

Town of Hempstead/City of Long Beach Workforce Development Board

Board Meeting Minutes

June 08, 2023

I. Welcome and Introductions

The meeting was called to order by the Town of Hempstead/City of Long Beach Workforce Development Board (LWDB) Chairperson Sara Griffith at 9:30 A.M. She asked each of the attendees to introduce themselves.

II. Review of the Minutes

Ms. Griffith asked the members to review the minutes from the meeting of October 12, 2022. A motion to approve the minutes was moved by Ms. Griffith, seconded by May-Whei Lin, and approved by the Board.

III. Out-of-School Youth Program Proposals Review and Presentations

Ms. Griffith indicated that in February, DOOR published a request for proposals (RFP) for Out-of-School Youth program services under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). Ms. Ajasin explained that to be eligible for the program, youth must be aged 16-24 and have a barrier to employment. The RFP was designed to identify organizations that can make available and administer to eligible youth the 14 WIOA elements, which are services that assist youth to overcome their barriers and obtain gainful employment. In addition to administering the elements, vendors would also be responsible for recruiting youth and reporting their progress. She explained that the procurement process would be different from previous years, starting with the number of youth to be served (80) and a maximum award of \$250,000. Then, after in-house review of proposals, where appropriate, we invited applicants to speak about their proposed programs. We also requested that they each provide draft marketing materials they would use to recruit youth and a sample 3-month calendar of events/activities in which youth would engage.

Ms. Ajasin said that in response to the RFP, DOOR received responses from the Economic Opportunity Commission of Nassau County (EOC), EAC Network, the Woman's Opportunity Rehabilitation Center (WORC), and MusicBreeds. After review and presentations from vendors, we internally approved WORC and MusicBreeds and invited them to present their programs to the Youth Standing Committee last week, and in a motion, the Committee requested that the Board approve the proposals. We invited each program to present to the Board. First, Dr. Lisa Williamson presented the WORC program, which primarily serves women with criminal justice involvement and their children but will expand to serve youth with barriers. Ms. Theresa Regnante asked WORC if they have alumnus from other programs that can help to see the impact and progress of their programs. She also

asked about WORC's practices that supported youth to be more self-sufficient. She suggested that a program should be put in place to measure and understand the impact and the dynamic of the program. Ms. Gaines explained that a new data system has been implemented to measure components of youth progress. Ms. Theresa suggested and offered to share the Impact System that her organization has been using.

Next, Ms. Griffith invited Mr. Isaiah Grigg, the Founder/Executive Director of MusicBreeds, to shed light on his organization and its programs. He outlined MusicBreeds' commitment to offering services tailored to middle school and high school students, emphasizing a sustainable, equitable, and diversified approach to workforce development through the power of music. He explained that music is both a tool for expression and a means of cultivating essential life skills such as interpersonal communication, collaboration, and conflict resolution. In addition to music education, the program extends its reach to financial literacy, facilitated in partnership with Jovia bank. Youth can also participate in a work experience program to prepare them for entering the workforce. In addition, MusicBreeds coordinates an apprenticeship program that includes opportunities in Information Technology, Music, Education, and Business Management. It also conducts SAT and ACT in-house testing and provides transportation incentives for enrolled participants.

Ms. Regnante asked about MusicBreeds' location and the number of students currently enrolled. Mr. Grigg said they are located at 100 Main Street in Hempstead, and they have 180 students enrolled. Ms. Tania Peterson-Chandler asked if the award amount for the program is per year or per contract, and Ms. Ajasin confirmed that it is per program year. Ms. Regnante recommended that the vendors excuse themselves from the meeting to discuss the proposals before a final decision is made. Addressing some concerns raised by Ms. Regnante, Ms. Ajasin provided further details on the selection process. Ms. Deirdre Duke asked about accountability measures if vendors work together, and Deputy Commissioner Rockensies clarified that both vendors must provide services individually, with youth counselors guiding and assisting them as needed. They will be monitored quarterly.

A motion to approve the WORC and MusicBreeds' proposals was moved by Ms. Regnante, seconded by Ms. Duke, and approved by the Board.

