

UNION COUNTY WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD  
DISABILITIES COMMITTEE  
Cyndy Walsh Rintzler, CHAIRWOMAN  
MEETING MINUTES: March 22, 2023 10:00AM via Zoom

**Committee Members**

1. Cyndy Walsh Rintzler, Inroads for Opportunities
2. Robert Croom, Union County American Job Center
3. Perle Almeida, Union County American Job Center
4. Nasrene Mondol, Union County American Job Center
5. Carolina Marin, Union County American Job Center
6. Manny Ramirez, Union County ADA Compliance
7. Marc Schweitzer, NJDVRS Business Outreach Team
8. Liz Paskewich, Division of Individual and Family Support Services
9. Zinnia Catala, GoodWill
10. Sandra Lynch, Community Access Unlimited
11. Melody Holiday, Community Access Unlimited
12. Melissa Lomax, Family Resource Network
13. Ed Faver, DVRS
14. Walter Droz, The Salvation Army
15. Rita Mirabelli, Rutgers University

**Union County Workforce Development Staff**

Antonio Rivera, Director

Meredith Barracato, Policy and Strategic Planning Advisor

**Meeting Summary**

**I. Welcome & Introductions:**

Chairwoman Walsh Rintzler welcomed everyone to the Disabilities Committee and thanked them for participating. Chairwoman Walsh Rintzler mentioned she was happy to see some new faces and encouraged everyone to participate.

**II. Approval of September 8, 2022 and November 3, 2023, Meeting Minutes:**

Robert Croom noted he wanted to add a few details to the November 3, 2022 meeting minutes regarding the October 2022 job fair. Some of these details included the number of employers present were eight instead of four, client workshops were conducted with various partners, and many of the job fair attendees were being tracked and referred to other job opportunities. Meredith Barracato asked Robert Croom to email her the specific details so she can include as an attachment to the November 3, 2022 meeting minutes. Meredith Barracato stated it is important to have detailed information presented at the actual meeting because the information listed

UNION COUNTY WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD  
DISABILITIES COMMITTEE  
Cyndy Walsh Rintzler, CHAIRWOMAN  
MEETING MINUTES: March 22, 2023 10:00AM via Zoom

in the November 3, 2022 meeting minutes were based on committee member comments and perspective and might not represent factual details. A motion was made by Robert Croom and seconded by Perle Almeida.

**III. Strategic Plan:** Meredith Barracato provided everyone an update of the strategic plan. She mentioned the plan was published March 13, 2023 and was in the thirty-day public comment phase. The plan can be located on the Union County Workforce Development Board Website and will need Board approval on April 12, 2023 meeting. The Union County Workforce Development Board will submit plan to State Employment and Training Commission with any public comments. Meredith Barracato mentioned the strategic plan guidance had a section specifically dedicated on expanding accessibility to individuals with disabilities and how to incorporate diversity, equity and inclusion. Meredith Barracato mentioned Union County Workforce Development Board is actively working with its regional partners to complete the Regional Plan by the end of March to post for a 30 public comment period. Meredith Barracato moved the conversations to the following topics which relate to the strategic plan.

a. **Partner Snapshot:** Meredith Barracato mentioned the Workforce Development Board will conduct inventory of partner services. This will be a quick view of information for each partner program. The one sheet document will then be uploaded to the Google Drive and shared with all partners.

b. **Survey Results:** Meredith Barracato provided everyone with a snapshot of the Employer, American Job Center program participant, program partners, and Department of Human Service Community Needs assessment survey results. Meredith Barracato highlighted some of the common theme such as barriers to employment, supportive services needs, and career service needs. The Workforce Development will continuously meet with program participants to ensure their voice is incorporated into the workforce system by conducting periodic surveys, focus groups, and invite clients to participate in committee meetings.

