



YOUTH COUNCIL

MINUTES

**Wednesday, April 8, 2014
Northern Essex Community College
Riverwalk, 360 Merrimack Street, Bldg. 9 Entry K, Room 308
Lawrence, MA 01840**

Youth Council MEMBERS PRESENT:

Howard Allen, Francisco Brea, Irene Chalek, Brad Howell, Superintendent John Lavoie, April Lyskowsky, Wilberto Mejias, Steve Noroian, Tom Raiche, Lisa Remington, Megan Shea, Michael Strem, Nancy Tariot, Ellen Weinhold, Cal Williams

MVWIB Youth Council MEMBERS ABSENT:

Janet Allison, Marina Acosta, Michael Bevilacqua, Beverly DeSalvo, Tom Connors, Ed Fitzgerald, Maria Miles, Linda Piergeorge, Barbara Richards, Donna Rivera, Ed Warnshuis

MVWIB STAFF PRESENT:

Rafael Abislaiman, Cristy Gomez, Mary Kivell

OTHERS:

Robert Bower, Mass AFL-CIO, Rose Pierre and Melissa Sue Frasca (Cambridge College, Diane M. Demmer (Suffolk University)

I. Call to Order and Introductions

A quorum being present, Cal Williams called the meeting to order at 11: a.m. and welcomed all to today's meeting at Northern Essex. Introductions were made around the table. He then called on Megan Shea, Program Director, MACCWDTA at Northern Essex Community College, who welcomed the MVWIB Youth Council to NECC communiversy as she said Dr. Glenn likes to refer to this site. Megan said that they have a great partnership with Cambridge College and Suffolk University who are also here. She then mentioned Irene Chalek, NECC Center for Adult Education Programs and George Moriarty, NECC Community and Corporate Training Program both who are also in this building.

II. Approval of February 12, 2014, 2014 Minutes

Youth Council Chairman Cal Williams then called for a motion to approve the minutes of the February 12, 2014 meeting.

Motion by Megan Shea, seconded by Howard Allen, to approve the minutes of the February 12, 2014 Youth Council minutes as submitted. Motion passed.

III. Youth Programs Update

Youth Programs Director Cristy Gomez presented the youth programs update. She said that we are just finishing up the Year Round YouthWorks with 90 youth from Lawrence, Haverhill and Methuen. Now we are transitioning to the Summer YouthWorks Employment Program for applicants from Haverhill, Methuen and Lawrence between the ages of 14-21, eligible to work in the United States, income eligible, and males 18 years or older who must provide proof of Selective Service registration.

Cristy continued stating that our targeted youth enrollment is 309; 93 from Haverhill, 185 from Lawrence, and 31 from Methuen. They will participate in 15 hours of work readiness and an additional 5 hours during the program. They will work 25 hours per week for 6 weeks at \$8.00/hour. Any employers wishing to participate in the program should contact Susan Ingham at (978) 722-7048. Cristy also referred to the 2014 federal poverty guidelines by family size for income guidelines. Cal asked Cristy to discuss how we are handling recruitment. Cristy said that staff will be at Lawrence High School Mondays and Wednesdays, the High School Learning Center & Phoenix Academy Fridays, Haverhill High School on Tuesdays and Thursdays and Greater Lawrence Technical School Thursday, May 1st and Tuesday, May 6th from 9:00 am – 1:00 pm.

Mike Strem wondered how the youth get into jobs and Cristy said that youth state their job preferences and if they are qualified we try to match them to jobs near where they live. She said that the deadline for applications in May 16th with the lottery on May 30th.

Rafael Abislaiman thanked Northern Essex for hosting today's meeting with the WIB providing the food. In the past, he said that the Summer Jobs Program was historically for crime prevention. A couple of years ago we decided to take another approach to better the playing field. We changed the guidelines and have had some success. We made the change to allow the kids doing well in school, but who were poor, the opportunity to participate and since then the state has also made the change so that 80% of state participants can be just low income. This year we are going one step further with Mayor Rivera's interest in summer youth involvement of the private sector through the Lawrence Boys and Girls Club and GLCAC, Inc. with \$1550 to subsidize youth. This is modeled basically the same as Mayor Menino and Boston have done. Rafael continued stating the WIA is our principal funding stream. The only mandatory entity other than the board is the Youth Council which identifies local training vendors and makes recommendations to the full board. In the past the board funded a vendor

that the Youth Council had rejected and now they need the recommendation of the Youth Council.

