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Atlantic County Workforce Development Full Board Meeting 9am December 10, 2020

Attendance:

Neil Bellinger	Pat Constantino	Jim Drew	Dr. Gaba	Dan Kelly
Stephanie Koch	Theresa Lutz	Paul McClellan	Riaz Rajput	Nandini Singh
Marian Woodson	Jim Waters	Carol Spina	Dan Konczyk	Jim Connett
Lillian Smith	Tim Kreischer	Rodney Finx	John Fata	Fran Kuhn
Alicia Oatman	Forrest Gilmore			

Minutes:

This meeting was called to order by the Board Chair Riaz Rajput at 9:04am. A motion was made by Jim Drew to approve the minutes from the previous meeting and was seconded by Pat Constantino. The motion to approve the September minutes was approved.

Financial Report:

John Fata, fiscal officer, reported on the PY20 revenue and expenditure. Overall on a total budget of \$6.9 million, the agency has expended \$1.3 million with \$5.5 million remaining, which places total expenditures at a 20% expenditure rate. Page 4 of the financial report reflects contracted expenditures. Because of the pandemic, the only active contracts of those for the youth. Expenditure reports were limited to two of the four contracted providers because of delays in receiving the finalized signed contracts from the legal department. Mr. Fata indicated that those signed contracts should be received very soon.

Stephanie Koch added that there were 14 youth enrolled and 4 certifications were obtained so far from the Atlantic City Boys and Girls Club.

Training- PY20 There are 49 new Individual Training Agreements (ITA) for the current program year. Customers have completed five (5) training programs. In comparison, in PY 19 for the program year, there had been 197 ITAs with 138 completed as of June 2020.

Fran Kuhn, executive director, explained the reason that there were no competitive contracts released for the WorkFirst New Jersey populations. He stated that the contracts had been withdrawn because the evaluated contracts were based on a level of service that would require referrals from the board of social services. The board of social services was not making referrals because the mandate for public assistance recipients to participate in work activities has been temporarily waived due to the pandemic. As a result, the WDB is examining other alternatives to the contracted process to respond to the interests of a voluntary customer.

Literacy Funds- Mr. Fata reported that literacy funds were listed at \$18,000 for first quarter funding. The area anticipated an additional \$54,000 for the remaining 3 quarters. The actual amount that was recently provided by the Department of Labor is \$52,000 for the year.

Cares Funding- COVID relief funds will be allocated to us in place of the Dislocated funds @\$101,000. Dan Konczyk made a motion to approve the financial report and seconded by Jim Drew with all in favor.

Chair Report

Riaz Rajput, Board Chair reports that during a recent video conference call with the Commissioner of Labor, he stated that all of the local areas are struggling with the same issues in relation to the inability to provide any services face-to-face. He also stated that all of the WDB chairs were concerned with the lack of contact with unemployment workers to resolve problems. He stated that the Commissioner is working hard to correct the unemployment issues and challenges that customers are facing; additional staff have been employed to assist in this crisis.

Chairman Rajput stated that we need to formulate a financial committee and are seeking volunteers. Fran Kuhn said he would be reaching out to several members. Chairman Rajput also stated that there is a need to have members on the other committees, in addition to vacant chairs for several committees.

Executive Director Report:

Fran Kuhn reports that in an effort to let the members of the community know about the services available and being offered at the One Stop Career Center, a number of different projects have been created to get the word out. Director Kuhn mentioned the efforts to enhance the agency's brand through the media and relationship building. He referenced the recent article in the Atlantic City Press that brought attention to the contracted program with Atlantic Cape for the Work First and WIOA eligible populations. He also mentioned the agency's recent involvement in the Community Network Association, a collection of government and non-profit agencies in south jersey that meet virtually to discuss events and services that are being offered. The platform offers an opportunity for networking and information sharing. The agency has used this platform to circulate current flyers advertising the services offered by the One Stop Career Center. The forms are circulated through the association's Facebook page.

The agency has created a bag that contains a mask, hand sanitizer and calendar, pen and stylus that all have the workforce development board label. In addition, the bag also contains two flyers that advertise our training program and the most recent, Foundations for Success program.

The agency has also obtained two customer databases to begin outreach to identified customer populations. The two databases are the TANF, General Assistance and food stamp database and the initial unemployment claims database. There were approximately 670 contacts in the public assistance database and over 1,500 in the initial unemployment claim database for November 2020. Director Kuhn stated that the office is seeing an increase in the number of phone calls and contacts to the office, as much as double the number prior to the mailings. The agency currently has 73 active training contracts with 53 that are in process.

