

Board of Directors Quarterly Meeting
September 25, 2024
The Waypoint Event Center, New Bedford, MA
Meeting Minutes

Attendance : David Slutz, Bernice Jensen, Jane McArdle, Bonnie Mello, Christopher Mittell, Margarita Graham, Jeffrey Pelletier, Duarte Sylvia, Dr. Steven White, Michael Watson,

CC Staff: Rodney Solomon, Fran Grey, Stephanie Smith, Sharon Martin

Workforce Board Staff: Abbey Despres, Lynn Connor, Jacqueline Sylvia, Justin Grota, Christina Baptiste, Jandira DaSilva, Deven Robitaille, Brandon Soares, Lindsey Rocha, Angie Furey

Guests: Antonio Cabral, Diane Hurley, Maciel Pais

Meeting begins at 5:00 PM awaiting additional committee members. The quorum was not met which resulted in votes not being carried out.

Motion to approve Treasurer report and minutes made by Duarte Silvia and seconded by Jeffrey Pelletier all in favor, opposed none.

Special Recommendation:

Recommendation to the Executive Committee to approve the appointment of Stephanie Chase as a Board Member Director to complete the remainder of Jennifer Patnaude's term on the Board of Directors to replace Jennifer Patnaude and serving the remainder of her term. Motion could not be made as quorum not met.

Workforce Reports/Discussion – Abbey Despres

Workforce Board has absorbed the Youth Program as of May 20th. With a 96 % rate which is an all time high. We are working with PACE to set up a program on construction credentials. A para-professional grant was rewarded. CNA cohort starting in October which is partnered with New Bedford High School and Fairhaven High School. They are waiting on response of VA grant which was submitted in August. It is a 5-year grant which provides upscale navigator working with Veterans. They are hoping to have response in the next few months. South Coast Wind received their grant from MA & RI for their power agreement and they are looking to start early January/February. In regard to apprenticeship, Abbey mentioned that a contract of continuation funds covering 7/1/24 through 12/31/2024 was received with an expansion grant to follow. They are currently servicing 18 apprentices in a 6-month period.

Youth Program – Justin Grota

Justin spoke on youth Programming updates. Youth presentations showing high level of updates on grants. This year was met with challenges for the youth team as the funder did away with their database and didn't have an electronic application system. They were able to work with Rodney and track down applicants – 800 applicants and 40 businesses participate in the program. This provides for a good base for next year. The active youth activity shows 59 youths in the pipeline with 6 different vendors in motion with good standing. Looking for a December benchmark when everyone should have their recruitment.

Health Care – Jacqueline Sylvia

MassHire received a Region Health Care Grant from EOAAH. This program started 2 years ago and goes into March 2025. They have allocated 115 enrollments for CNAs and have finished their placements in April resulting in a very successful allotment. They just started another Medical Assistant Program which has budgeted another 36 seats at Quincy College. Recently a Phlebotomy course started at Bristol Community College with 40 budgeted seats with currently 2 enrollments. Also, working with Highpoint and Steppingstone on addiction counselor training. It is a quick course, but all applicants will need about 500 hours to become certified and then another 35 hours of clinical supervision. This program should be starting in January.

Career Center Reports/Discussion- Abbey Despres for Rodney Solomon/Fran Grey

There is a strong pipeline for adult workers that they are planning to serve in this fiscal year. They currently have 164 which is more than 86 that were carried over from last year, resulting in a strong percentage. Dislocated workers had a less strong pipeline than last fiscal year. 58 people have already completed training being way over last year. Fran mentioned that it is early in the fiscal year compared to numbers from last year. On the employer's side, unemployment jumped roughly 4.6% which is a little concerning. The usage of the resource room is down from last year. Since it is located downstairs if customers already have a login and password, they are not going upstairs to sign in. If the room was upstairs, it would improve the numbers.

Opioid Grant Successes – Stephanie Smith

Grant has been run from 2021 until this year and has been a tremendous success. There have been 137 served customers who have been impacted by the opioid crisis through training or subsidized employment. There have been 122 completers and 40 subsidized employment participants and 66 people gained employment.

Job Fair – Sharon Martin

There is a job fair on October 29 at Rachel's Lakeside because of the success of their previous job fair where they had 217 job seekers and 35 employers. The new job fair is to honor our veterans. Local legislators have been invited to speak. Tony Cabral will be present to speak to veterans from 9 AM to 10 AM. At 10 AM the fair will be open to the public. Currently there are 27 employers registered which are screened to meet potential employees' needs. There are currently 60 job seekers registered, it's still a little bit early to push those numbers since the job fair is still a month away. Fun 107 will be broadcasting live from the event.

Motion to adjourn by David Slutz, all in favor, meeting ends at 5:40 PM.

Upcoming Meeting

- **FY25 Board of Directors Meeting**
 - **Wamsutta Club 427 County Street, New Bedford**
 - **December 18, 2024**