



## ***Newark Workforce Development Quarterly Board Meeting***

Wednesday, March 14, 2018  
Rutgers-Paul Robeson Center  
350 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd, Newark, NJ

### **Meeting Minutes**

#### **Attendees:**

##### **Board Members:**

Mitch Cahn, Dhiren Amin, Jonathan Kobza, Shanequa Wilson, Mahesh Shah, Dexter Hendricks, Joseph Epps, Ron Wise, Zachary Lipner, Safanya Searcy, Joy Adesumola, Vesta Godwin clark, Robert Clark, Chip Hallock, Mitra Choudhury, Diane Hill, Elizabeth McLily and Danny Denise Gonzalez

##### **Staff/Guests:**

Tameka Allen, Marsha Armstrong, Tom Bacote, Kelli Bell-Taylor, Amina Bey, Maryam Bey, Jasmyne Beckford, Tawana Campbell, Ida Chimbay, Susan Croce, Melissa Dorlean (representing Morris Murray), Audrey Djamat-Dubois, Jason Frazier, Orlando Mingo, Jobi Odeneye, Amanze Okere (representing Samuel Okparaeke), Travis Reid, Rigoberto Salas, George Santos (representing Aisha Glover), Frank Smallwood, Alleshka Velez-Torres, Della Walker, Jr., Sonja Williams, Tania Wright and Paul Yuen

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

##### **Mitch Cahn – Chairperson, Newark Workforce Development Board**

Mitch brought greetings and welcomed everyone to the first Newark Workforce Development Board Meeting of the year. Mitch introduced Deputy Commissioner of Department of Labor and Workforce, Paul Yuen and advised the meeting will touch base on Newark 2020 and status of Amazon's possible relocation to Newark. A roundtable roll call was conducted to introduce all meeting attendees.

December 14, 2017 Minutes approved by Joseph Epps and seconded by Zachary Lipner.



**Paul Yuen – Deputy Commissioner, New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development:**

Mr. Yuen thanked Executive Director, Amina Bey for the invitation and for the opportunity to speak at the first Board Meeting of the year. Mr. Yuen advised this is his 27<sup>th</sup> year with the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development who celebrated their 140<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of serving the residents of New Jersey.

Mr. Yuen advised that the Commissioner and the Governor of New Jersey have many ideas in regards to helping fill the skills gap and growing jobs in New Jersey; part of their plan is to focus on apprenticeships and pre-apprenticeships programs. Continue moving further into the next steps in regards to the Talent Networks to hopefully meet the skills gap, train more individuals to fill those skills gap and place them in jobs that are in demand.

Apprenticeship and Pre-Apprenticeship Programs are currently in the preliminary phase. The Commissioner's goal of such programs is to focus and utilize these programs to prepare the youth and the underserved population find a career path and hopefully fill the skills gap needs. Mr. Yuen advised the Governor is creating more resources for labor and training for individuals in skills that are in demand.

Mr. Yuen mentioned the Department of Labor and Workforce Development are not only focusing on soft skills training but, providing wraparound services to ensure the success of the individuals seeking such services. The type of wraparound services provided will be determined by the population and needs of each county and city. The Department of Labor and Workforce Development will seek aide from all agencies and department before establishing any wraparound services.

Executive Director, Amina Bey mentioned one of the topics discussed when she was part of the Transition Team for Governor Murphy was the issue regarding funding and the disparity between Local Workforce areas, Talent Development Networks, and Specialized Training Programs. Governor Murphy mentioned changes in the formula of the distribution of funding. Ms. Bey advised all local areas and needs of each county and city are very different and diverse and should be approached not as a whole but individually. Ms. Bey asked Deputy Commissioner if this topic was revisited and if there will be any specialized training program funding that are not traditionally under WIOA.

In response to Ms. Bey's question, Deputy Commissioner advised the Governor and the Commissioner are strategizing in making state funds available to the needs of each City and



County and utilizing state funds to meet the demand of training and workforce. Mr. Yuen advised the Commissioner will provide further and specific details at a later date, however, they are thinking outside of the box and will use state funds in a different approach.

Mr. Yuen advised the Commissioner will expand apprenticeship program by using apprenticeship models that have been successful in other states, like Rhode Island, who identified the skills gap in non-traditional apprenticeship industries. In regards to Pre-Apprenticeship Programs, the goal is to reach students at an early age and give them choices as college may not always be the best fit for some students so they may be aware and advised of different options.

