



Planning/ Career Center Committee Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, June 20, 2017

8:00 a.m.

255 Essex Street, 4th Floor

Lawrence, MA 01840

Members Present: Juan Yopez, Chairman
Ron Contrado, Andrew Herlihy, Bob Wescott, Abel Vargas

Members Absent: Rosalin Acosta Mike Munday,

Staff Present: Rafael Abislaiman, Corina Ruiz, Susan Almono

Other: Amy Weatherbee, Dawn Beati

I. Approval of Minutes of the May 16, 2017 meeting

A quorum being present, Juan Yopez, called the meeting to order at 8:10 a.m. and then called for a motion on the minutes of the May 16, 2017 meeting.

Motion by Bob Wescott, seconded by Ron Contrado, to approve the minutes of the May 16, 2017 meeting as submitted. Motion passed.

II. Performance Summary as of May 31, 2017

Susan said the number of job seekers we've served is good. The employer services category are way above plan because of a change in the definition reportable services. We still have time to increase the adult exit numbers and the dislocated worker outcomes are doing well. The youth outcome numbers are better compared to other years.

Bob Wescott asked what type of disabilities are reported under persons with disability and Susan said disabilities are self-declared. If someone states they have one then we record that person as having a disability.

Abel Vargas asked if the similarity between the average wages for adults and youth is due to the increase in minimum wage. Susan said that that is one factor but WIOA raised the upper youth age to 24 so we're now serving young adults. Amy Weatherbee said that we're not young adults but older youth. This year we served youth via ITA's and group training. Our goal is not have any WIOA trained people make minimum wage. They should make more than the

minimum. Rafael reminded members that MVWIB policy states that WIOA trained youth should make an average of \$2 over minimum wage.

III. Budget Update as of May 31, 2017

Rafael said the current budget situation is problematic because the MVWIB is owed quite a bit of money from the State and also Federal money that passes through the State. We also lost the opportunity to receive additional funds due to irregular communication between the State and Feds. He noted that MA DOL has been under a Federal audit for a couple of months there's no knowing when there will be a resolution to the audit and how much it is impacting us. Tracy Myszkowsky said we are running programs at our own risk.

Tracy summarized the budget and cash flow situation as follows. The MVWIB is awaiting a \$341,111 Multiple Employer Set Aside grant from MA Rapid Response. These funds were again requested on May 17, 2017. The funds are needed while the MVWIB awaits the second part of US DOL multiple employer NEG contract funding. About \$300,000 of these funds have already been spent.

The MVWIB had submitted timely requests to include other employers in the mentioned US DOL multiple employer contract a year ago but third year funding was lost due to unsuccessful State submissions to US DOL. The MVWIB is now seeking funds to recover already expended funds incurred serving seven CBE Company dislocated employees. It is uncertain if whether MVWIB can recoup \$36,848 in ITA Dislocated Worker dollars Training for those CBE Company enrollments. They were approved by US DOL via email.

The MVWIB paid for those ITA's using local WIOA Dislocated Worker funds. If the Multiple employer funding is approved, we will carry the \$36,848 to cover Dislocated Worker ITAs in FY18 and soften our 14% FY18 budget cut.

We are also awaiting \$187,114 for a Polartec Set-Aside pending Polartec NEG contract and subsequent funding. We've also asked if the Polartec Set-Aside grant should run through June 30, 2018 because of possible delays in NEG funding. For both of the above, the MVWIB is waiting to hear whether there can be an additional 5% for Admin in the Rapid Response budgets. That increase would mirror the 10% Admin in NEG budgets.

The MVWIB is hoping for a \$25,390 increase in FY17 Rapid Response State Staff funding to cover their share of equipment rental/copying, premises IT upgrading, supplies, and career center relocation costs and for \$21,247 in funding to cover the costs incurred paying for seven (7) DCS Staffs that were laid off four (4) months later than budgeted in our annual plan. The seven state staff were paid via another State account that should be balanced out.

Rafael stated that it is especially worrisome because we do not have a time frame for resolution of the mentioned cash flow issues. It's possible that the State will not be able to pay using FY 17 money and we may start out in a hole with FY 18 money. Typically, there's also a multi-month wait for payments at the start of each fiscal year.

He added that there is also about \$250,000 in employee pay-outs due at the end of June because of ValleyWorks staff transition from the City of Lawrence to NECC. MVWIB will be well

over half a million dollars in the hole if we do not receive Rapid Response and NEG funds within the next few weeks. Neither NECC nor the City of Lawrence can long front us endless amounts of money once we burn through the remaining half million dollars in MVWIB discretionary funds. We accumulated those discretionary funds over the past three or four decades. Without additional funds, staff lay-offs will become necessary.

Tracy also needs certain accounting transactions to be done in order to properly reconcile funding and calculate FY17 carry in funds. This has been communicated to the State.

