



*Joint Newark & Essex County  
Business and Economic Development Committee Meeting  
Essex County College, Training Inc.,  
4<sup>th</sup> Floor Multipurpose Room  
Thursday, October 1, 2015  
9am-11am*

**AGENDA**

1. Opening Remarks
2. Introductions
3. Approval of Minutes
  - a. Amendment to minutes on 7/7/15
  - b. Approval of minutes for 8/6/15
4. Youth Investment Council Co-Chairs, Apryl Caldwell and Sonja Williams
5. Work Readiness Certification
6. Employer Content Library
7. 2016 Committee Calendar
8. WIB Partnership Inventory (Please complete and submit at the November 5<sup>th</sup> Meeting)
9. Next Steps
10. Adjourn Meeting



## Joint Newark and Essex County WIB Business Committee

Essex County College, Training Inc.,

4<sup>th</sup> Floor Multipurpose Room

Thursday, October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2015

9am -11am

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### **Attendees:**

Adam Albanese  
Kelli Bell-Taylor  
Joyce Bryant  
Alfred Bundy  
Mitch Cahn  
Apryl Caldwell  
Qadr Camillo  
Mitra Choudhury  
Deborah Collins  
Adriana Crawford

Barbara George-Johnson  
Davetta Lane  
Ruth Rodriguez  
Rhonda Lewis  
Charles Rosen  
Janine Schaeffer  
Bhavna Tailor  
Yuemeng Zhang  
Elizabeth Davis

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### **Meeting Called to Order: Chairperson Mitch Cahn**

Mr. Cahn called the meeting to order. A roundtable roll call was conducted to introduce all meeting attendees.

### **Approval of Minutes**

- a) Amendment to minutes on 7/7/15
- b) Approval of minutes for 8/6/15

### **Youth Investment Council Co-Chairs, Apryl Caldwell**

Ms. Caldwell recapped some questions such as:

- a) What are some of the largest barriers as employers that you've seen in Newark and the Essex County Area?
- b) As businesses, do you have flexibility for future employees? Or are you looking for the same standards for youth employees as you have for adult employees.
- c) Do you feel it's better to for us to create a general work regimen or is it better to integrate?

### **Question 1:**

What is the business community looking for?

Mr. Cahn stated that the business community has a lot of different industries here in Newark and it's also not very well represented at the WIB. There are two places that Mr. Cahn recommends going to; one being Mayor Baraka's Business Advisory Council of which they have a Workforce group that Mr. Cahn is currently trying to get to merge with this group so that they can get more employer representation. Their next meeting is at the end of the month and they are facilitated by Jennifer Kohl. With them not having an agenda it would be great to get on the agenda with

feedback from the business community. This has been the number one issue in Newark and if there is a way to solve the work readiness problem it would be amazing. If there is a way to at least give it credentials, for example to be able to say "this person has passed with credentials" it would be one of the best things to be able to move forward. Mr. Cahn read off the list from the previous meeting for Work Readiness Issues:

1. How to dress for work
2. Financial literacy
3. Interpersonal relations
4. Conflict resolution
5. Self-esteem
6. How to talk to a supervisor
7. Business ethics
8. How to manage case work issues (custody, parole, healthcare and childcare)
9. Emotional intelligence
10. Interview skills
11. Driver's license
12. Attendance

Mr. Cahn asked if anyone had anything else they would like to add, any other issues that should be part of the Work Readiness Credentials.

Essex County has just brought a Pre-Apprenticeship Training Program that is for high school seniors as well as new graduates at the Newark Technical School. They are now going to a Pre-Apprenticeship Program to not only work at the reconstruction of the new vocational technical school, but to also work for the County part-time while going to school. This is a model that could be presented to the Commissioner of Labor about funding the program going forward.

Mr. Cahn stated that the NJ Institute of Social Justice was a late scratch from our agenda today; they want to participate in our meetings. So when speaking about the credentials, perhaps this could be a great place to conduct a pilot, if they have their own private funding. One thing about the Pre-Apprenticeship Programs is that there are industries where would work in where the skills are the same in the industry. Building Trades, Healthcare, some manufacturing would work, but the manufacturing would have to be local from that, in order to move on. Also, to combine a Pre-Apprenticeship Program and On the Job Training or Summer Job Training.

Mr. Cahn was asked where do the special needs adults that are seeking employment and training fit into this population. Mr. Cahn suggested that another committee meet with them to help address those adult needs. It's a large population however you rarely hear those populations mentioned.

**Employer:** We have been thinking about our own Pre-Apprenticeship Programs starting at a younger age than what you were talking about. With the requirement that we would provide summer employment or after school internships on the condition that students stay in school. Can we incentivize through our job creations programs that our training would be contingent on continuing their education and then upon graduation from high school? Then they come to their first job at the end of it. We have been finding out through some research that a great number of students don't really even know what the benefits of them staying in high school are as they don't even see it, they don't see it leading to higher wages or a career path, and they certainly not entitled to higher education beyond that. We thought this could be a very tangible element that they are looking for.

## Question 2:

Are there employers that are hiring youths?

Mr. Cahn stated that at his company they do still hire people in their teens; we make it a practice to not keep teens together. We separate them and team them up with someone else as they can be really good employees. Many of the teens aren't mature enough to have learned any of the skills listed above, therefore they are learning them on the job. We also have some Essex County College kids who are in that age group and go to school during the day and come here to work at the factory after 2p.m.

