



Joint Newark & Essex County Business and Economic Development Committee

Essex County College- Training Inc.

Thursday, June 2, 2016 at 9:00 am

Meeting Minutes

Attendees:

Kelli Bell-Taylor, Jasmyne Beckford, Al Bundy, Andrae Bynum, Mitch Cahn, Apryl Caldwell, Qadr Camillo, Mitra Choudhury, Evanthia Corrado, Jerrah Crowder, Joseph Epps, Lincoln Farquharson, Barbara George Johnson, Chip Hallock, Vann Holland, Jonathan Kobza, Tolu Lanrewaju, Fred Murphy, Janine Schaeffer, Rebecca Shulman, Bhavna Tailor, Willie Tolbert, Nicole Vazquez Wise, Anthea Williams

Meeting Called to Order: Chairperson Mitch Cahn

Mitch called the meeting to order. A roundtable roll call was conducted to introduce all meeting attendees. A motion to Mitch opened and moved the motion to have the minutes approved. He reviewed the take aways from the retreat. He stated that the group would be best effective if they split up into sub-committees. Many of the tasks will require a big ask from people outside of our committees. Mitch distributed and explained a printout that serves as a base of where we want the committee to go. The contents of the pages are as follows:

- Screenshot of how we want workforce system to appear on site
- Transportation Programs offered to employers by the NJTPA
- Sources to ask help us help build our database
- Employer contact information for testimonials
- Training/ incentive programs for Newark and Essex County businesses
- Proposal for how we might classify training/incentive programs

Mitch explained that the committee's Strategic Plan will be used as a guide to what we will accomplish in 2016 and how we plan to execute it. He expressed the need to designate tasks, get

involved in the launch of Jobs4Jersey (soon to be Career Connections), and to communicate a way to engage employers.

Sub-Committees-

The role of each committee chairperson will be to report out any progress at regular committee meetings and to be responsible for sharing information with the volunteers on their sub-committee. It was suggested that Sign-up Genius would be useful tool in keeping track of sub-committee progress and who is assigned specific tasks.

Work Readiness Credential - Apryl Caldwell

Web Development- Lincoln Farquharson

Content Library & Resource Guide - Rebecca Shulman (Continue to get information for the list)

Career Connections Liaison- Andrae Bynum

Key Strategies-

-Rebecca and Lincoln will work finding a volunteer to work on links for information on programs available to employers.

-Barbara George Johnson will engage the NJTPA who provided a wealth of knowledge on how employers can benefit from transportation resources.

-Evanthia Corrado will work on testimonials.

-Charles Rosen was volunteered by Mitch to validate contact information and employer facing descriptions.

-Chip Hallock- Continue to expand each list following the steps

-Willie Tolbert and Evanthia Corrado- Classify each program by sector, industry and location to best show programs that might be appealing to employers.

-Lincoln and Mitch will be putting together a RFQ (Request for Quote) for web developers. Mitch expressed that there was a need someone to manage the incoming information.

Lincoln expressed his confusion in regards to why the WDB isn't absorbing the cost and responsibility of housing the website and link. He expressed that since the committee is an extension of the WDB, whoever manages their site, should also manage the content library.

Mitch suggested that we should put something on paper and propose what is needed from the WDB. Mr. Tolbert asked if it was possible to get someone who manages the WDB's site at the table to help us with the format so that we can expedite the process. Mr. Bundy volunteered to reach out to the Technical Assistance Consultant for Essex County and to report back to the committee. Tolu advised that she would reach out to her colleague who manages the NWDB site to inquire about specifics, updates and what is possible as far as adding the link to the NWDB's new site. One of the gray areas of the RFQ involved having a single individual serve as a shepherd to help employers through the maze of employer programs. Lincoln suggested that one person should be dedicated to receiving information and the WDB should serve as the system in place to be the host for this information so that it doesn't get lost. Barbara George Johnson advised that the lack of staff might mean that the Joint WDB means that there are policy questions as far as what the state is not doing. Mitch communicated that he wasn't sure that putting this task on the WDB was possible without obtaining additional funding, but the idea can be proposed. Lincoln said that he didn't understand why WDB staff could not give concrete answers as to what kind of support could be offered by the agency. Mrs. Caldwell added that the proposal and questions are those that only Sam or Amina could answer. Barbara George Johnson expressed that this issue continues to come up because more resources are needed. She added that this is indeed a policy issue and we must support Sam and Amina in a policy conversation so that we can get a workforce board that meets the needs of what we are trying to accomplish. She volunteered to chair the policy committee to address such matters. Mitch suggested that an appeal be made to the State of NJ.

Work Readiness Credential

Mitch advised that the purpose of the National Work Readiness Credential was to identify work-ready job seekers through a credential designed to help employers feel confident in their hiring practices. He told the committee that that the credential failed a few years ago for a few reasons; 1) some felt that the test was too hard 2) there was no effort to promote the credential among employers. The organization that created the credential was contacted and they agreed to change the test to suit our population of jobseekers. Mitch said we should identify specific things that we can change to suit our population of jobseekers. Mrs. Caldwell suggested that the state is coming out with its own readiness credential, so the committee should consult them before moving forward. Mitch suggested that we could continue the work and pitch our outcomes to the state, since they currently don't have anything concrete. He volunteered to obtain information from Hire Newark and move forward with pilot tests. Mrs. Caldwell recommended that we obtain a copy of the test to get a better idea of what should be changed within its content in addition to talking to individuals who have taken the test. Mr. Tolbert suggested that training agencies like ECC might be able to incorporate the Readiness Credential into their curriculum. Vann Holland spoke of a practice of the Urban League in which the credential was incorporated with a few other practices. He will share information and try to obtain more detailed information.

Next Steps-

Mitch suggested that we invite Kirk Lew to speak to the committee about Placement Systems/ Career Connections for the next committee meeting.

Andrae Bynum will come up with a plan for placement and career connections.

Chip Hallock and Jonathan Kobza will be working on building up our employer database.

Elizabeth Davis will work with Career Connections

Rebecca spoke of the Disabilities Committee Event on June 16th.

Tolu relayed that once the new fiscal year starts in July, the NWDB will be using more WIOA funds with employers on OJT training programs for entry level and senior management positions. Through federal funding, the agency will be able to help offset the cost of training up to 75% of employee salaries for three to six months. If anyone knows of employers that might be interested, please contact Amina or Tolu. Andrae said that OJT could go hand in hand with career connect. Getting the word out to employers is key.

Apryl Caldwell shared that Essex County RFP for the Adult Dislocated Work Program for ADE. The Bidder's Conference will be held June 22, 2016 at 50 S. Clinton Street in East Orange, NJ. The youth services RFP is in process.

There was no further business with the committee. Mitch thanked everyone for their participation and called motion for adjournment. Motion was seconded and adjourned.