

COASTAL COUNTIES WORKFORCE BOARD

Minutes of Workforce Board Meeting
Southern New Hampshire University
March 2, 2017

Board Members in Attendance: Jennifer Andrews, Christa Baade, Craig Burgess, Russell Chaput, Julie Chase, Tammy Combs, Samantha Fenderson, Denise Griffin, Michelle Love, Kelly Osborn, Leon Ouimet, Nick Paquet, Claudia Raessler, Peter Russell, Erika Stone, Lydia Sy, Neal Williamson, Linda Winton

Board Members Absent: Mary Ellen Barnes, Joni Boissonneault, Charles Crosby, Kelly Flagg, Cynthia Lobikis, Tricia Richardson, Bob Schmidt

Staff in Attendance: Mike Bourret, Executive Director; Antoinette Mancusi, Deputy Director; Sarah O'Connell, Program Manager; Valerie Odams, Executive Assistant

Others in Attendance: Rebekah Bossie, Mary Bouvier, Jay Collier, Marianne Doyle, Brenda Gagne, Skip Hall, Stephanie Haskins, James James, Gail Kezer, Diana McCain, Kim Moore, Tom Nickerson, Erin Rhoda, Kristine Schuman, Dawn Self-Cooper, Gail Senese, Heather Stott, Dawn Wheeler, David Wurm

I. WELCOME / CALL TO ORDER / INTRODUCTIONS

Lydia Sy, CCWB Chair

Chair Lydia Sy called the meeting to order at 9:03a.m. and welcomed everyone to the meeting.

- Introductions were made around the room.
- Attendees at the CCWB Board Training weighed it about the benefits of attending the training. Lots of good info. It helped to connect the dots and made sense.
- Letters were drafted to Congressman Poliquin and Congresswoman Pingree requesting the appropriations bill to fully fund the Title I and Title II accounts at the levels authorized by WIOA. CCWB business board members were asked to review the letters (copies in packets) and sign.
- CCWI's Spring Newsletter was just printed. 25 copies were provided to each member of the board with hopes that they could distribute them throughout their community.
- A reminder that the financial report is included in your packet.

A. Minutes of December 8, 2016 Meeting

VOTED: *To approve the minutes of December 8, 2016 meeting as written. (A copy is attached to the official minutes).*

Motion: Neal Williamson Second: Christa Baade Vote: All in Favor

II. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Michael Bourret, CCWI Executive Director

A. Bangor Daily News Reporter – Erin Rhoda

1. Doing a story on Workforce Development in Maine.
2. Long conversation explaining what Local Boards are and how they work.
3. Asked what needs to happen to improve skills of the workforce in Maine and what we are doing already.
4. She will be attending the meeting to meet and talk with the board.

B. Make It in America Grant

1. Three year, \$1.3mil H-1B Jobs Accelerator Grant awarded to CCWI in Oct 2013.
2. Grant is ending on March 31. TOPS grant ended in November 2016.
3. Looking at other opportunities but as of now, there are no new grants on the horizon.
4. Mike read an appreciative note from Don Marino, who managed the MIIA grant and is no longer with CCWI now that the grant has ended.

C. One-Stop Operator RFP

1. Recently sent out an RFP for a One-Stop Operator.
2. OSO is an entity created by workforce legislation
3. After the new workforce legislation was passed, CCWI obtained agreement from our 4 core partners (Adult Education, Rehab Services, Employment Service, and WIOA provider) to come together as a consortia as a OSO. No money was exchanged. Their role was accepted as part of their job. This was in place for 1½ years.
4. When USDOL monitored our WIOA implementation, they asked about procurement of the OSO. We told them it was sole-sourced because no money changed hands. They responded that there needs to be procurement.
5. We issued a RFP with the intent of contracting by April.
6. There were two responses, one from GWINNE and one from LSI out of Utah.
7. Both had thorough responses. Mike Bourret, Antoinette Mancusi, Michelle Love and Commissioner Stephen Gorden (Cumberland County) reviewed the responses.
8. The decision was that GWINNE would be the best solution.

VOTED: *To approve the selection of Goodwill Industries of Northern New England as the One-Stop Operator for the Coastal Counties Region.*

Motion: Michelle Love Second: Denise Griffin Vote: All in Favor

Abstained: Kelly Osborn & Leon Ouimet

III. YOUTH STANDING COMMITTEE UPDATE

David Wurm, Goodwill Senior Program Manager

- A. YSC has partnered with Jobs for Maine Graduates and the Muskie School of Public Service to serve on a youth panel. This panel will help service providers better understand and identify the barriers to employment for this demographic.

