote.

**BOARD
ACTION**

Erich Peter made a motion to approve the meeting minutes for June 8th, 2022 **Dr. Tasharofi** seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

VI. Budget & Expense Report

Tom McCabe presented the closing budget and expense report for Program Year 2020 as of June 30th for Adult, Dislocated Workers, Youth, WFNJ, and Endures Grant. Tom McCabe discussed the transfers that were completed between program year 2020 and Program Year 2021 which reduced the amount that was rescinded to the NJ Department of Labor.

Amy Wagner thanked and congratulated Director Rivera and the Workforce Development Board team for the amount of work that was put into ensuring the transfers were completed and the funds that were sent back to the NJ Department of Labor were lower compared to the numbers from the June meeting.

Tom McCabe reviewed slides which showed information on the closing of the budget for program year 2020. In addition, Tom McCabe shared the amounts that have been expended, the amounts that will be transferred from program year 2021 to program year 2020 and the amounts that have been modified.

Erich Peter asked if the Workforce Development Board needs prior approval from the state to do the budget transfers. Tom McCabe responded there is no approval needed because the state encourages local areas to do the transfers by line items. Director Rivera added the US Department of Labor grants given to the NJ Department of Labor are for three years. The local Workforce Development Board then have two years to use the funds and NJ Department of Labor prefers that money be spent at the local areas because anything returned to them will need to be spent in a year. Due to this the NJ Department of Labor allows for local areas to use the first in first out accounting practice and Union County has been vetted by internal audit at the state which show the line item transfers.

Tom McCabe continued presenting program year 2021 budget and expense report for Program as of June 30th for Adult, Dislocated Workers, Youth, and On the Job Training grant. Tom McCabe explained due to the transfers from

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program year 2020 there is an increase in the budgets that must be expended June 30th 2023. Tom McCabe reviewed the WorkFirst New Jersey and Workforce Learning Link budget that must be expended by December 31st 2022

Stan Robinson Jr. asked if there was anything that could be done to accelerate what the Workforce Development Board is spending and if there are productive ways to spend the funding to avoid having to return it at the end of the year. Director Rivera mentioned there are strategic ways the American Job Center can spend the funding and those are the continuous discussions that can be held throughout the year. Director Rivera discussed the On the Job Training opportunities that have been previously discussed and the opportunities in increasing the amount of funding provided to clients for work-based trainings.

VII. Director's Report / Resolutions of the UCWDB

Director Rivera reviewed slides regarding the NJ Department of Labor policy, WD-PY 21-6 Local Governance under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). Director Rivera mentioned the policy was passed in May and provides local area details on the roles and responsibilities of the local elected official and the Workforce Development Board. Director Rivera mentioned the September 2022 Workforce Development Board meeting needs to offer responses to the requirements laid out in the new policy. Director Rivera mentioned NJ Department of Labor was monitored by the US Department of Labor and were found to be out of compliance and as a result local area will need to update their policies and resolutions. Director Rivera added Union County is ahead of the curve but will need to update some documents such as the rules and regulations and procurement process of the Workforce Development Board.

Director Rivera transitioned the discussion to review the resolutions that required board action.

**BOARD
ACTION**

RESOLUTION NO. 2022-29: RESOLUTION OF THE UNION COUNTY WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD AMENDING THE PROGRAM YEAR 2021 UNION COUNTY WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AREA BUDGET FOR THE PURPOSE OF ALLOCATING CARRY-OVER FUNDS.

Chairman James Brady requested motion to approve **Resolution No. 2022-29**. **Teresa Soto-Vega** made a motion to approve **Resolution No. 2022-29**. **Dr. Tasharofi** seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

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BOARD
ACTION

RESOLUTION NO. 2022-30: RESOLUTION OF THE UNION COUNTY WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD ADOPTING THE PROGRAM YEAR 2022 UNION COUNTY WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AREA BUDGET.

Chairman James Brady requested motion to approve **Resolution No. 2022-30**. **Dr. Kamran Tasharofi** made a motion to approve **Resolution No. 2022-30**. **Stan Robinson Jr** seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

BOARD
ACTION

RESOLUTION NO. 2022-31: RESOLUTION OF THE UNION COUNTY WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD AUTHORIZING THE USE OF BUDGET ACCOUNTS BY THE UNION COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES FOR THE PROVISION OF COMPREHENSIVE CAREER SERVICES.

Chairman James Brady requested motion to approve **Resolution No. 2022-31**. **Dr. Kamran Tasharofi** made a motion to approve **Resolution No. 2022-31**. **Stan Robinson Jr** seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

Debbie Ann Anderson abstained from voting on **Resolution No. 2022-31**.

