



Planning/ Career Center Committee Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, June 19, 2018

8:00 a.m.

255 Essex Street, 4th Floor

Lawrence, MA 01840

Members Present: Andrew Herlihy, Abel Vargas, Bob Wescott

Members Absent: Ron Contrado, Carol Riemer

Staff Present: Rafael Abislaiman, Susan Almono, Corina Ruiz

Other: Linda Rohrer

I. Approval of Minutes of the May 15, 2018 meeting

In the absence of a chairman, Rafael asked Andrew Herlihy to chair the meeting.

A quorum being present, Andrew Herlihy, called the meeting to order at 8:25 a.m. and then called for a motion on the minutes of the May 15, 2018 meeting.

Motion by Abel Vargas, seconded by Bob Wescott, to approve the minutes of the May 15, 2018 meeting as submitted. Motion passed.

II. Performance Summary as of May 31, 2018

Rafael said we are ahead in some categories and not in others. This is at least in part due to a change in definitions and in how we deliver services. Andrew asked why the entered employment percentage of plan is 38% for the dislocated worker category. Susan explained that the Polartec customers were co-enrolled and many of them decided to retire or didn't want to go back to work. Rafael added that more exact employment information is usually delayed and then goes up when the State does wage record matches in the unemployment insurance system.

Rafael said we are expecting a 10% WIOA funding cut in the dislocated worker category for FY'19. Over the last three years, Massachusetts and we have had about a 40% WIOA cut due to our low unemployment rate. This year, perhaps because we have the have the largest number of people coming in to DUA, we didn't get hit as hard in WIOA as other areas did. Susan added that luckily we didn't get cuts in the other non-WIOA programs where we've managed to raise income.

Bob Wescott asked what are the disabilities reported and Linda said it's a broad range that customers self-report.

Rafael said that after WIOA superseded WIA, everyone needed to recalculate what constitutes a WIOA eligible job seeker. Many people never become WIOA eligible but instead just come in to get unemployment insurance (DUA) assistance and go. Linda added that VWCC is 2% below the average state number in WIOA eligible job seekers but much higher in its DUA assistance numbers.

On another subject, Rafael mentioned new well-paid teacher externships funded by the State Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. Teachers will incorporate lessons learned in STEM related industries within their classrooms. They seem to be getting paid \$7,000 for 50 hours but Rafael stated that it will likely be closer to 100 hours of work. If any company is interested in hosting a teacher extern please contact Rafael.

III. Budget Update as of May 31, 2018

Rafael said all activities are running in good shape. This year's total budget is about \$7 million.

The State has issued no rapid response funds other than those needed to pay Rapid Response staff salaries. We are owed about \$250,000 and when we asked the State if we should remove that expected income from our carry-in because we will never be paid, they said no, we will get paid. Rapid response money may be released to help dislocated workers when any one company has a significant number of layoffs in Massachusetts or when several companies are bundled in one Rapid Response application.

Abel Vargas noted that \$350,000 has been spent on training. Andrew Herlihy asked how the committee can determine if the amount of funds spent on training is a good one. Rafael said right now it is less than 10% of the budget but when you factor in Polartec, then it makes more sense because the State is holding the Polartec training money and our career center is providing case management. Susan added that when expenditures and accruals have been added, there's roughly \$600,000 allocated for training.

Rafael said that OJTs are paid through Workforce Training Funds (WTF) and non-WIOA programs. NAMC is a four WIB consortium who doesn't have a single direct fund recipient – the WIBs take turns receiving funds. This region has been selected to train other regions on manufacturing-related apprenticeships. Those efforts will be led by Brian Norris at the MVWIB. In recognition of his role, Brian's job was reposted pending the new funding. Rafael added that the MVWIB has the largest number of manufacturing apprenticeships and that the majority of them are at Magellan Aerospace.

Rafael mentioned our small Bridging the Opportunity Gap (BOG) program where we can serve up to 20 of them simultaneously but where we instead typically end up serving 3-4 youth because the majority of enrollees break parole end up back in jail. Linda added that at some point they should highlight program successes and Rafael agreed.