The director spoke about the need to expand training opportunities toward job opportunities and budgeting funds (\$500,000) to On-the-Job training, because of the direct connection to jobs. OJT is targeted to the WIOA and WorkFirst New Jersey populations. The WIOA OJT is established with a state-approved reimbursement level of 70%. It does not target jobs in hospitality, retail and tourism. The WorkFirst New Jersey OJT is at a 50% wage reimbursement and does focus on hospitality, retail and tourism.

We are unable to use funds for marketing however we have implemented a marketing tool with the purchase of tote bags to include PPE, sanitizer, One Stop resources, etc. which will be distributed throughout the community during public food and gift drives.

The director introduced the following resolutions for board consideration:

Resolutions

1. One Stop Certification- the Board will vote to approve the certification submittal. Please review the website for the information.
2. OJT Resolution- a vote is necessary to increase the wage reimbursement maximum amount to \$6000 using WFNJ funds to do so. The WIOA OJT wage reimbursement is at 70%; the WFNJ wage reimbursement is at 50%.

Pat Constantino made a motion to approve the Resolutions and Lillian Smith seconded.

Chairman Rajput announced the Fran Kuhn has been appointed as the Executive Director of the Atlantic County Workforce Development Board. He had previously been appointed as acting director.

Committee Reports

Literacy- Pat Constantino committee Chair reports that the committee had a meeting on 11/20/20. CASAS testing will be by appointment only. Atlantic Cape Community College has Title I funds and will offer additional trainings during the month of December to include Serv Save and limited table games. The next meeting will be in January 2021.

Youth- Fran Kuhn reports that the youth committee met in November with the discussion regarding services and OJT. Youth Corp Director Rev. Maddox discussed the Youth Corp efforts in developing a virtual class and its success. The Youth Corp has 11 students in the cohort with 10 passing the HSE; this success will be featured in the County's newsletter.

Stephanie Koch of Atlantic City Boys & Girls Club reports that they are offering hospitality training using their commercial kitchen. The ELE grant focuses on healthcare, technology and hospitality. Ages 9-11 are learning robotics and coding; there is a partnership with Apple Products which was instrumental in developing the STEAM Lab which is about 225hrs per week. Apple has also given skills to which they look for when considering a new hire.

Healthcare Committee- Fran Kuhn reports that during the last meeting it was noted that Respiratory Therapist are needed at Atlanticare and Shore Hospital. This is a challenge because there is no local training in this area. There is discussion to develop an apprenticeship training for respiratory therapist.

Oversight- During this meeting contract were discussed i.e. WFNJ and Job Dev/Job Placement. Supplemental contracts are going well with participants being engaged in learning virtually as well as face to face. There will be no face to face at the One Stop as we are following the Governor's orders along with CDC guidelines. Director Kuhn does not believe that the work activity waiver will be removed until the pandemic has been addressed.

Membership- Carol Spina reports that there are four new members for the Board. 2021 meeting will be scheduled.

Dr. Phil Guenther, Superintendent, Atlantic County Institute of Technology, congratulated Stephanie Koch on the new program development and her success. He also mentioned two grants that ACIT is pursuing, related to the aviation industry-one for the expansion of the school for \$53 million that will include a curriculum for aviation maintenance and a building to house that program, with a planned transition to adult education in aviation maintenance using the partnership of Atlantic Cape Community College and Embry Riddle. The other grant is for the development of aviation studies throughout Atlantic

County using the same partners. Dr. Guenther stated that he may need the board's support for the grant applications some time in the near future. This may be a request that requires a fax poll vote.

No Old Business

New Business

Tim Kreisler asked about the PY19 report regarding tracking trainee's seeking the reasons as to why they have not or did not complete their course of study also does the One Stop have job placement once training is complete; Fran Kuhn stated that we currently do not track this however, it could be done going forward, also currently the counselors are not obligated to provide employment leads. Rodney Finx manager of the training unit responds that some customers want training as a space filler until they go back to the job that they're familiar with. Mr. Kreisler also asked if agency that trained the individual worked to place them in jobs.

In a final reference to the materials, Director Kuhn mentioned the performance sheet and the concern with a red area related to youth credential attainment. He stated that the information being captured by the report reflected performance from January 2019 to October 2019. He felt that the numbers were preliminary for the period and as more credentials were documented, the performance should improve in the next quarter.

Motion to adjourn made by Jim Drew and seconded by Tim Kreisler. The meeting adjourned at 10:15am.

Respectfully submitted.

