



# MERRIMACK VALLEY WORKFORCE BOARD

## Planning/Career Center Committee Meeting Minutes

**Tuesday, January 21, 2020 - 8:10am  
Greater Lawrence Family Health Center  
401 Griffin Brook Dr, Methuen, MA 01844**

Members Present: Ann Marie Borgesi, Ron Contrado, Carol Riemer, Bob Wescott, Andrew Herlihy

Staff Present: Abel Vargas, Susan Almono

### **I. Approval of Minutes of the October 2019 meeting (vote required)**

A quorum being present, Chairwoman Ann Marie Borgesi called the meeting to order at 8:20am and then called for a motion on the minutes of the November 26, 2019 meeting minutes.

**Motion by Ron Contrado, seconded by Bob Wescott, to approve the minutes of the October 2019 meeting as submitted. Motion passed.**

### **II. Performance Summary as of December 31, 2019**

Challenges continue to persist in some in areas, particularly in WIOA Youth and Adult new participants. The Career center continue to identify new ways to engage the community to better promote programs available at the center. In recognition of this need, an Outreach Specialist position has been posted to help with connecting more broadly.

### **III. Budget Update as of October 31, 2019 (Abel)**

No significant updates on the budget. The board continues to work with the Community College to ensure funds are being spent down as needed.

### **IV. Grants Update (Susan)**

And update on upcoming funding opportunities were discussed. The Board recently submitted a Federal grant that could support the Opioid issues facing the region. That grant would support residents affected crisis as well as developing training opportunities for residents looking to provide services to this population.

Andrew – Haverhill submitted an Urban Agenda grant, where they identified 3 of their largest employers that are having issues hiring/training/maintaining the lower level employees. Would like to see if we can hire another business services rep that could go out to each of these HR departments to help connect the employer and prospective employees.

- Cedars – 804 employees, 2 HR staff
- Joseph's
- SouthWick

## **V. Career Center Report (Linda)**

### **Business Services**

- Major effort continues to be dedicated to recruiting workers for Census 2020; to date 67 job seekers have applied for Census 2020 positions
- Newburyport Chambers of Commerce to spread the word about Census jobs
- Planning continues for the Trades Industry Briefing, which will now be held in February, and the February 4<sup>th</sup> Job Fair

### **Advanced Manufacturing Training**

- GLTS and Whittier EOHED CNC training cycles began on January 13<sup>th</sup>; 14 students enrolled in the GLTS class and 15 students enrolled in the Whittier class
- GLTS Tech Hire Automation and Robotics training began on January 20<sup>th</sup>; 10 students enrolled
- Career center employment counselors will now case manage students to keep them on track toward successful completion and job placement
- This large number of students recruited, assessed, and enrolled in these 3 advanced manufacturing training programs, all beginning within the same time frame, is an achievement – especially since we are somewhat understaffed at the moment; this was an effort across the career center with staff in all functions contributing to identifying potential candidates
- Plan is to employ similar tactics to recruit for the WIOA Adult and Youth Programs

### **Staffing**

- First and second round of interviews have been completed for the 2 NECC employment counselor positions; recommendation for hires will occur by the end of January
- DCS hiring process is beginning for the hire of 2 employment counselors and 1 support staff for the Business Services Unit
- Hiring process for Outreach Specialist complete; recommendation for hire determined
- This additional staffing, once trained, is capacity very much needed by the center

### **Move Back to 255 Essex Street**

- Plans are in motion to move back to Essex Street during the weekend of February 7<sup>th</sup> – February 9<sup>th</sup>
- The Center will be closed Friday, February 7<sup>th</sup> and the morning of Monday, February 10<sup>th</sup> – opening at 255 Essex Street at 1 PM that Monday
- Staff are very anxious and grateful to be moving back

### **Move from NECC HOW to Haverhill Heights**

- Information was just received that this move will be delayed from March to later in the spring

### **Career Center Performance**

- Detailed information on career center performance, with a focus on WIOA training enrollments and WIOA entered employments will be provided to and reviewed with the Committee at the February meeting

### **VI. Other Business**

Abel: The effort to move back to 255 Essex St continues. The city has committed to perform a deep clean of the building to include both hard and soft surfaces. A final Air Quality Test will be performed to ensure the improvements resulted in the expected result.

### **VIII. Adjourn (vote required)**

Having no further business Ann Marie called for a motion to adjourn at 9:30am.

**Motion by Andrew, seconded by Carol Riemer to adjourn the meeting. Meeting was adjourned.**

Respectfully submitted,

*Sabrina Boggio*

Recorder