## Work Readiness Certification

National Work Readiness Council from the University of Tennessee have developed a test credential based test that is meant to be a stackable credential after your GED but before professional or career training. They don't certify trainers; they do have their own online curriculum and their own hardcopy curriculum that they sell for \$18.00. The student or the trainer pays for the test which is currently \$75.00. It doesn't have any grand value locally but there are communities that it has grand value. In Long Beach, California it has been successful; since employers looked for it they promote it. Mr. Cahn plans on obtaining more information on it. The question came up that should there be a credential that is Industry specific? Is there a universal credential or perhaps a soft skills credential that is separate from the map? The vast majority that has been discussed in previous meetings is the Soft Skill Development Training & Job Specific Training or Industry Specific Training that would come through internships. Some that comes through skill training which may or may not require a higher level of math. Therefore we need to develop more of a tailored program that meets more of the community needs.

One of Mayor's Key Initiative is engaging our higher education institutes such as Essex County College's 50,000 students that do live in the community on a daily basis. The Mayor is very eager to turn Newark back more into a college village. If we go to our institutions and create this stackable certification in between with GED or something you can get at Essex County College. It's tying the institution to the community, its tying the students with a path up to that institution. So they are incentivized because they may stay with that institution after the first round of certifications. Then the employers know that there is a stamp of approval from our local education institutions. In which Essex County College and Rutgers have much more credibility in the local community than some National Organization that has conducted a study in Virginia. Since we have to pay out the money anyway it would be more of an incentive from the city's prospective to use our local institutions. Mr. Cahn stated for everyone to figure out across all industries what soft skills employers want and if there is a program and a credential that will certify those soft skills if not then how can we get it. Then for the industry specific ones we should leave that up to the industry which is how it's happening now. Mr. Cahn said that what really is important is to be able to insert the committee where they can sit as the liaison between three buckets:

- a) The employers
- b) The employees
- c) The institutions/organizations (training)

We can become a hub, where employers can look to us to say:

- a) Which organizations are doing which kind of training that's beneficial to my own needs?
- b) Are there sources of money to fund some of that training?

An employer can come to this committee and say I am looking for this number of employees, I am looking for with these kinds of trainings and here are some buckets of cash that I can go after to

get it. As we are developing our curriculum through Rutgers what we are now saying is we want that Phase I Training done by LSite Organizations. Therefore we are now taking on employees that has been through some sort of first round of soft skill training. We then as the employer are willing to invest in them for a second or third round of training on the following conditions:

- a) Do they have a case worker to deal with parole issues or life issues?
- b) Have they gone through some sort of emotional intelligence training?
- c) Are they relatively job ready?

Once that has been established we are ready to invest in them for a much deeper and richer education in each of those phases. Instead of certifying or giving a credential to the individual we as the committee can certify the program saying that they were giving the soft skill training that we need. As an employer I would love to be able to come to the business committee and say, "Here is what I am looking for and you tell me which of the institutions are doing this kind of training". This can become a clearing house for employees, for organizations and employers. I would have seventeen year olds at the top of the market if I knew that as of right now there is access to capital and access to training to bring in that population. I would be entirely incentivized to bring in a whole new crew of 17-21 year olds just because of Apryl's presentation. Mr. Cahn states that although there are alternate needs for individuals, this committee's work is to say okay how do we connect the right individual with the right employer and package those people properly so that the employer is participating in paying that person enough money so that person is not homeless? That's our job as the liaison between the employer community in Newark and Essex County and the individuals. This business community is not using the Workforce System because we can't tell them where the rotten eggs are, the credentials will allow us to say this is a pool of good eggs right here. As an employer if I go to the Workforce System I don't want to have to wait two weeks or a month to find out if someone is bad. It means right now I have to hire 10 people to keep one and that's down from 20. I have gotten better with the Workforce System.

We as a community cannot train them but we can figure out a way to credential them. We have a bunch of great ideas up here. We can:

1. Use the existing credential
2. Modify the existing credential
3. Come up with our own credential
4. Certify trainers

#### **Employer Content Library:**

Mr. Cahn will talk with Long Beach as they have a similar workforce and similar industry as Newark. There is a lot of manufacturing and we have the same size port. The following is the marketing package that has been agreed upon:

1. We have a great workforce
2. We have a great workforce system
3. There is money available for employers to hire the people in our workforce
4. We can help get them to work
5. We can tell you who is work ready

Content Library is going to be classified; manufacturer in Newark and attorney in Roseland will get two totally different sets of information. Due to the large amounts of trainers, grants and incentives but only a couple will appeal to any one person. Another way to get a potential employer buying is to have them select local employers take some of their best entry level employees or maybe even mid-level to run through an emotional intelligence assessment that can possibly be used as a recruiting tool. Hopefully that might be a way to build back with the employer.

Mr. Cahn wanted to discuss how the committee was going to get their marketing package done. A video was shown to the committee of their Marketing Piece to Workforce Investment Board.  
Video Played:

### **Motion to approve the minutes was passed**

### **Next Steps**

Mr. Cahn passed out the marketing workforce piece and reviewed it with the committee. The top issues that need to be resolved:

1. Placement: Jobs4Jersey or replace with LinkedIn or Monster
2. Resolve worker readiness issue
3. Transportation
4. Comprehensive list of training programs

Take the list of the training providers, classify them and summarize them and get a link to their website and contact information. Sub-committee of this committee can do.

Mr. Cahn would like to see that done before the next meeting.

1. DaVetta Lane will spearhead the training piece
2. The testimonials will be handled by \_\_\_\_\_
3. Transportation will be handled by \_\_\_\_\_
4. Placement to be handled by Ruth Rodriguez (connect individuals with employers)

This committee will be developing their own website what we will have is information that other organizations can open up in their existing websites in an Iframe. If they have a page that can pull content from our library we'll be ahead of the game. So we can have this up and running by the end of the year.

### **Meeting Adjourned**