



Joint Newark & Essex County Business and Economic Development Committee

Essex County College- Training Inc.

Thursday, August 4, 2016 at 9:00 am

Meeting Minutes

Attendees:

Jasmyne Beckford, Kelli Bell-Taylor, Addy Bonet, Alfred Bundy, Mitch Cahn, Qadr Camillo, Mitra Choudhury, Evanthia Corrado, Elizabeth Davis, Jennifer Gonzalez, Joseph Epps, Barbara George Johnson, Davetta Lane, Tolu Lanrewaju, Janine Schaeffer, Bhavna Tailor, Nicole Vazquez Wise

Meeting Called to Order: Chairperson Mitch Cahn

Mitch called the meeting to order and conducted a roundtable roll call of meeting attendees. Files motion to approve minutes from the last meeting. Minutes approved with one amendment.

Committee Business

Mitch brought a sample of some of the committee's accomplishments under the Booker administration. Over a three year period, they met with people from the workforce community development, employers and state officials in Trenton. Based on these meetings, recommendations were made to the NWIB, resulting in implemented changes. One of these changes is the 1st Source agreement which included timeline and occupation listings which were used as instrumental tools to bring more jobs to the city. Getting the workforce system involved at the beginning of the process proved to be beneficial with the Marriot Pilot Initiative. Another recommendation that the committee made was to make sure that there was at least one member of the workforce system serving a contact for employer information on each Brick City Development Corporation (BCDC) Project.

Mitch advised that up until about three years ago the Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC) was almost as valuable as OJT incentives. It granted employers about \$6,000 in tax credit for hiring Newarkers who were under 40 years of age. After investigating why the initiative failed, it was determined that the program was discontinued because ADP and Paychex were fogging up the system by submitting applications without using a pre-screening process for eligible candidates. These agencies failed to thoroughly screen eligible employees, in their aim to get \$2000 of the \$6000 WOTC.

The committee also made recommendations about the port area of Newark to address two issues; the lack of development due to contaminated land and the deficiency in employment opportunities for re-entry clients. The results of the recommendations were:

- 1) BCDC hired a full-time Environmental Consultant that found alternative uses of the land.
- 2) A special committee was formed to bring re-entry friendly businesses and transportation to the edge of the port.

Mitch explained that the purpose of sharing the committee's past accomplishments was to show how their recommendations improved the workforce system in the past. The committee will be examining Career Connections in an effort to understand why Jobs for Jersey did not work as it was intended. Jennifer Gonzalez spoke of the great improvements of Career Connections and boasted about the helpful information about WOTC and labor market information that can be found on the website. She expressed her desire to partner with employers on this committee and encouraged them to work with the Talent Network so that they could make meaningful suggestions to assist with the needs and certifications of the job seekers. Mitch agreed that this could prove to be beneficial and recommended that several employers could test the system.

Committee Updates

Evanthia is working on testimonials. Adjustments are being made to appeal to employers. Mr. Bundy mentioned that October is the projected time frame to get information added to Essex County's website.

The next part of the meeting was dedicated to working on the content library. Mitch passed out a list of areas that needed to be classified so that it could be collaborated and added to the websites. The meeting attendees worked on the classifications for the remainder of the meeting.

Next Steps

-Draft an RFQ

-Draft a letter to the State of New Jersey- Mr. Epps will work on an outline for the work readiness credential.

This concluded the business of the committee meeting. Meeting was adjourned.

The next meeting will be held on Thursday, November 3, 2016 at 9 a.m.