



## ***Joint Newark & Essex County Workforce Development Board Meeting***

Thursday, December 15, 2016

Nanina's in the Park, 540 Mill Street, Belleville NJ

9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

### Meeting Minutes

#### **Attendees:**

Aleksandra Adamczyk, Mary Alexander, Tameka Allen, Dhiren Amin, Benjamin Amos, Tom Bacote, Mayor Ras Baraka, Christian Barcelos, Paula Barratta, Joe Barr, Jasmyne Beckford, Kelli Bell-Taylor, Amina Bey, Nela Blanco, Addy Bonet, Mariselis Bonilla, Linda Brodie, Joyce Bryant, Al Bundy, Mitchell Chan, Apryl Caldwell, Allyson Carvajel, Judith Celestin, Mitra Choudhury, Arthur Cifelli, Maureen Clifford, Deborah Collins, Monica Colon, Evanthia Corrado, Jerrah Crowder, Wendy Cubano, Elizabeth A. Davis, County Executive Joseph DiVincenzo, Jr., Melissa Dorlean, Qonisha Earl, Joseph C. Epps, Sharon Fields, Keisha Flemming, Barbara George Johnson, Ethel Gilbert, Vesta Godwin Clark, Danny-Denise Gonzalez, Roxanne Hall, Chip Hallock, Todd Hay, Diane Hill, Angela High, Vann Holland, LaDonna Johns, Jaquelyn Johnson, Jonathan Kobza, Everette Kilgo, DaVetta Lane, Andrea Levandowski, Rhonda Lewis, Zach Lipner, Nereida Lombardi, Barbara Lozaw, Donna McKnight, Shaquillah McMillan, Mignon Glenn, Orlando Mingo, Betty Mirda, Julius Montford, Patricia Moran, Dawn Morris, Kareen Motley, Rahaman Muhammad, Fred Murphy, Morris Murray, Samuel Okparaeke, Joy Olagbegi, John Perry, Stephany Porter, Raji Ramachandra, Anibal Ramos, Miriam Rodriguez, Charles Rosen, Pamela Ross, Janine Schaeffer, Safanya Searcy, Farag Seiam, Mahesh Shah, Rebecca Shulman, Sonja Simmons, Lynn Sternstein, Sabrina Sullivan, Bhavna Tailor, Willie Tolbert, Chike Uzoka, Josette Van Dyke, Nicole Vasquez-Wise, Sharlene Vichess, Elvy Viera, Howard Weiss, Anthea Williams, Tanya Wright, Ronald Wise

#### **Welcome & Opening Remarks:**

##### **Sam Okparaeke- ECWDB**

Mr. Okparaeke brought greetings and welcomed everyone to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Joint Newark & Essex County Workforce Development Board Meeting.

##### **Arthur Cifelli- Chairman of ECWDB**

Mr. Cifelli thanked everyone for being present. He expressed his gratitude to the County Executive, Joe DiVincenzo and Mayor Ras Baraka for their vision in working together to address the issues that impact the residents. He files a motion to approve the minutes from the last Essex County WDB Meeting. The minutes were moved and approved. He stated that the committee

work is at the soul of everything that we do and challenged everyone to find the energy to recommit and focus on doing the work.

### **Amina Bey- NWDB**

Ms. Amina Bey welcomed all meeting attendees and thanked them for participating in the meeting. She introduced the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson of the NWDB, Mitch Cahn and Vesta Godwin Clark.

### **Mitch Cahn, Chairperson & Vesta Godwin-Clark, Vice-Chairperson - NWDB**

They thanked board and committee members for their dedication to accomplish committee goals in 2016. They relayed that the focus for 2017 would employer engagement and putting more people to work. Mr. Cahn requested a motion for approval of the minutes from the previous NWDB Board meeting. Minutes were moved and approved.

### **Amina Bey- NWDB**

Ms. Bey attributed the NWDB's accomplishments to the leadership of Mayor Ras Baraka. She expressed that his guidance, support and direction is what allows us to move workforce development forward throughout the city.

