



YOUTH COUNCIL

MINUTES

Thursday, October 12, 2006

11:30 a.m.

**Merrimack Valley Workforce Investment Board
60 Island Street
Lawrence, MA**

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Cal Williams, Linda Piergeorge, Thomas Casey, Melissa Hogan, Megan Shea, Sr. Gwynette Proctor, Vinnie Ouellette, Jenny Picket, Cindy Mejia, Tom Cuddy, Steve O'Brien, Ed Warnhuis, Janet Allison (via cell phone)

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Michelle Collins, Erin Kelly, Dave Konjoian, Jeff Marcoux, Fred Shaheen

GUESTS PRESENT:

Ed Anderson, John Niles, Amy Weatherbee

STAFF PRESENT:

Fred Carberry, Chris Shannon

I. Approval of Minutes

Fred Carberry said that Dave Konjoian has stepped down as chair of the Youth Council but will continue to be a member. Cal Williams has served as the chair in the past but the by-laws require the chair to be from the private sector. The Chair of the WIB selects the committee chairs. Fred said he felt that we would be in conformance with the by-laws for this committee to select a vice chair to preside over the meetings until a private sector chair is appointed.

Motion by Megan Shea seconded by Tom Casey to nominate and approve Cal Williams as vice chair. Motion passed unanimously.

Cal Williams called the meeting to order at 11:40 a.m. and introductions were made.

Mr. Williams then asked for motion the minutes of the April 7, 2006, May 19, 2007, June 28, 2006, and August 29, 2006 Youth Council meetings.

Megan Shea made a motion to approve the minutes of the April 7, 2006 Youth Council meeting as submitted and Ed Warnhuis seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Megan Shea then made a motion to approve the minutes of the May 19, 2007 Youth Council meeting as submitted. Ed Warnhuis seconded the motion and motion passed.

Ed Warnhuis made a motion to approve the minutes of the June 28, 2006 Youth Council meeting as submitted. Tom Casey seconded the motion and motion passed.

Jenny Picket made a motion to approve the minutes of the August 29, 2006 Youth Council meeting with Tom Casey requesting the change on Page 3, paragraph one from "undocumented jobs" to "under the table." Ed Warnhuis seconded the motion and motion passed.

II. FY'07 OSY Youth RFP Update

a. Youth Build

Amy Weatherbee began stating that because Youth Build submitted a poor proposal, the reviewers had not recommended funding the proposal in response to the FY'07 OSY RFP. The WIB staff and DGA staff have been working at the direction of the Youth Council to see how Youth Build finishes out the year and if they get additional training related placements. They have met with the program person and their supervisor and Amy said her staff provided ongoing technical assistance. The WIB staff had also met with them offering assistance with construction. Amy said that given all this there has basically been no change in the performance. There has also been a lack of monthly reports.

Chris also added that the question is the value added of the program. These students were getting jobs at Wal-Mart and doing custodial work at places where they could have gotten jobs without participating in the program. The program made it clear they are not really focused on job placement but on the leadership development.

Amy said because this is a two year round RFP and in the last cycle they were having issues with the training related placements, we went back in, based on

the Youth Council recommendations, strongly gave technical assistance and said this is really important, this is what the RFP is designed for. We require employment connections and training related job placements. Now in the second cycle we are having the same issues and she said that this is a difficult situation.

Chris said that reviewer comments and current performance information has been provided in the meeting packets. The decision is to either recommend for future funding or not. We can continue to provide technical assistance even if not funded and encourage them to develop the program accordingly to apply in the future. They also have other funding sources to support the program.

Discussion followed on the funding and the fact that it is federal funding.

Tom Casey said that he agreed with the recommendation if things haven't changed but added that construction is an ever growing field. We need to train people in construction in some other way.

Megan Shea also mentioned the lack of credentialing and the need to help youth to get certifications. Megan also noted that these kids are 'at risk' hard to serve and that is some of the challenge.

Discussion followed on cultivating vendors and in the future to assist them to pursue putting together an advisory committee.

Amy said that we will have to go out to bid again this year with remaining funds. We can also review the RFP to see what we want to do regarding the gaps in our critical industries and how to target the money.

Motion by Jenny Pickett seconded by Ed Warnhuis to accept the recommendation and not fund the Youth Build Program at this time. Motion passed with Sister Gwynette Proctor abstaining.

Sr. Gwynette asked if this is the time to gather the employers and to start a focus group of vendors and maybe ask folks to come and help write grants.

Chris also said that that the vacant Adult Workforce Manager position would be in line with putting together regional industry meetings of critical and emerging industries. We can pull that in when the position is filled.

Amy also said that one of the issues is that this region took a significant cut in funding across the board so we do like to set the training dollars aside for actual training activities. Having regional industry forums could be a really good way to reach out to industries and noted that in our ITA database there are over 300

training providers putting their programs to the region to talk about what things such as common measures and certification are going to affect our RFP.

John Niles said that you can use the ITA providers on the adult side and provide youth services on the occupational skills without doing a wide procurement. One way to achieve what Amy is talking about is to work with existing vendors on the literacy and youth development and mentoring and then pick an ITA provider for the construction skills, etc. This combined effort might get you where you want to be faster.

III. WIA 101

Chris Shannon then introduced John Niles from Commonwealth Corporation. John began his presentation stating that he is ready and willing to assist this Youth Council in any way we deem necessary.

John said he was here in August and explained that he is the Deputy Director for the Center for Youth Development and Education at Commonwealth Corporation. They work with all the Youth Councils in Massachusetts and have done consulting work with Youth Councils outside of Massachusetts so he has a pretty broad perspective of the role of the Youth Council.

John offered to be our guide to WIA 101 and provided an overview. He can address policy, procedure and any other issues this Youth Council wants to discuss. He asked for ideas of how to best access his services by the end of the meeting.

Chris noted that there is no charge for John's services and his technical assistance.

John said that it is likely that you will be using him or Commonwealth Corp services more intensely than any other Youth Council in the state given the fact that you are relatively new.

He then proceeded with an overview of what the WIA Youth roles and responsibilities are including key principles, eligibility, required program elements, performance measurements and "new" common measures. He also talked about challenges, connecting to a larger youth system and determining strategic priorities.

IV. Next Meeting

Discussion followed on the next meetings and the consensus was to have a working lunch on Thursday, November 9th from 11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. and a one half day strategic planning retreat on Thursday, November 30th from Noon – 4:00 p.m.

V. Adjournment

Having no further business Megan Shea made a motion to adjourn seconded by Tom Casey. Motion passed.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Kivell
Recorder