Chairwoman Walsh Rintzler asked how were participants invited to take the surveys. Meredith Barracato mentioned the participant surveys were shared with over 800 American Job Center participants who received training services from 2018 to 2022.

c. **Oversight and Monitoring:** Meredith Barracato noted the strategic plan asked questions regarding how the Union County Workforce

UNION COUNTY WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD  
DISABILITIES COMMITTEE  
Cyndy Walsh Rintzler, CHAIRWOMAN  
MEETING MINUTES: March 22, 2023 10:00AM via Zoom

Development Board would conduct oversight and monitoring. Meredith Barracato gave some examples which included:

- Quantitative and Qualitative methods
- Evaluations of Program and Services
- Training and Professional Development
- Implementation of Best Practices and Evidence Base Practices
- Engage in Open and Transparent Communication with Stakeholders

Meredith Barracato then reviewed the program year 2021 and 2022 budget for participant career services. Meredith Barracato noted there were over one million dollars in unexpended funds that would be returned by June 30, 2023. Meredith Barracato mentioned the need to work with partners to be creative and hold each other accountable to ensure funding is being spent. Meredith Barracato added that the Union County Workforce Development Board will be releasing request for proposals to see if partners can work on using funds for client's services. Sandra Lynch from Community Access Unlimited asked if the funding was for program year 2023. Chairwoman Walsh Rintzler asked what would be the process to tap into resources. Meredith Barracato explained the request for proposal process. Nasrene Mondol asked if the partners who apply for a request for proposal will be responsible for doing eligibility that the American Job Center is currently doing. Meredith Barracato explained that since the American Job Center is the only program with access to the state system then they are responsible for the ensuring the client information is entered into the state system. Meredith Barracato added it is important to work closely with the partners to assist with eligibility but it is the responsibility of the American Job Center to ensure the information is correct and input into the state software. Nasrene Mondol mentioned having challenges with the amount of paperwork the American Job Center is receiving from the partners. Director Antonio Rivera mentioned there needs to be more coordination between the American Job Center as the Operator and the partners. Director Rivera added this should be done at monthly meetings to troubleshoot these concerns and the American Job Center need to negotiate with the partners to figure out how to make the system work.

Sandra Lynch from Community Access Unlimited mentioned her organization has an American Job Center grant for Supportive Services but they do not receive any referrals and consumers do not know that

UNION COUNTY WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD  
DISABILITIES COMMITTEE  
Cyndy Walsh Rintzler, CHAIRWOMAN  
MEETING MINUTES: March 22, 2023 10:00AM via Zoom

they have that funding available. She added that they can not spend the funding like they did with the Youth Forward program. Director Rivera mentioned a conversation like this would need to be held with Robert Croom on ways to spend supportive service funding. Nasrene Mondol mentioned supportive service is not for the general public and clients need to go through the eligibility process. Meredith Barracato mentioned that Individuals with Disabilities would be eligible it is just a matter of getting their paperwork together and enrolled. Robert Croom mentioned the American Job Center is working with their partners to get clients enrolled.

d. **Performance Measures and Accountability:** Meredith Barracato then discussed the various ways the Union County Workforce Development Board would need to track performance to ensure accountability. She mentioned used various systems such as:

- Annual Reports
- Board and Committee Meetings
- Certification of AJC
- Procurement and Contracts
- Americas One Stop Operating System, FutureWorks, and Union County Works software

Meredith Barracato asked Nasrene Mondol to provide committee members with information on the Union County Works software that is available to partners to communicate about shared clients.

Meredith Barracato noted in addition to reviewing the budget at each committee meeting the Union County Workforce Development Board would be presenting data from FutureWorks on the enrollment of Individuals with Disability and the various services being offered to them. Meredith Barracato noted that since the American Job Center and the Youth Forward team are the only one with access to the Americas One Stop Operating System software both departments would be responsible for discussing specific client data listed on the two slides which include client information such as:

- Demographics
- Supportive Service Needs
- Referral Source
- Barriers to employment

Meredith Barracato discussed the two sub-strategies that will be a main focus is professional development and employer engagement.