Juan asked Rafael to escalate the issue to the appropriate staff and Rafael said he will be contacting Alice Sweeney and Jennifer James. Juan said we need to make sure the City of Lawrence is willing to assist and to send the committee email updates as necessary.

IV. Grants Update

Susan said there weren't any updates but briefly talked about SkillsBuild. The MVWIB was presented with an opportunity to enroll two young adults in the Skills Build program in Hopkinton. This is a 6 week program that offers opportunity to build skills in the trades and to connect to the trade unions for employment. The training is onsite at the Laborers training facility where students stay during the week and return home on weekends. Juan asked about transportation and Susan said that Francisco Brea committed to providing weekend transportation. The program flyer was shared with members.

Amy said she had a systems concern because the Board voted that WIOA Youth funds will only be used for ITA's and Group trainings and anything else would need to go through our procurement policy. Rafael said there are two ways to resolve the concern. The program can be treated as buying slots in another WIB's group program. Another approach is to consider the activity work experience rather than training. Rafael added that an email was sent to the State for guidance but no response has been received. We want to make this work as it will provide two youth with a unique opportunity that the Youth Council has recognized as valuable.

Juan asked for a motion to create a 3rd activity category under the MVWIB Youth training called work experience.

Motion by Bob Wescott, seconded by Ron Contrado, to create a 3rd category under the MVWIB Youth training policy named work experience. Motion passed unanimously.

V. Career Center Partner MOU

Rafael said that Peter Matthews just signed the Career Center Partner MOU and that the Mayor will sign today. Planning Committee members received a draft several weeks back. The MOU has been worked on for several months and is due this upcoming Friday. WIOA mandates that workforce partners work together and although it's a great idea, this is in part an attempt to prepare for reduced funding. The mandated partners are MRC, MCB, DTA, DUA, DCS, Senior Network and WIOA Title II remedial education partners.

VI. Career Center Report

Amy shared WIOA service and Career Center highlights. In the WIOA Adult category, 102.9% of WIOA Adult training slots and 94.95% of funds have been utilized. As of 05.31.17, the total enrollment goal is 79% and the entered employment rate 76%. The post-placement wage is \$14.93, which is 120% of the previous wage. The Path-to-training workshops were stopped two months ago because there was not more funding.

For WIOA Dislocated Worker, 105.41% of WIOA DW training slots and 100% of funds have been utilized. As of 05.31.17, the total enrollment goal is 219% and the entered employment rate 75%. The post-placement wage is \$20.74, which is 94% of pre-placement wage. The goal for DW customers is to be 80% of their prior wage.

For WIOA Youth, 84.78% of WIOA Youth training slots and 76.4% of funds have been utilized. As of 05.31.17, the total enrollment goal is 122% and the entered employment rate 68%. The post-placement wage is \$13.28. A few problems were encountered with the medical assistant (MA) training at LARE. Many of the customers in the training are supporting themselves and have part-time jobs. The MA training is intense and because of these factors we are seeing a lot of young adults struggle. VWCC is reviewing their assessment strategy.

Amy said that the total job seekers served is at 88% of plan, with over 36,600 visits to date by these customers. The average wage at placement is \$24.23, which is up from this time last year \$21.09.

The business services unit supported several events in the past month. The Lawrence City @ Work (co-sponsor) was held on May 12, 2017. This event had over eighty guests in attendance from Manufacturing companies, local not-for-profits, training providers, and other employers and interested parties.

On June 7th, VWCC hosted an employer session at the request of the NAMC Apprenticeship grant where the Business Service Representatives cultivated eleven different companies. In this event, businesses learned about the Apprenticeship Opportunities in Manufacturing and the support the NAMC Grant can provide to them.

On June 15th VWCC held its Clipper City Job Fair in Newburyport, with nineteen companies in attendance and approximately 100 job seekers. The numbers are being finalized this week, and despite the low attendance, the employers were generally happy with the event. The team is rethinking if and when they should have the Newburyport job fairs in the future since because recent fairs have been poorly attended.

On June 21st there will be a Parlex/Johnson Medtech Job Fair, in partnership with the Rapid Response Team, with up to ten companies on site for those employees who are currently faced with dislocation.

VII. WIOA Update

Rafael said that a contract with NECC is under development. We're incorporating a lot of the things NECC mentioned on their proposal, State standards and MVWIB strategic plan elements and lessons learned. We are waiting to hear back about the MassHousing proposal submitted

for \$35,000 to serve 20 kids. If we get the grant, we'll have more flexibility to pay part of the SkillsBuild work experience program previously mentioned.

Andy said that the City of Haverhill is pleased with number and demographics of the youth that will be participating in the Summer YouthWorks program.

VIII. Other Business

No other business.

IX. Adjourn

Having no further business Bob Wescott made a motion to adjourn the meeting seconded by Andy Herlihy, and the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Corina Ruiz

Recorder

DRAFT