IV. Budget Summary for PY'23

Deputy Commissioner Kurt Rockensies explained that the Town of Hempstead Department of Occupational Resources (DOOR) drafted its budget for Program Year 2023. He presented the budget to the Board and noted that 80% of WIOA funds must be spent or obligated by the end of each program year.

A motion to approve the PY'23 Budget was moved by Tania Peterson-Chandler, seconded by Jeffrey Johnson, and approved by the Board.

V. Policy for Adult Priority of Service

Ms. Griffith indicated that WIOA requires that each local area have a policy on Adult Priority of Service. Ms. Ajasin explained NSYDOL is requires that in each local area, at least 50.1% of WIOA Title I Adults receiving individualized career or training services, must fall into at least one of three categories of priority populations: low-income individuals, public assistance recipients, or individuals who are basic skills deficient, which includes English language learners. Another tier of priority populations includes veterans and their eligible spouses, individuals with disabilities, justice-involved individuals, single parents, and individuals with barriers to employment. Information that qualifies individuals for these categories is gathered from the career center registration form, which was derived from DOL's ES 101 and 102 forms, and an interview with our intake staff during the process of enrollment into the WIOA program.

Ms. Ajasin explained that Priority of service generally means that individuals in priority populations are given precedence over other individuals for receiving individualized career and training services. We determined that on a practical level, priority of service will be applied if there is a shortage of funding available to support individualized career and training services. The policy also details instructions on how to enter data into the One-Stop Operating System (OSOS). On a quarterly basis, the State pulls information from OSOS to review DOOR's progress made toward meeting the 50.1% requirement.

Mr. Jeffery Johnson asked if what qualifies customers as low-income, and Ms. Ajasin responded that they are low-income if their total family annual income does not exceed the higher level of the poverty line or 70% of the lower living standard income level guidelines.

A motion to approve the Adult Priority of Service policy was moved by Ms. Lin, seconded by Mr. Johnson, and approved by the Board.

VI. Policy of the Provision of Supportive Services

Ms. Griffith indicated that WIOA requires that each local area have a policy on the Provision of Supportive Services. Ms. Ajasin explained that WIOA can fund supportive services that would allow customers to successfully engage with WIOA career and training services and meet their desired outcomes. With this policy, DOOR is expanding the scope of supportive services that can be offered to participants.

Participants eligible to receive supportive services are those who are actively engaged in an occupational skills training program or a subsidized employment program like on-the-job training (OJT) and internships; they have a demonstrated need for the specific services; and they are unable to access the service from other sources or have already exhausted them. Historically, we've primarily provided supportive services in the form of transportation and training-related expenses, but supportive services can also cover childcare assistance, educational testing, reasonable accommodations for individuals with disabilities, and appropriate work attire and work-related tools. In addition, we are now including Needs-

Related payments (NPR), which is financial assistance. Eligibility for NPRs are highlighted in WIOA, but our additional criteria are that the customer is also a priority of service adult or an out-of-school youth, with career counselor recommendation. In addition, NPR eligibility will be reevaluated on a regular basis.

Ms. Deidre Duke asked if childcare support is given directly to the provider. Ms. Ajasin responded that support is reimbursed to the customer provided that the childcare agency is accredited and the customer can provide the required documentation for reimbursement.

A motion to approve the Supportive Services policy was moved by Ms. Duke, seconded by Ms. Lin, and approved by the Board.

VII. Board Updates

Ms. Griffith explained that with the upcoming start of the new program year, the New York State Department of Labor (NYSDOL) is requesting some information from each local area. Ms. Ajasin provided the following updates:

a. Local and Regional Plan Updates for Program Years 2021 through 2024

WIOA requires that each local workforce development board submit a local and regional plan. The plans are an inventory of workforce development strategies to be implemented over the course of four years on a local and regional level. The local level pertains to us here in the Town of Hempstead/City of Long Beach, while the regional plan was constructed in collaboration with both the Suffolk County and Town of Oyster Bay local workforce development areas. In May 2021, we presented to the Board the local and regional plan, to be in effect from July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2025. At the midway mark, each local area and region should submit modifications. For the local plan, NYSDOL seeks updated information on labor market and economic conditions, financing for WIOA services, Board structure, strategies for meeting local performance goals and adult priority of service and youth services. To address each of the criteria, we will conduct research of the current labor market, which is arguably much different today than it was in 2021. Financing for WIOA services generally will not change, but we do intend to make better use of our supportive services capabilities, as addressed earlier. Meeting our performance regarding the primary indicators of performance and the Adult Priority of Service standard, is dependent on proper data entry, and we have been conducting regular staff training and monitoring to ensure that these goals are met. The youth services section will differ from the plan that was originally submitted given that the in-and-out-school vendors are all new. One other criterion of modifications to the plan is Board structuring.

