



Full Board Meeting
June 29, 2016
The Waterfront, 2 Grafton Avenue
Newark, NJ 07104
9:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.

Meeting Minutes

Meeting Attendees: Dhiren Amin, Eva Anochi, Jasmyne Beckford, Kelli Bell-Taylor, Amina Bey, Nela Blanco, Scott Blow, Marsha Brown, Andrae Bynum, Mitch Cahn, Apryl Caldwell, Al-Qadr Camillo, Bruna Carli, Mitra Choudhury, Vesta Godwin Clark, Adriana Crawford, Jerrah Crowder, Susan Croce, Elizabeth Davis, Jesus DePaula, Joseph Epps, Lincoln Farquharson for Marsha Brown, Jason Frazier, Barbara George Johnson, Danny-Denise Gonzalez, Chip Hallock, Alturrick Kenney, Jonathan Kobza, Davetta Lane, Tolu Lanrewaju, Calvin Ledford, Orlando Mingo, Julius Montford, Angelique Morrison, Kareen Motley, Fred Murphy, Morris Murray, Curtia Orr, Travis Reid for Robert Clark, Charles Rosen, Rigoberto Salas, Safanya Searcy, Al-Tariq Shabazz, Bhavna Tailor, Nicole Vazquez-Wise, Sonja Williams

Introductions- All

All meeting attendees and staff introduced themselves and articulated what businesses and/or organizations they represented.

Welcome & Opening Remarks- Amina Bey

Amina Bey, Executive Director of the Newark Workforce Development Board (NWDB), welcomed all board members, meeting attendees and staff to the meeting. The meeting was held at the Waterfront, 2 Grafton Avenue in Newark, New Jersey. A motion was presented to approve the minutes; motion was moved and approved with corrections adding Bhavna Tailor, Eva Anochi and Curtia Orr as attendees at the last meeting.

Welcome of New Board Members

Newark City Clerk, Ken Louis administered the Oath of Office for Angelique Morrison (L&M Development) and Calvin Ledford (PSE&G). They were graciously welcomed as members of the Newark Workforce Development Board.

Vesta Godwin-Clark, Co-Chairperson Newark Workforce Development Board

NWDB Rebranding Event- Vesta commended Amina and the entire NWDB team for hosting a successful event.

Joint Newark and Essex County WDB Retreat- Amina informed the group that the 2nd Joint Newark and Essex County WDB Retreat was part two of the strategic plans laid out by each respective committee. She advised that each committee has a better understanding of their goals, objectives and roles. Vesta encouraged everyone to continue to help in moving the residents of the City of Newark forward and suggested that the rebranding video be shared and that board members should be advocates for the NWDB and its mission.

NWDB Update - Amina Bey

Ms. Bey advised that 52 RFP's (Request for Proposals) have been received from vendors looking to contract with the City of Newark. The review process has begun and stressed that past performance of any returning vendors will be factored in the review. The city aims to get the most for its buck by scaling down on contracted vendors. Putting more money into OJT (on the job training) programs and apprenticeship programs will be a priority in the review process.

Newark WORKS Changes- Norma Gonzalez has transitioned to NCEDC and Amina went on record, commending her for years of service and commitment. Al-Tariq Shabazz, Interim Director for Newark WORKS, is looking to find a new director. Jason Frazier is the new Chief Fiscal Officer for Newark WORKS. Jasmyne Beckford has come aboard the NWDB team as the Special Projects Coordinator. Tolu Lanrewaju and Adriana Crawford will be transitioning out in September of this year.

NJ Institute for Social Justice- The previous administration granted a \$150,000 contract to service about 10 people in construction and re-entry trades. The amount owed was disputed, and subsequently reduced from \$150,000 to \$75,000.

Grant Associates- The previous administration entered into a \$1.35 million contract for this agency to provide work readiness and placements for adults and dislocated workers. NWDB terminated the contract August 2014. Grant Associates is suing the NWDB for \$450,000. NWDB does not have unrestricted funds available to pay any judgement rendered against it.

Davetta Lane, Chief of Operations- NWDB

SETC Board Recertification-

The recommendation was made to certify the NWDB and it certified by the commission effective July 1st, 2016. Amina thanked the team for the work that went into the recertification and stressed that many of the programs and opportunities that are provided for program participants could not happen without it. The documents needed for recertification include memorandums of understanding between the WDB and the City of Newark, local and chief officials, programming reports, board and committee meeting minutes for the last two years and strategic plans.

Newark Education Training Fund Update- this program provided 23 vocational students with stipends. The remainder of the funds will be set aside for the construction trades program for the duration of their training. Amina thanked Angelique Morrison and L&M Developers for donating \$200,000 to the NETF Program.

The NWDB is hosting 7 interns for the summer. The interns are college students from Rutgers University, Felician College and Montclair State University. Interns will be available to work on committee projects as needed.

Jasmyne Beckford, NWDB

Honeywell Project- Of 100 applicants, there are thirteen strong candidates who met the eligibility requirements. Training is projected to start soon. This Energy Savings Improvement Program will rehab city owned properties and training participants to work and assist in guiding them into full-term employment.