VII. American Job Center Report

Robert Croom reviewed American Job Center information which included services offered by the American Job Centers and the partners within the network. Robert Croom discussed the service data for the third and fourth quarter. Robert discussed the Pepsi Co hiring event, program initiatives, and information of the partnership with Union College, DVRS, NJDOL Employment Services, and Plainfield Public Library.

Chairman Brady asked Robert Croom what are stackable credentials? Robert Croom informed him they are additional credentials that a client can receive in addition to the basic credentials. Dr. Lisa Hiscano discussed the various certification programs that are offered by Union College such as Supply Chain Management which is an industry recognized credentials.

Gloria Dunham asked Robert Croom if the individuals who were offered the Pepsi Co. job rejected them and what were their reasons. Robert Croom responded they have been working with the clients who rejected the offers to see what other opportunities did they accept. Robert discussed the communication challenges they have been facing due to job candidates that changed their numbers, ignored their calls or simply refused to engage with the American Job Center after the hiring event. Robert Croom mentioned their staff

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is tracking the clients more to ensure they have the client's information up to date.

Dr. Tasharofi asked what can be done about individuals who do not want a certain pay range because their new income will then kick them off of public assistance. Robert Croom stated their business team works with companies who are looking for individuals who want a job that can help them in the immediate but they are also looking to work with those individuals on ways to provide them supportive services and financial literacy that will teach them ways to get off of public assistance.

Robert Croom continued with his presentation and discussed the Youth Forward Summer Youth Empowerment program. Stan Robinson Jr. congratulated Robert Croom on the Youth Work experience event and asked what did the AJC and Youth Forward team do to get a good turnout. Robert Croom mentioned the Youth Forward team marketed to the schools, partners, and social media. Robert Croom added a lot of the phone calls were made and flyers were distributed to all communities to get more engagement. Debbie Ann Anderson added the youth work experience is an all year event that will continuously be promoted and thanked Commissioner Granados, Deputy County Manager Amy Wagner, and Antonio Rivera who met with the superintendents of the schools to kick off the program. Curry Bucu asked if the youth participants were put on the company's payroll and does it matter if the position pays more than \$15.00 an hour? Robert Croom explained Community Access Unlimited tracks and pay the wages which is a fixed rate of \$15.00 an hour. Director Rivera added there is an educational component to the youth's work experience that is factored into the rate. Debbie Ann Anderson mentioned there was a lot of engagement between staff and youth to understand their needs and interest.

Robert Croom continued with his presentation. Dr. Lisa Hiscano mentioned the referrals provided to the American Job Center from the Title II program is part of a new initiative to offer Title II clients more training opportunities that are more than just ESL and GED services. Deputy Director Amy Wagner asked Robert Croom to explain the difference between Title I and Title II programs. Robert Croom provided an overview of the program. Dr. Lisa Hiscano further explained the services offered by Union College which is the lead of the Title II consortium. Director Rivera mentioned the new initiative is a way to co-enroll the Title II and Title I clients who would benefit from integrating the ESL component with the occupational training.

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Debbie Ann Anderson discussed a new financial literacy program that will be led by LISC at the American Job Center. Robert Croom ended his presentation with discussing changes to the American Job Center personnel.

Chairman Brady discussed the Simon Youth Academy graduation and thanked everyone who worked with the youth that graduated. Chairmen Brady added the American Job Center should look into providing clients with TWIC certification to work at the ports. Paul Belardo added SWAC certifications offers Union Workers more opportunities and would benefit individuals who are looking to go into the construction trade. Paul Belardo mentioned the need for grants to pay for the SWAC certification and the need for Union County to require construction sites to hire Union County residents. Director Rivera mentioned the American Job Center could pay for certification with supportive service dollars. Dr. Lisa Hiscano mentioned Union College was building a Union Trades building to address the growing need for individuals in the construction field. Gwen Ryan added the Vocational Highschool provides youth training for trades program. Paul Belardo mentioned they would like to open their outreach to all youth instead of those who are part of the vocational high school.

VIII. Old Business

Gwen Ryan thanked everyone who attended the Simon Youth Academy and thanked the County who provided the funding for the school. Deputy County Manager encouraged board members to attend the graduation next year so they can see the impact of the program and its effect on students' lives.

IX. New Business

No Public Comments

X. Public Comments

No Public Comments.

XI. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned by Chairman James Brady at 10:10 am.

Meeting Schedule:

9:00AM, Wednesday, September 14th, 2022

Location:

**Warinanco Park Sports Center
1 Park Dr, Roselle, NJ 07203**