- B. Alan Lampert from Sanford Community Adult Education has developed a great wrap-around service model that links not only employment services, but also support for those with mental health issues and substance abuse challenges.
- C. The Gateway to Opportunity – is a program for Portland area youth to experience project-based learning. Youth go into local non-profits to take on a short-term, intensive project to focus on professional development, different careers, working in teams, etc. In the pilot year, 22 youth were served. They are looking to grow to 48 this year.
- D. One issue they are focusing on is the difficulty in serving rural youth. Working on getting a dedicated staff member to outreach to youth in the hardest to serve areas with the hardest to serve needs like mentoring, entrepreneurship, financial literacy, etc.

IV. **TECHHIRE UPDATE**

Sarah O'Connell, Program Manager, CCWI

- A. **Four-year, \$4 million H-1B Job Training Grant awarded to CCWI in July 2016.**
 - Statewide grant. Primary partners are CCWI, Central/Western WIB, Northeastern WIB, Educate Maine, Adult Education, UNE
 - Time has been spent on implementation.
 - Now starting intake process and enrollments. Goal is 500 participants served by the end of grant (1/30/20).
 - Looking for individuals with a stronger skillset in reading/math. Classes are provided as accelerated, competency-based training.
 - 8-week courses with up to 10 students/class, 1st starting on March 27.
 - Trying to utilize the Maine Job Link, primarily a WIOA tool, to capture data and develop reporting for TechHire. Still in process.

V. **TECHHIRE BOOTCAMP THROUGH UNE**

Jay Collier, Director, UNE, Academy of Digital Sciences

A. The Problem:

- We have a growing number of computing and IT jobs in Maine and too few Mainers prepared for them.

B. The Situation:

- Colleges and universities are increasing the quantity and quality of graduates in computing and IT programs, but it's still not enough to meet demand. Even those with the skills are having a hard time finding their place within companies that need these professionals
- At the same time, underemployed Mainers, with or without completed degrees, could find meaningful work in these roles.
- However, there are few opportunities to rapidly learn about the full spectrum of careers in the profession and determine if there could be a match.

C. Potential Options:

- Accelerated learning programs around the country have been identified as potential solutions to this problem. They are often called "bootcamps."

- However, not all “bootcamps” work for Maine employers or candidates. Some focus on deeply-specialized skills which are relevant in large markets with large corporations like Google or Facebook.
- Maine has more small businesses that need interdisciplinary approaches. Some programs require a full time commitment. Mainers need options that can fit around full-time work or a family schedule.

D. Solution: The UNE Academy of Digital Sciences

- After 3 years of development with Project>Login and the original TechHire employer partners, we have built the UNE Academy of Digital Sciences to meet the needs of Maine people, Maine employers, and the Maine economy.
- Candidates who have engaged in learning experiences developed for local needs are ready for local businesses.

VI. WORKFORCE SOLUTIONS DELIVERY UPDATE

Ryan Anderson, Program Manager, Workforce Solutions

- Visits to the CareerCenters have gone up a little in Q2, which is normal due to seasonal unemployment.
- Increase in Belfast area due to Sheila Muldoon working at bringing people newly-released from the correctional center to the facility.
- York County has had a decrease in CareerCenter visits, largely due to transportation issues in a rural area. WFS has increased Center hours in larger service centers (Bonny Eagle, Sanford Adult Ed) and making more visits in the field upon request, going to York County shelter and correctional facility, as needed.
- In Portland, working more with New Mainers through the Maine Access Immigrant Network (MAIN). Started working with MAIN participants to get them enrolled into WIOA and addressing the barriers they have.
- In York county, the CareerCenter and community colleges have been having great conversations working with businesses and their Advanced Manufacturing needs. Working toward an Advanced Manufacturing event later this year.

*****NETWORKING BREAK*****

VI. BOARD POLICIES

Antoinette Mancusi, Deputy Director, CCWI and Denise Griffin, CCWB Vice Chair

Because of the conversion from WIA to WIOA, we are required to revise some of our policies. These are not new policies.

A. Definition of Self-Sufficiency

- Defines the self-sufficiency wage that people can earn up to but not over, and still receive WIOA services.
- This wage is 185% of the HHS Poverty Guidelines
- These dollar figures are subject to change every March.