### **Mayor Ras Baraka, City of Newark**

Mayor Ras Baraka brought greetings to meeting attendees. He commended Ms. Bey, the NWDB, Newark WORKS, County Executive Joe DiVincenzo, the ECWDB, Mr. Cifelli, and all agencies represented between the boards for working so hard for our residents. He expressed his excitement about how their collaborative efforts have created and secured thousands of jobs for Newarkers, causing a dip in the unemployment rate. He spoke of the opportunities coming up in 2017; the Waterfront Project at the Newark Bay Complex in which Newark and Essex County received over \$50 Million Dollars in grant funding to rehabilitate Riverbank Park. This project will bring many jobs to Newark. He also mentioned a meeting that recently took place at Rutgers University in which some of the top corporations in Newark were in attendance. More importantly, these companies committed to embark upon job initiatives in the new year. He expressed his gratitude to Newark and Essex County Workforce Development Systems and Newark WORKS for their push to supply training in growing fields to ensure a prepared and qualified workforce. He urged everyone to keep up the great work.

### **Samuel Okparaeke- Essex County WDB**

Mr. Okparaeke introduced Anibal Ramos and expressed how the freedom and direction that he continuously provides fuels the work that being done at the county.

### **Anibal Ramos- Director of Essex County DEDTE/ North Ward Councilman**

Director Ramos brought greetings and thanked the ECWDB, NWDB and chief elected officials. He urged that it is their leadership that promotes progress in workforce development throughout

Newark and Essex County. He expressed how proud he was of Sam and Amina and mentioned how pleased he was about the improved “game changing” job market. He looks forward to exciting things in 2017.

### **Amina Bey- NWDB**

Ms. Bey thanked each committee for their hard work in constructing the strategic plans. She reviewed the contents of the meeting packet. She expressed her sincere appreciation to the boards and committee members for their commitment. She acknowledged the Chairpersons of each workforce development committee and committee members. She then, introduced Patricia Moran.

### **Patricia Moran**

#### **Assistant Commissioner for the Dept. of Labor in Workforce Development**

Ms. Moran stated that workforce development is not easy and further expressed that it is wonderful knowing that participants are assisted with passion. She spoke of the great strides that have recently been made in workforce development. She gave a brief overview of Career Connections, which is a digital tool that provides job seekers with a way to plan, prepare and succeed in their job search by providing a common denominator of knowledge. She asked everyone to review the information left on each table about talent development and challenged them to get involved and expand their base. She advised that Essex County that has served as the model in graduating individuals to unsubsidized employment through literacy skills gains. She mentioned how thrilled she was in reviewing each committee’s strategic plans. She thanked Mr. Okparaeke and Ms. Bey for having her.

### **Joe DiVincenzo- Essex County Executive**

County Executive DiVincenzo wished everyone a Happy Holiday. He stated that Newark and Essex County are one team with the common goal of putting residents to work. He relayed that the most important thing that he and Mayor Baraka could do would be to make sure that the right people and resources are in place to get the job done. He acknowledged Anibal Ramos and Art Cifelli and urged that we must continue to work together and share ideas to move Newark and Essex County forward.

### **Closing Remarks**

#### **Sam Okparaeke and Amina Bey**

Mr. Okparaeke stated how extremely proud he is of Newark and Essex County WDB staff for all their hard work. He acknowledged Deborah Collins, Director of Essex County Small Businesses, Mitra Choudhury of Essex County College, Tom Eastwick and Bhavna Tailor of Eastwick College for being avid supporters and sponsors. He thanked Essex County DTE Staff and Julius Montford, Deputy Director of Essex County Division of Training and Employment.

Ms. Bey thanked the NWDB team, Newark WORKS and Newark City Hall staff. She acknowledged Tom Bacote, Director of Newark WORKS. She stated how extremely grateful she was for Davetta Lane, Chief of Operations. She gave special acknowledgements to Mitch Cahn and Vesta Godwin Clark for their time and talent to the mission of the NWDB. She thanked Deputy Mayor Rahaman Muhammad and Phil Alagia, Chief of Staff of County Executive Joe DiVincenzo, for their continued support. She wished everyone a happy holiday season.

All business for the Joint Newark and Essex County Workforce Development Board was concluded. Meeting adjourned.