Cal wondered how the Mayor was going to reach out on the Summer Youth and Ralph said that there will be a public event sometime soon but it will only be for Lawrence youth. The City of Lawrence has the liability as the lead city in our region.

Lisa Remington asked if there were plans for a group program and Cristy said that if a site wanted to offer a group program we would place youth at their site. Lisa then asked about opening the program to others and not the same kids who participated in the past. Rafael said that we use the lottery system and there might be repeaters. He also mentioned that it takes more than just 6 weeks to get kids' job ready but we also want to reward kids who do well.

Megan Shea noted that youth unemployment is at an all-time low and employers and kids are skeptical of each other.

IV. Special Presentation on AFL-CIO Apprenticeship Program

Cal then introduced Robert Bower, Special Advisor to the President for Workforce Development Massachusetts AFL-CIO. Mr. Bower said that he came out of Raytheon where he worked as a welder and union vice president for the IBEW 1505. He said that his father had worked at Raytheon and his brother is still there. Mr. Bower also said that he serves on the Mass WIB Association Executive Committee and enjoys working with Joe Bevilacqua and Rafael Abislaiman. He is also working on the Young Adult Initiative Board at MetroWest serving the most at risk youth from Framingham and Marlborough. He said that there is never enough funding to do as much as we want to but mentioned the state budget is coming out today. He said that our biggest role is advocating for these kids and getting businesses to open doors. As regards transportation many youth can't afford cars and don't get their licenses a young as we may have but anytime you can help 300 kids get an opportunity to work and learn soft skills is a plus. He said he used to believe that we needed to get kids into a good job but with today's economy he has come to realize any job is a good job.

Mr. Bower noted that we have a pretty good size Youth Council here. He said that in Metro West the majority of members are women who are like mothers to these kids. We wish we had more money but try to get the best bang for the buck. We were awarded a piece of a DOL Youth Connecting to Careers grant to connect freshman to a career path as most kids need a certificate or Associate Degree in today's labor market. We have Youth Centers in Framingham (Tempo) and Marlborough (Walker Building) as young people are reluctant to go to the Career Centers. Mr. Bower said that they are developing an RFP to seek foundation funds for technology and how to better connect young people today. We are trying to make some changes and hope to share the information. The contact person is Kelly French.

Mr. Bower then spoke about the apprenticeship programs. He said that in the past women and people of color were not represented in the unions. Today they are trying to create more opportunities for them. The building trades' apprenticeship program has people of color but needs women. Boston and other communities agree that 10% should be women according to DOL guidelines. What he said we need are pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship programs but not just in the building trades. He spoke about a conference coming May 21st on Cape Cod highlighting the best practices of the culinary programs. The SEIU is funded through Taft Hartley for a pathway to careers in health care in a health care learning program designed with counseling. He offered a tour of any of the apprenticeship sites. The IBEW training program utilizes a wind turbine and solar lighting and is open to the community to learn green technology. The Plumbers used a DOL grant to reclaim water at the Patriot's complex in Foxboro. He said that all the water is reclaimed. The Laborer's training center is big on safety and includes instruction on things such as weatherization. Recently Vice President Biden spoke about the importance of apprenticeships and connecting with the community colleges. After completing their apprenticeship they can continue and get a degree and become a foreman, engineer as there are a lot of pathways. Mr. Bower said that the best operating engineers come out of the laborers union.

Mr. Bower continued stating that Metro West used stimulus funds for kids 18-24 working with the career center for a 6 week summer program for kids with real barriers (drug and alcohol). We didn't do a good job with recruitment and many couldn't pass the drug test. We are now using union funds to drug test up front.