Tolu Lanrewaju, NWDB

NJ Build Grant- The NWDB was recently approved for two construction trade grants from the NJ Dept. of Labor for \$200,000. The first program has a projected launch date of July 2016 and the other has a projected launch date of August 2016. Essex County College, Local 55, Urban League of Essex County and the Sisters and the Brotherhood have been valued partners in this project. Fifty participants will be able to participate in the program and they must be over 20 years of age, have a driver's license and live in Newark.

Adriana Crawford, NWDB

One Stop Relocation Update- The agency is in the process of looking for commercial space to bring all entities of workforce development and training under one roof. Since the walk-thru at 320-321 University Avenue, the building located at 765 Broad Street is being explored. If this property is chosen, parking will be baked into the overall contract and we are looking at 165 parking spaces. The NWDB has been working closely with the State of NJ Facilities Manager, the City of Newark Business Administrator and the Dept. of Treasury to get the process moving. Architects have begun to draw up plans specific to the needs of the One-Stop. The 2nd meeting with architects will occur on July 5, 2016.

NWDB Website- We have a new website and video that was designed by FemWorks. Meeting minutes, strategic plan and information about the upcoming fundraiser are available on the webpage at www.newarkwdb.org. The folder passed out at the meeting includes documentation that provides a great reference of the NWDB and its connection to NewarkWORKS. Vesta stressed the importance of sharing the information provided. Amina urged the importance of promoting and supporting Newark businesses. She thanked Adriana for her contributions to the team and wished her well in her future endeavors as she moves forward to bigger and better things.

Financial Update-Susan Croce, Aurora Nonprofit Solutions

The audit report for fiscal year June 30, 2015 was released, and the opinion was unmodified. There were no financial or internal control findings, but there was a grant compliance finding. The compliance finding was that there was no signed contract between the State of New Jersey and NewarkWORKS and between NewarkWORKS and NWDB. For fiscal year ended June 30, 2016, a signed contract is in place and this compliance finding will be resolved for the next audit report.

Grant Associates dispute with NWDB in regard to a signed contract with the previous administration remains unresolved. Grant Associates was paid \$300,000 as “start-up” costs which is an unallowable cost. During the audit for June 30, 2014, the \$300,000 start-up payment was applied against Grant Associate invoices for June, July and August 2014 which resulted in the dispute with Grant Associates. NWDB’s legal fees are covered by insurance, but any settlement with Grant Associates is not covered by insurance.

NJ Institute for Social Justice was paid \$25,000 of the \$75,000 owed to them.

For fiscal year ended June 30, 2016, the projected operating deficit is \$100,000 due to the delay startup of the NJ Build grant and lower than anticipated contributions.

NewarkWorks has yet to receive the Notice of Obligations from the State of New Jersey resulting in delays in finalizing budget for next year.

Jason Frazier, Newark WORKS

Strategic changes have been made to revamp the vendor payment process to cut inefficiency, better serve stakeholders and to shift the work load in an effort to create a more balanced team. Newark WORKS is reestablishing strong relationships with the NWDB and working with the Programmatic Team to comply with the new WIOA regulations. Jason is working closely with Susan on the budget and MOU findings. He said that the agency is looking at vendor performance history as RFP’s and ITA’s are considered. Contracts will only be given to vendors who help the agency meet the metrics outlined in the new regulations. Mr. Epps expressed that it seems that a lot of money is being spent on nothing, yet constraints make it difficult to measure up. Amina chimed in, advising that the number of vendors with class-sized contracts by going into more specialized and apprenticeship programs. We are taking full advantage and redirecting funding to other sources. Morris Murray expressed concern about vendors coming into vendor orientations as wolves in sheep’s clothing. Amina added that this is a new day and vendor manipulation will not be tolerated.

Al-Tariq Shabazz, Interim Director of Newark WORKS

Job Development and Placement-

Direct Placement- 437

Contract Vendors- 649

Employment Services- 183

OJT Placements- 60

Vocational Training- 1171

ITA’s- 659

Classroom Training Youth- 166

Classroom Training TANF- 82

Literacy Workforce Link- 264; the target number was 225.

He expressed that the NWDB's commitment to increase business engagement with employers will positively help Newark WORKS as they move towards a more sector specific job development plan to boost employment numbers. The Office of Re-Entry handles general intake and assessments for individuals coming home from prison and/or those serving probation. He provided information on an upcoming initiative that targets re-entry clients who will be trained to run a commercial laundry business. He also mentioned a partnership with Rutgers University called Project Restore which studies the effects of the trauma that ex-offenders experience when re-entering society after incarceration. Faith Renewed is another initiative that offers mentoring and safe havens once school starts in September. It includes academic enrichment, community service, physical fitness and cultural enrichment. The last initiative mentioned was the Transition to Work Program, where 50 re-entry individuals working in the Sanitation Department will receive \$15/hour compensation with life skills training every Friday.