The regional plan also requires a modification, and like the local plan, we will update changes to the labor market. We do not foresee any factors that may affect implementation of the plan, but we will discuss this with the Town of Oyster Bay and Suffolk County local areas.

b. Career Center Certification

Ms. Ajasin explained that one-stop career centers in each local workforce development area must be certified, and each Board's primary responsibility is to certify the centers at least once every three years. Certification is based on an on-site review that evaluates two components: required standards, which are attributes and standards deemed essential for certification, and enhancement standards, which are attributes and standards deemed desirable for certification. Career centers must be certified to continue receiving infrastructure funds.

Career center certification address three categories: physical and programmatic accessibility, effectiveness of the network, and the continuous improvement of one-stop career centers and delivery systems. Because the Board is not the One-Stop Operator, the results of the certification assessment will be provided to the State for information purposes only. We will conduct the certification review and share the results with the Board.

VIII. TANF Program Update

Ms. Griffith explained that every year, HempsteadWorks receives funding to operate the Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP). Program Year 2022's program was a success, and HempsteadWorks will run the program similarly for PY'2023. Nene Alameda indicated that we have funding to support employment for 100 youth, and 50 employers applied to be a worksite. Youth will work in various positions including receptionists, administrative support, camp counselors, and customer service representatives. Deputy Commissioner Rockensies reiterated that in previous years, we contracted with the school districts to coordinate the program and serve as worksites, but again this year, more local businesses be worksites, including HempsteadWorks. In addition, we will also conclude the program with the Career Fest, which will be held at the Town of Hempstead pavilion.

IX. New York Systems Change and Inclusive Opportunities Network – NY SCION Project Updates

Mr. Rockensies provided progress and updates regarding the SCION project. Afterwards, he commended Ms. Maria Lombardi, Disability Resource Coordinator, for her hard work concerning the grant.

X. Vision for Board Restructuring

Ms. Ajasin extended her gratitude to Board members for their contributions to HempsteadWorks' visions and shared plans to bring in more business members. To achieve this, a rework of the value proposition for joining the Board is underway. While recruiting new business members, the focus will be on prioritizing their workforce needs and emphasizing access to skilled jobseekers and training programs like OJT, internships, and customized training. The goal is to target businesses that have participated in these programs before or acted as SYEP worksites. Another key initiative involves creating an onboarding

process for new Board members to enhance their understanding of the workforce system, available resources, and their roles and responsibilities. Regular feedback on specific issues will be sought through surveys or one-on-one meetings. Lastly, Ms. Ajasin highlighted the importance of industry representation on the Board, specifically from sectors like healthcare, advanced manufacturing, information technology, skilled trades, and hospitality. She reiterated that Board members are free to share feedback and ideas to strengthen collaborative efforts in advancing HempsteadWorks' mission.

XI. Old Business

No old business was discussed.

XII. New Business

Commissioner Eric Mallette expressed gratitude to all Board members for their significant contributions to HempsteadWorks. He specifically thanked Ms. Rosa Murciano for the generous donation from New York Community Bank to support SYEP. Ms. Duke conveyed appreciate to HempsteadWorks for hosting Northwell Health at its Spring job fair. Staff described it as a phenomenal experience and expressed anticipation for future participation in jobs fairs. In addition, Mr. Johnson voiced concern about under-enrollment for the Urban League program and proposed a collaborative effort with fellow Board members and the organizations they represent. He committed to reaching out individually to members to explore potential partnerships and collaborations.

XIII. Adjournment

A motion to adjourn was offered by Ms. Duke, seconded by Mr. Johnson, and approved by the board. The meeting was adjourned at 11:12 A.M.