### **Newark Workforce Development Board Report:**

#### **Amina Bey- Executive Director, Newark Workforce Development Board**

#### **MBKA Opportunity Summit**

Ms. Bey thanked Deputy Commissioner for his time and also thanked Acting Commissioner of Labor for his commitment to workforce.

Ms. Bey advised the Obama Foundation's My Brother's Keeper Alliance, in partnership with Prudential and the City of Newark hosted an Opportunity Summit that provided employment and training opportunities for young men of color ages 16-29 on Tuesday, February 27, 2018 at the Prudential Center in Newark, NJ. There were 55 employers present with a total of 500 available jobs. 1375 participants attended with 604 obtaining job interviews. There were also 48 community partners and 18 entrepreneurs present. Final hire numbers will be advised. Ms. Bey thanked all the board members, staff and any and all resources provided in making this summit a success.

#### **First Source Task Force**

As a part of Mayor Ras J. Baraka's *Hire-Buy-Live* Newark Initiative, the NWDB is partnering with the City of Newark's Office of Affirmative Action to form a ***First Source Task Force***. The purpose of this team is to connect to and remain engaged with businesses in the City of Newark that have received tax abatements and financial resources from the City of Newark to ensure that they are in compliance with the City's First Source Ordinance. The Task Force will institute tighter monitoring and enforcement of local hiring requirements under the City's "first source"



ordinance, which gives preference to Newark residents for jobs filled by firms with city contracts. The ordinance also facilitates an agreement between the City of Newark and our corporate partners that states that businesses will utilize the City of Newark's workforce system as the first source for their employment and labor market needs. They will be provided information on accessing business resources such as On-the-Job training programs and the Payroll Tax credit for Newark business who have 50% or more of their employees that are Newark residents. Businesses not in compliance will be fined by the City, with that money being used for training programs through NWDB.

### **Local Workforce & Strategic Plans**

The NWDB will be updating the Local Workforce Plan that was submitted to the State Employment and Training Commission (SETC) in 2017. NWDB will be reaching out to Joint Sub-Committees and Partners for input in the Local Workforce Plan as well as the updated NWDB Strategic Plan. Both updated plans will be distributed to NWDB membership for review and approval before resubmitting to the SETC. NWDB staff will be working with the Committees on their strategic plans to ensure their alignment and coordination with the Local Workforce and Strategic Plans.

### **Newark Workforce Development Board Fiscal Report:**

#### **Susan Croce- Aurora Non-Profit Solutions**

Susan advised the audit report was accepted by the State of New Jersey with no administrative findings. NWDB is in a much better position moving forward in terms of securing grants. The operating budget is running at about 80% of the budget. NWDB started the year off with a deficit which was closed by reducing spending. NWDB had a shortage of cash which caused little to no spending; cash started flowing in from the City. NWDB is financially stable and can focus on growth, grant opportunities and pilot programs that have worked elsewhere to see if we can secure government and private funding in order to be able to produce results.

NWDB Fiscal Report approved by Danny Denise and seconded by Vesta Godwin Clark.

#### **Jason Frazier-Fiscal Officer-NewarkWORKS**



Jason advised they are closing out the 2016 Program Year Funding which ends June 30, 2018 and are expecting to use up 100% of the WIOA funds for Program Year 2016. NewarkWORKS is preparing for Program Year 2018 which will start July 1, 2018.

### **NewarkWORKS Report:**

#### **Tom Bacote- Director-NewarkWORKS**

Mr. Bacote advised NewarkWORKS recently received \$1 Million Dollars from the Department of Labor for a program called the *Smart Grant* in partnership with Rutgers. 70 parolees will be mentored and provided workforce services throughout the next two years which is a partnership with the State of New Jersey and will be worked out of 1008 Broad Street, Newark, NJ under the management of Maryam Bey.

Mr. Bacote advised NewarkWORKS has assessed and serviced 543 Newark residents, 289 were taken through vocational training programs and 1531 Newark residents were placed in full-time jobs. Mr. Bacote advised the Summer Youth Program serviced 2873 youth ages 14-24.

