

Youth Council Quarterly Meeting

Minutes

December 1, 2009

Keith Middle School

3:30 p.m.

Members Present: John Fernandes, Chair; Ron Rouillard, Vice Chair; Dianne Rivet, Clerk; Reverend David A. Lima, Elaine Wilcox; Nancy Feeney; Lee Blake(Proxy for Chancellor MacCormack) ; Ronald Rheaume; Cynthia Wallquist; Gloria Williams

Members Absent: Carl Alves; Kathleen Castro; Richard Colon(called); Lynn Donohue; Jennifer Donovan; Nelson Hockert-Lotz; Walter Jones; Elizabeth Lozano; Helena Marques; James Mathes; Gregg Miliote; Joan Ann Niles; Alice Oliveira; Pamela Pollock(called); Donna Sachs; Benita Santiago; Emily Saunders; Dr.John Sbrega; Chris Shannon(called); Barbara Sullivan(called)

Guests: Kristin Almeida; Peg Curro; Zelia LaGarde; Florrie Reddish; Stephanie Barnes; Ron Moss

Workforce Development Staff Present: Edward Dennehy; Tanya Alves; Heather Cabral; Jean Fox; Sean McGauley

Welcome and Introductions: Chair John Fernandes called the meeting to order at 3:40 p.m., announces Lee Blake as proxy for Chancellor MacCormack.

Consent Agenda:

- A. 6.10.09 Youth Council Annual Meeting Minutes (draft):** Motion to approve by Lee Blake, seconded by Cynthia Wallquist, and approved unanimously.
- B. 8.11.09 Youth Council Special Meeting Minutes (draft):** Nancy Feeney moved to receive and place on file, Elaine Wilcox seconded, no abstentions.
- C. Modification to bylaws in connection with WIB address:** Modification would include change from old address 12 Welby Road, New Bedford Massachusetts to the current address of 227 Union Street, New Bedford Massachusetts. Note that a 2/3 majority was present, and this is required for a change in bylaws. Modification was moved by Nancy Feeney, seconded by Dianne Rivet, and voted unanimously.

Other Business:

Jean Fox synopsised the total numbers in youth summer jobs. Jean Fox stated that the Youth Council is continuing to identify challenges and seek strategies for improvement in the future.

Jean Fox then went over the issues arising from the November 4th presentation from Commonwealth Corporation (CommCorp). A full report is being generated. Issues thus far uncovered:

There was a lack of clarity around actual data reporting dates. There is nothing on file that provides a cut-off date for data that CommCorp intended to use to present data to the state.

Communication between framework provider and CA should be improved, with the possibility of adding a weekly reporting component.

There is an apparent discrepancy regarding the level of access to the CA database that the framework provider required/achieved.

A monitoring function is essential to ensure that employers are doing their part.

The Nov. 4 data was a “snapshot” of information. CommCorp’s upcoming report will use current data.

Chair John Fernandes then stated that monitoring efforts revealed that the summer programs performed well. The report also showed that the region may have fallen short in the employer piece, but programs were strong. John also stated that he would like to have youth in jobs earlier. Going forward, there will be hard target dates for RFPs, proposals, programs, and start/end dates. He further stated that the Youth Council should entertain additional discussion relative to pay, and whether or not stipends are more effective.

Nancy Feeney expressed that she was pleased with the new, centrally located Youth Annex offering one-stop shopping for youth. She also stated that WIA eligibility is a horrendous process and rules seem to vary from city to city.

In connection with eligibility, Gloria Williams suggested giving applicants a numbered receipt upon delivery of all documentation. Furthermore, she suggested the receipts be one color for in-school youth, and another color for out of school youth. This was well received by the council and by New Directions.

Chair John Fernandes stated that the paper system and the MOSES system are incongruous data systems and he would like to see more of the energy expended on data acquisition be funneled into tangible youth needs.

Heather Cabral informed the group that she had developed a new document that records everything involved in the application process. This document will be implemented as soon as possible.

Gloria Williams also suggested informing potential youth participants that there is good money to be made in the youth summer jobs. She stated that youth will be more motivated to get their paperwork in on time. This was also well received by the Youth Council.

Florrie Reddish of Commonwealth Corporation applauded the local youth summer jobs effort, stating programs were creative and effective.

Lee Blake then asked about the issues that were had with the employers. Chair John Fernandes responded, saying that the RFR needed to be more specific and include real job descriptions and employer expectations.

Frameworks RFP:

A sub-committee was formed with Ron Roulliard as chair; Dianne Rivet, Lee Blake, and Nancy Feeney volunteered to be members of this sub-committee.

RFP 2nd Year:

Discussion ensued around the Formula RFP. The funding level is unknown, but in the second year the Youth Council asked for a program match of 25%. There will be meetings with Steve Grant and Jean Fox to review the match and the overall funding.

Edward Dennehy also suggested setting up a meeting to inform employers of the year-round program and introduce the 10 elements.

Chair John Fernandes noted that the Youth Council might consider contracting out some services in a separate RFP, thinking this might entice new organizations and collaborations to apply.

Gloria Williams recommended issuing the RFP earlier with a caveat that it is contingent on funding. Discussion ensued on whether or not the stimulus RFP and Formula RFP should be separate or combined. Meetings to discuss this with Planning Committee will begin in January.

Harvest Awards:

Jean Fox gave a brief description of the Harvest Awards event. Certificates of Appreciation and pumpkins were presented to ARRA programs and employers.

Director's Report:

Jean Fox synopsised the Massachusetts Graduation and Dropout Prevention and Recovery Commission Report. She stated that the Youth Council Director and the Southcoast Education Compact were among those who submitted testimony.

Statewide expectations included:

- Reducing the dropout rate by half over the next five years
- Expanding DESE's early indicator pilot
- Specific strategies for dropout prevention, intervention, and recovery
- Increasing the dropout age to 18
- Sec. Bump, Sec. Reville, and Commissioner Chester applauded the work of Connecting Activities, noting that they hope funding will be restored.

Nancy Feeney added that a number of these recommendations will not come to fruition due to funding issues.

Leonard Coriaty noted that new administration is really looking at things and more information is coming for dropout prevention.

Lee Blake announced that Representative Canessa will be speaking on December 11, 2009 at 10:30 a.m. at the New Bedford Free Public Library.

Also discussed were the proposed WIA 101 sessions for employers. The sessions will begin in January and provide information and guidance to current and prospective employers.

Nancy Feeney noted that a WIA 101 for students in school would be beneficial and informative.

Scorecard:

Jean Fox presented the Scorecard, which has been updated for review, and will continue to be updated as requested by WIB Chair David DeJesus.

Employer Survey:

Jean Fox synopsised the employer survey which has been produced, and is in the beginning stages of being circulated among area businesses.

Adjourn:

Upon a motion made by Reverend Lima and seconded by Nancy Feeney, the meeting was adjourned at 4:58 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Dianne Rivet, Clerk