At the Laborers Training Center in Hopkinton we bus in from Framingham and Marlboro and they receive breakfast and lunch. There is also a dormitory where they may stay during the week and dinner is provided. The first day they are fitted for red wing boots. The first week focuses on drug and alcohol awareness. This is for 10-15 kids. There are labor construction classes on OSHA 10 certification, energy efficiency, on site welding, underground piping, brick laying and team and line work. They are instructed that their boots must be tied and pants up. There are union jobs with good money and good benefits and they are also instructed that there are no cell phones allowed on the job. They earn a \$200 stipend and it is a great experience with safety stressed and respect for other men and women. The vans take day trips to places such as the Carpenter's facility in Middlebury where they see cabinet and finish work, pile drivers and operating engineers and are given a hands on experience. Iron workers climb steel and they are offered hands on of every trade. The staff meet on a periodic basis and the 7 weeks program is paid with federal and state dollars. He said that the final week they are given the opportunity to give back to the community and with the laborers built girls softball dugouts in Ashland. They are taught how to prepare for interviews with contractors and union on each side the table. They speak at graduation. They kids build a camaraderie. Not all want the trades and decide to go back to college. As the issue of transportation has come up, we are looking at a transportation bond that has built in seats on regional transportation authorities. It doesn't have to be a union

person but must be someone who actually uses the transportation and we are seeking to staff those boards. There is \$3M for apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship that DOT can tap into for a percentage. Senator Donnelly is sponsoring money for the regions to apply.

There is thinking about pre-apprenticeship around other models such as a single head of household. Crittenden has a model for pathways out of poverty and a pre-apprenticeship program to prepare young mothers for a career. They learn life skills in the pre-apprenticeship to develop pathways out of poverty.

Rafael Abislaiman asked if there are any plans for programs in the North East region. Mr. Bower mentioned Jeff Turgeon in Worcester who negotiated \$300,000 for three years to look at doing a pre-apprenticeship program. He said that there is nothing out there for Lowell or for this region. He did ask if there are any projects in the planning for the MVWIB region and Rafael said that there is talk of an option for building for 50,000 square feet of space. Bob Bower said that there is enough work for ten years in Boston. This will happen in the South Boston area and you have to go where the work is.

Ellen Weinhold said that the only way out of poverty for women is access and spoke about the Crittenden model. Bob Bower said that the problem with WIA programs is job placement. We need a structure with a support system for training and partnering for jobs. Cal Williams mentioned the IBEW partnership. Mr. Bower said that the new Secretary of Labor Matt Malone appreciates the connection with community colleges and the technical school. Rafael Abislaiman said that this area has enormous potential for apprenticeship programs. Superintendent John Lavoie said that the Voke has relationships with the unions but it is difficult to get into the apprenticeship for plumbers. Mr. Bower said that there are a lot of changes in the unions with some members aging out and moving on. Labor is needed to keep the middle class alive. With changes in leadership, Harry Brett is opening the engineering and elevator union. Superintendent Lavoie said that he has a good relationship with the Carpenters probably because he was a union carpenter. He also mentioned that the electrical union has stepped up to the plate. Bob Bower said that he knows the building trades apprenticeship directors and would call and arrange meetings. Supt. Lavoie said that we need to build better relationships with the unions. Mr. Bower said that Raytheon has a good relationship with management and cited Harley Davidson where everyone is part of the team whether management or union.

Irene Chalek asked how we in the Merrimack Valley get our kids into programs. Mr. Bower said that in the past most of the big unions were in every city and now most are centered in Dorchester. If folks can get to Hopkinton or stay over some time, we can probably accommodate them. Worcester has a pre-apprenticeship program for women and people of color up to \$6,000. All union pre-apprenticeships are funded through Taft-Hartley and have to have a relationship to finding placement in an apprenticeship.

Rafael mentioned YouthBuild and Job Corps programs and April Lyskowsky, Youth Build Director, said that it is still difficult to get placements due to location and transportation. She said that they tried to get placements when the schools were built where 30% were to be local and couldn't get them in. Mr. Bower said that project labor agreements should be enforced. He again referenced an upcoming culinary conference on the Cape in May that will focus on best practices. He concluded his remarks stating that you have to be true to the people.

V. Partner's Information

Megan Shea said that they have placed a lot of students in advanced manufacturing jobs and on April 30th there will be a Higher Education Fair.

Ellen Weinhold said that April is Child Abuse Prevention Month.

VI. Adjournment

Having no further business made a motion to adjourn was made by Howard Allen, seconded by April Lyskowsky. Motion passed and the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Kivell

Mary Kivell
Recorder