VOTED: To approve the policy as presented.

Motion: Craig Burgess Second: Shannon Kashinsky Vote: All in Favor

B. Supportive Service Policy for WIOA

- Supportive Services include services necessary for the participant to complete their employment, education, and training goals (child care, transportation, housing, etc.)
- Same as policy under WIA, but language changed to comply with WIOA

VOTED: To approve the policy as presented.

Motion: Craig Burgess Second: Tony Sirois Vote: All in Favor

C. Priority of Service Policy

- Adding a 5th Priority to the MDOL WIOA policy, stating that if after the first 4 priorities are addressed and there remains other barriers of employment, the participant would be eligible for assistance.
- These can include lack of educational or occupational skills and may apply to employed workers, incumbent workers, individuals with disabilities, immigrants, out-of-school youth, and older workers.

VOTED: To approve the policy as presented.

Motion: Lydia Sy Second: Shannon Kashinsky Vote: All in Favor

VII. UPDATE ON SERVICES TO NEW MAINERS

Antoinette Mancusi, Deputy Director, CCWI; David Wurm, Senior Program Manager Workforce Solutions; Kim Moore, Coordinator, Greater Portland Workforce Initiative; Skip Hall, Employment & Training Specialist III, Great Portland CareerCenter, MDOL/BES; James James, Multilingual CareerCenter Consultant, Greater Portland CareerCenter, MDOL/BES

A. There is a significant disparity between our immigrant neighbors and native population

- Immigrants tend to be 2-3x more likely to be unemployed
- Approx. 40% live below the poverty guidelines vs. 10% of natives
- The income threshold is substantially lower for those from other nations vs. US born

B. Our programs are not allowed to help people who are not “work authorized.”

- Adult Education CAN serve people who are not work authorized.
- Helps those with language barriers.

C. Brain Waste

- Of 9,500 college-educated, foreign-born (age 25+) in Cumberland County, 24.2% are un- or under-employed, vs 19.9% of US born.

D. What’s being done for immigrants?

- Regional Plan targets services to immigrants
- Supportive Services Policy covers foreign credentials analysis costs
- Held an Open House for ECBOs to introduce them to our services
- Outreach materials are being translated to common foreign languages
- RFP for ECBO services to increase referrals
- Coastal Counties Core Partners (CCCP) was established and they are working on language training services.

E. Contracted ECBOs – MAIN and Maine Immigrant & Refugee Services (MEIRS)

- \$50,000 for 6 month contract
- Outreach to 600 immigrants to educate them on our services
- Of those 600, 240 to be screened by the ECBO
- Of those 240, 90 to be referred to Workforce Solutions

F. Who are we servicing?

- Refugees:
 - Unable to return to their country of origin due to fear of persecution.
 - These people are “work-authorized” automatically.
 - Receive a one-time \$900 provision to help resettle.
 - Eligible for Refugee Cash Assistance (RCA) or Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)
 - Access to MaineCare for 8 months
 - Eligible to work upon US arrival
 - Little to no English language proficiency
- Asylum Seekers/Grantees
 - Asking for protection from prosecution by submitting an Asylum Application
 - Some enter legally with work or student visas, some Enter Without Inspection (EWI), usually over a land border
 - Hearing process can take years
 - Can apply for work after 6 months
 - Not eligible for state & federal benefits outside of General Assistance
- Special Immigrant Visas
 - For special categories including: former US Govt. employees, interpreters, religious workers, or other special cases.
 - Eligible to work upon arrival in the US.

G. Why are we focusing on the immigrant population?

- Higher unemployment rate with this demographic
- Higher poverty level, less economic success – even with high-level educations
- Single heads of households struggling with poverty
- Immigrants bring needed skills, knowledge, education, talent, innovation, entrepreneurial spirit, and international connections.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

VOTED: *The board motions to adjourn at 11:50 p.m.*

Motion: Nick Paquet Second: Michelle Love Vote: All in Favor

Respectfully Submitted:



Valerie Odams
CCWI Executive Assistant

APPROVED: 6/9/17

2017 Coastal Counties Workforce Board Quarterly Meetings

June 9, 2016 (Annual Meeting) Hilton Garden Inn (Freeport), 10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

September 14, 2017 Southern NH University (Brunswick), 9:00 – 11:45 a.m.

December 14, 2017 Southern NH University (Brunswick), 9:00 – 11:45 a.m.