He advised that the retention benchmark is being brought back and clients will be followed for a year.

Sonja Williams, One-Stop Youth Department

The office has been working on working on RFP's for 2015-2016. They recently partnered with United Airlines who hired 16 participants for the Summer Assist Program. There are 84 college students who will be working until mid-August and are placed at partnering sites throughout Newark. The Youth Department is targeting high school graduates and out of school youth to roll over to vocational training. Throughout the year, there were 43 ITA's. One summer program slated to start on July 11th, will place over 2000 participants. The Municipal program was promoted online and the One-Stop staff also went out to schools and used social media to spread the word about summer employment opportunities. The agency tried something new this year in their effort to move up to the 21st century.

Mr. Murray asked if it was possible for the city and the state to collaborate to increase the participation rates for both agencies. Amina clarified that the numbers are from ITA's and direct placements, however she agreed that the partners can sit down to discuss how everyone's efforts can be reported.

Apryl Caldwell, Essex County Update on behalf of Sam Okparaeke

Sam Okparaeke sent his regrets for not being present. Apryl congratulated the Disability Committee for the successful event that they hosted last month. The Essex County RFP's are out and the county is soliciting reviewers. She asked anyone interested Please reach out to Josette Vandyke at 973-395-8603. The Bidder's Conference for youth RFP's will take place next week. The Youth Service Summit will be held immediately after the Bidder's Conference to brainstorm on how to gain and retain the out of school youth population. Sends regrets on behalf of Sam.

Sub-Committee Reports

Business & Economic Development Committee (Mitchell Cahn)

Mitch advised that the BEDC strategic plan was written and advised that the focus is on three major areas. They consist of promotion of resources that encourage employers who hire residents, implementation of the work readiness credential and the Career Connections rollout through respective subcommittees. The committee is finalizing its content library to market to employers throughout the workforce system. The committee has collaborated testimonials to be linked to the NCEDC, Essex

County and WDB websites. The Work Readiness Credential Subcommittee will be working on a credential to be presented to the State of New Jersey for adoption and implementation. The Career Connections Subcommittee will be sending a group of individuals through the training class so that they can report back to the committee. The Employer Communications Subcommittee aims to develop a strong employer mailing list that can be used to increase employer engagement.

Education and Literacy Committee

The Literacy Committee is working to influence the redefinition of funding and priorities to reflect corporative programming. They recognized the importance of business engagement in the process to include preparation of a competitive workforce and how to actually engage businesses. The partners in their strategy are Newark and Essex County WDBs, Mayor Baraka, County Executive Joe DiVincenzo. The committee identified New Jersey All as a resource to assist in advocacy, partnerships and diversification while addressing funding cuts. Their plan is to obtain a copy of the state plan to align resources, to connect employers by sector and to include next steps to career paths and credentials.

Disability Issues Committee (Elizabeth Davis)

Elizabeth expressed her appreciation to everyone who participated in the Employer Recognition Event which highlighted and recognized four Newark employers who hired disabled workers. It was held at McCloone's Boathouse in West Orange, NJ. Elizabeth thanked Mitch for providing the sound system. The committee is already working on resource training for One-Stop staff and funding for next year. The next committee meeting is June 30th.

Youth Investment Council (Sonja Williams)

The committee is working on the clothes closet for youth which will be located at 50 S. Clinton Street on the 5th Floor in East Orange. The closet subcommittee has volunteered to donate paint and is arranging donated clothing. The floors have been done and the space will be painted soon. They are not yet in the position to take large donations, but they welcome them once the renovations are complete. The Work Readiness Credential is being worked on consistently.

Mitra advised that ECC is looking for donations for their re-entry populations for big and tall men.

Welfare to Work

The first session at the WDB Retreat really focused on understanding what the committee needs and how to focus on employers and the need for more integration and sharing information. Both parties must understand what must be offered. The Community Health Program was identified as a proposed model solution because of the tremendous success in partner engagement. The stakeholders identified were potential employers, leadership, the Department of Labor, the City of Newark, the County of Essex and business representatives. The committee also posed the idea of hosting a Business Breakfast catering to businesses looking to hire welfare recipients. They also want to continue to include the committee in the RFP process.

Conclusion

Vesta thanked the committee and chairpersons for their commitment and dedication. The next NWDB meeting will be held on September 7, 2016 at 2 Grafton Avenue in Newark. The 2nd NWDB Fundraiser

will be held on Thursday, September 1st at Hotel Indigo in downtown Newark. Mitch added that one of the things that made the Disability Issues Committee's Employer Recognition Event successful was that it engaged employers. All board members were encouraged to support the fundraiser by purchasing tickets and/or by bringing two employers to the function. Amina expressed sincere gratitude to staff, chairpersons and committee members for their time, participation and efforts. She stressed how meaningful it is to Mayor Baraka and the population that we serve daily. Vesta commended Amina and the NWDB team for a job well done.

Meeting Adjourned

A motion to adjourn the meeting was presented and moved. Meeting adjourned.