- **Professional Development:** Based on recommendations from committee members the Union County Workforce Development Board will be looking to partner with Rutgers

UNION COUNTY WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD  
DISABILITIES COMMITTEE  
Cyndy Walsh Rintzler, CHAIRWOMAN  
MEETING MINUTES: March 22, 2023 10:00AM via Zoom

University, The Boggs Center on Developmental Disability. Melody Holiday from Community Access Unlimited mentioned her agency has received trainings from the Boggs Center and recommends Quality Support and Services. Manny Ramirez, Union County ADA Compliance include a training provider link <https://disabilityrightsnj.org/get-in-touch/training-and-outreach/>. Chairwoman Walsh Rintzler shared a few trainings her program uses and offered the Rutgers School of Social Work also has trainings for adults with disability <https://ssw-ce.rutgers.edu/index.php?m=catalog> . Melissa Lomax, Family Resource Network mentioned Partners for Youth with Disabilities <https://learn.pyd.org/> is a training provider they use in her agency for staff training. Walter Droz, Salvation Army, mentioned he sees parents with children with disability and how to transition into adulthood. Director Rivera mentioned Walter Droz should get connected with the Youth Forward team because they provide services to students as young as 14 years old. Sandra Lynch mentioned Community Access Unlimited has programs for youth. Director Rivera mentioned it would be a great idea to do a workshop at the One Stop on the services that are being offered.

- Employer engagement: Meredith Barracato shared information on Berks County Workforce Development Board which held a who held a diversity, equity and inclusion symposium on employer engagement. Meredith Barracato mentioned the presentation and a Hiring Guide handout has been uploaded to the partner resource Google Drive Folder. Meredith Barracato then asked for volunteers to join the employer engagement subcommittee. The following committee members volunteered:

- Carolina Marin, American Job Center
- Melissa Lomax, Family Resource Network
- Manny Ramirez, Union County ADA Compliance
- Marc Schweitzer NJDVRs
- Melody Holiday, Community Access Unlimited

Melody Holiday mentioned they have been working with various employer partnerships they have been successful in hiring their clients.

#### **IV. Committee Member Updates:**

**American Job Center:** Robert Croom mentioned they are open and

UNION COUNTY WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD  
DISABILITIES COMMITTEE  
Cyndy Walsh Rintzler, CHAIRWOMAN  
MEETING MINUTES: March 22, 2023 10:00AM via Zoom

Inroads to Opportunities: Chairwoman Walsh Rintzler mentioned there was a event and there have been lots of movement

**Bridgeway Behavioral Health Services**

**Department of Labor:** Marc Schweitzer State as A Model Employer, encourages individuals with Disabilities to apply for state jobs.

<https://info.csc.state.nj.us/jobannouncements/SameJobAnnouncement/JobList/>

**Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services:** Ed Faver mentioned there are new features for the career scope evaluation. His department is short staff so there might be delays in getting back to people.

**The Family Resource Network:** Melissa Lomax they have started to expand their services into Union.

**Arc of NJ: NA**

**Union County ESC: NA**

**Goodwill:** Zinnia Catala mentioned they have the Bridges to Youth grant to work with youth with disabilities and will share the information with Meredith Barracato. Also work with homeless Veterans

**Arc of Union County: NA**

**Union College: NA**

**UC Office for People w/Disability & Special Needs:** Liz Paskewich mentioned they are gearing up to celebrate Autism Acceptance Month and have a Walk on April 1, 2023.

**CAU:** Sandra Lynch they have a homeless shelter for their youth and prevocational group.

**Salvation Army:** Walter Droz his program is looking to help parents and will be starting a parent group.

**ADA Compliance:** Manny Ramirez mentioned the county is working on making all the One Stop Centers accessibility.

**V. Meeting Schedule 2023:**

Director Rivera asked that everyone go to the Union County Workforce Development Board website to review the strategic plan. Director Rivera commented the plan has a section dedicated to supporting Individuals with Disabilities. Chairwoman Walsh Rintzler will meet with Meredith Barracato to discuss some dates in May for the sub-committee employer engagement meeting in instead of the April 5, 2023 meeting.

- |                                 |                                 |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| a. Wednesday, April 5, 2023     | 10:00am- 12:00pm                |
| b. Tuesday, June 27, 2023       | 10:00am- 12:00pm Alternate Date |
| c. Thursday, September 14, 2023 | 10:00am- 12:00pm                |
| d. Wednesday, November 1, 2023  | 10:00am- 12:00pm                |

UNION COUNTY WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD  
DISABILITIES COMMITTEE  
Cyndy Walsh Rintzler, CHAIRWOMAN  
MEETING MINUTES: March 22, 2023 10:00AM via Zoom

**VI. Committee Adjournment:**