### **Essex County Workforce Development Board Report**

#### **Amanze Okere- Employment Specialist-ECWDB**

Mr. Okere advised Mr. Okparaeke in addition to being Executive Director of Essex County Workforce Development Board he was recently promoted as Director of Essex County of Small Business Department of Affirmative Action. ECWDB will continue working and improving their relationship with businesses in the community and with Talent Networks. In regards to small businesses they are trying to figure out the best practice to manage small businesses. Mr. Okere advised their annual Job Fair will take place on May 24, 2018 at Essex Count College.

### **Amazon**

#### **George Santos- Newark Community Economic Development Corporation**

Mr. Santos advised that on September 7<sup>th</sup> Amazon announced they were going to be seeking a location for their second headquarters. The State selected Newark as their sole submission and decided it was not going to backup any other municipalities' submissions in New Jersey. On January 18<sup>th</sup> it was announced worldwide that Newark is one of 20 cities out of 238 that moved



into the second round. Since then, Amazon requested information such as: transportation infrastructure, education system, universities and labor information. Amazon will choose a location in 2018 and potentially move-in in 2019.

Mr. Santos advised this will bring 50,000 direct corporate jobs averaging \$100,000 in annual salary, 70,000.-100,000 jobs in retail, construction, and arts and entertainment. The sites offered to Amazon are the Gateway Complex, 33 Washington Avenue, Matrix Sites and Riverfront Square among other larger sites. In regards to the additional jobs that will be created, 28% will be highly skilled level requiring B.A. Degree or higher, 50% will be middle skilled which requires more than a high school diploma and less than a B.A. Degree which means some form of certification and 22% will be low skilled level which will require a high school or GED Diploma.

In regards to the financial incentives the State has offered up to \$5 Million dollars in financial incentives which means for every new job they create they will get \$10,000.00 dollars a year in tax credit per year for up to 10 years. Tax credit can be used to help the infrastructure at the designated site which will help the entire City. Incentive programs will only materialize when jobs are created.

## **Newark 2020**

### **Travis Reid-Project Director, Newark Alliance**

Newark 2020 Project was launched June 2017 at a pressed conference lead by Mayor Ras J. Baraka. Mr. Reid advised the five goals of Newark 2020 are: 1) get two out of the five HUBS operational (2) identify and secure public funding stream to support the sustainability of the work (3) develop a clear program model and a theory of change that will guide work and how to move forward (4) articulate a policy platform to advocate for system reforms and (5) maintain community input in terms of strategy, development and execution.

Employer engagement is a huge part of Newark 2020's strategy. Newark 2020 focuses on full-time employment career and can be accessed online at [www.Newark2020.com](http://www.Newark2020.com)

## **Newark & Essex County WDB Joint Sub-Committee Reports:**

### **Youth Investment Council- Sonja Williams, Co-Chairperson**



Increasing membership, creating and partnering with other mentoring programs, and launching a Grand Opening of the YIC Closet which provides the youth with proper clothing for interviews.

### **Disability Committee- Elizabeth Davis, Co-Chairperson**

Employer Recognition Event will be held in October 2018 in honor of Disability Awareness Month. The committee is also looking to providing additional disability resource training for the One-Stop and develop a presentation for employers about recruiting and obtaining individuals with disabilities at their worksites.

### **Education and Literacy Committee- Tanya Wright**

The Committee is facing issues with the new version of the TABE test which the State is enforcing, however, the committee finds unfit for the population to take.

### **Business & Economic Committee- Mitch Cahn, Co-Chairperson**

Mitch advised the committee discussed a few items in the last meeting to take initiative and possibly influence some form of policy. *Items discussed:*

- Wage Increase- may increase unemployment among unskilled workers and be replaced by automation. Unskilled workers may look for employment elsewhere such as Pennsylvania.
- Marijuana- will there be expungement and drug testing policies? As both may affect the job market.
- Increasing funding to trade schools and helping trade schools match curricula to job demand
- Tax and Immigration Policy
- Affordable Healthcare Act
- Promote incentives to Newark and Essex employers to hire residents: Opportunity Zone Legislation & Urban Enterprise Zone
- Connect Manufacturing Talent Networks with job applicants with the Newark 2020 project. This will identify job seekers who have an interest in manufacturing and apprenticeship programs can be created.

Mitch adjourned the meeting and Shanequa Wilson seconded the adjournment. The meeting was adjourned.