IV. Grants Update

Susan provided a grants update. The EPA CDL program started. Its focus is on driving hazardous trucks. The EPA grant will train a total of 30 participants and right now they have 7.

The RECP program works with adult men who came out of jail is progressing well. Right now they have 7 in training.

Susan mentioned the WCTF Learn to Earn Initiative managed by Corina Ruiz. The MVWIB is training 12 Head-Start parents in CNC. A total of twenty-four participants will be trained.

Susan said that summer YouthWorks is underway and that it will provide subsidized employment for 229 youth. These youth will be placed in our recognized emerging industries and will start as soon as July 9th.

Susan said there are two teacher externship programs. One is funded by MA Economic Development via Amp It Up and the other by the State Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. We successfully applied for both of them.

Rafael said the MVWIB just put in a proposal to deal with 17-24 year olds young adults Re-entering society from jail or probation. We will provide the bulk of the money to SISU because we recognize how hard it is to serve that population and they have more experience at it. We are responsible for helping to train and job place about 60 of the young adults. The cost per participant will be \$8,000 and a total of 95 young adults will be recorded as served. The number served may end up being higher but our income and outcomes will be judged on the 95 number.

To view the grant update chart, click here [Grant Activity Update June 18, 2018](#).

V. Career Center Report

Linda said the Haverhill ValleyWorks Satellite will move to another location on campus. The HOW Building will be its new site starting in July. The VWCC Haverhill site will be closed Monday, June 25th – Friday, July 6th. It will re-open in its new space on Monday, July 9th. This move will be temporary until Haverhill Heights Building on Merrimack Street in Haverhill is constructed and ready for occupancy.

WIOA and Wagner Peyser FY 2019 funding cuts are not as dire as previously anticipated. The allocation cuts and increases were as follow: Wagner Peyser (-0.8%); WIOA Adult (+3.8%); WIOA Dislocated Worker (-9.4%); WIOA Youth (+1.4%).

ValleyWorks has been approved to be a DTA CIES Provider. The application was submitted application in February and a formal announcement forthcoming. CIES funding helps us serve public assistance recipients.

VWCC management is determining metrics to measure Industry Sector Teams performance. We are focusing on numbers of referrals and number of hires from referrals. FY 19 to FY 18 job fill rates will be compared. VWCC is in the process of setting goals for each team. Rafael added that sector teams works more than regional and that having well-informed BSRs should make employers happier with our services.

A USDOL National Emergency Grant is serving people that evacuated from Puerto Rico as a result of hurricanes. About 94 have received services at ValleyWorks and we are finalizing 8 enrollments. We have recruited by radio with the help of Isabel Melendez.

We have some upcoming events. Today, June 19th is the Multi-Industry Job Fair at NECC's Technology Center. We have 36 confirmed employers and our goal was 35. Our Advanced Manufacturing CNC Machine Operator Training program graduation will be on June 21st at NECC. The Spinner Job Fair, in collaboration with Lowell, will be on August 15th. We plan to do 6-8 on-site recruitments per month.

Also the Job Fair event in collaboration with Lawrence School Department/Lawrence Community Works (Family Resource Center) has changed. We are now looking into October 2018. We are targeting 6-8 employers that hire people with limited English language skills. The job seeker target population would be parents who are registering their children in the LPS. The desired location is Lawrence Public Library. The LCW will provide child care for children while parents speak with employers.

MassHire Branding is underway. Every region had to submit a plan for the launch and ours is scheduled for October 2018. We will be the MassHire Merrimack Valley Board and the MassHire Merrimack Valley Career Center. We have two brand ambassadors, Matthias Bohler representing the WIB and Marco Ruiz representing VWCC. As seen at the last quarterly meeting, Secretary Acosta is very much behind this.

Susan added that we will have signs and the Governor will do the formal launch in August. The launch video was shown to the committee.

VII. Other Business

No other business.

VIII. Adjourn (vote required)

Having no further business Bob Wescott made a motion to adjourn the meeting seconded by Abel Vargas, and the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Corina Ruiz

Recorder