

Town of Hempstead/City of Long Beach Local Workforce Development Board Meeting Minutes

Zoom Video Conferencing

February 2, 2022

**I. Welcome and Introductions**

The meeting was called to order by the Town of Hempstead/City of Long Beach Local Workforce Development (LWDB) Chairperson Sara Griffith at 9:33 A.M. She asked each of the attendees to introduce themselves.

**II. Review of Minutes from October 6, 2021, Meeting**

Ms. Griffith asked the members to review the minutes from the meeting of October 6, 2021. A motion to approve the minutes was moved by Tania Peterson-Chandler, seconded by Theresa Regnante, and approved by the Board.

**III. Transitional Jobs Policy**

Ms. Griffith indicated that the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) requires that the Board have a policy on Transitional Jobs, and she invited Elizabeth Ajasin to explain the draft policy before seeking the Board's approval. She explained that transitional jobs are a limited, subsidized work experience for adults and dislocated worker participants who have a barrier to employment because of chronic unemployment or an inconsistent work history. Inconsistent work history refers to someone who has been fired from one or more jobs within the last twelve months and has actively been seeking employment for at least two months. It also refers to someone who has never held a job or had a full-time job for more than thirteen consecutive weeks.

Ms. Ajasin explained that the goal of these jobs is to establish a work history, demonstrate work success in an employee-employer relationship, and develop skills that will lead to unsubsidized employment. The duration of transitional jobs cannot exceed 6 months, and the policy addresses the process for selecting, contracting with, and monitoring businesses.

Veronica Rose-Craig asked if any of the transitional jobs provided through the WIOA program has turned into a permanent position. Ms. Ajasin responded transitional jobs programs do not employers to hire participants upon completion of the transitional job contract. Conversely, in an OJT program, the employer must commit to retain the participant after completion of the contract period. Ms. Regnante asked how many people are allowed to hire under the business training programs and if the businesses must be in Nassau County to participate. Ms. Ajasin responded that the number of people allowed for training programs

like depends on WIOA funding and businesses' willingness to participate. Businesses may be in Nassau County, Suffolk County or New York City to participate.

A motion to approve the Transitional Jobs policy was moved by Ms. Regnante, seconded by Ms. Rose-Craig, and approved by the Board.

#### **IV. One-Stop Operator Annual Report and Feedback for PY'20**

Ms. Griffith said that the Hempstead/Long Beach LWDB Local Plan requires that the One-Stop Operator submit an annual report, whose purpose is to show progress made toward achieving quality standards and organizational goals. Then, based on its review of the report, the Local Board provides feedback to the Operator. She invited Ms. Ajasin to describe both the annual report and feedback for Program Year 2020 (July 1, 2020, through June 30, 2021.). The annual report can be accessed here:

[https://www.hempsteadworks.com/files/ugd/52305f\\_6dad33e5393b451aa60aa50d5e81af0e.pdf](https://www.hempsteadworks.com/files/ugd/52305f_6dad33e5393b451aa60aa50d5e81af0e.pdf)

Afterwards, Ms. Ajasin explained that the Board's feedback to the one-stop operator identifies trends, issues of concern, and continuous improvement actions the Operator must make. On a quarterly basis, NYSDOL provides Boards throughout the state with outcomes data for the Primary Indicators of Performance Employment Rates 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Quarters after Exit, Median Earnings, Credential Attainment, and beginning in PY'19, Measurable Skills Gains. The indicators apply to the adults, dislocated workers, and youth we serve. NYSDOL expects that each Board reach at least 80% of all goals, which have been met; however, we did not meet 100% of the goal for the adult and dislocated worker program employment rates 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> quarter after exit, as well as measurable skills gains for dislocated workers and youth.

The Board has made the following recommendations to the One-Stop Operator to help improve the outcomes of these indicators:

- Retain staff on proper data entry for outcomes data, the data has been compiled to determine our outcomes comes the One-Stop Operating System (OSOS)
- Ensure that career counselors regularly follow up with customer to determine their employment status. Another way to is to maintain that collection of employment data at every new quarter, call the customers, and record their employment outcomes
- Ensure follow-up on customers enrolled in occupational skills training and facilitate the supportive services needed for their success. Each month, staff submits a log that lists all their customers enrolled in training and their training outcomes

Ms. Rose-Craig asked if COVID-19 is a reason why certain goals were not met. Ms. Ajasin responded that the pandemic did have an impact on performance. Deirdre Deidre asked if employment rates were impacted by customers who left their jobs for fear of losing their benefits. Diane Bachor added that when individuals on SSI and Medicaid find work, they fear losing these benefits and would not be able to survive on their salaries. She asked if there is anything that can be done to assist them. Kurt Rockensies, Deputy Commissioner, responded that Maria Lombardi can provide Benefits Counseling to customers so that their benefits would not be interrupted upon finding employment. Ms. Regnante suggested that a monthly financial incentive would go a long way for these individuals.

Ms. Griffith thanked everyone for all the wonderful and suggestive comments.

## **V. In-School Youth and Summer Youth Employment Program – PY'22 Discussion**

Ms. Griffith said that HempsteadWorks is revamping both the WIOA In-School Youth Program and the Summer Youth Employment program and wants to share with the Board the plans for the upcoming program year. She had Ms. Ajasin provide an overview of the plans for both programs.

Ms. Ajasin explained that historically, DOOR has contracted with local school districts to provide services to In-School Youth. The school districts are responsible for recruiting, coordinating, and administering to youth the 14 WIOA elements. In Program Year 2022, DOOR will reformat the In-School Youth Services Request for Proposals (RFP) so that a single organization would coordinate the program with an award of \$150,000. The benefits of conducting the program are that first, the successful vendor will have demonstrated its experience with and capability to serve youth and help them reach their goal. In addition, the selected vendor has a greater capacity to assign multiple staff and contract services to serve the youth.

Later, Ms. Ajasin explained PY'22 plans for the Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP). DOOR receives funding to implement the program from the Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA) through the Nassau County Department of Social Services. Traditionally, DOOR contracts with the school districts to recruit and coordinate youth for the program, as well as serve as worksites. The worksites are within the districts' schools and youth work clerical and maintenance jobs. This year, DOOR will recruit and coordinate 100 youth, a figure based on previous funding. Youth will be able to complete a SYEP application online beginning April 1, and we will match them to jobs within their industries of interest. DOOR seeks worksites interested in taking on youth for the six-week program, and a worksite application form is available on our website. Prior to starting work, youth will meet with worksite supervisors for a brief interview. During the summer, youth

also participate in career exploration services, financial literacy and entrepreneurship training and will have to get a physical examination and pass a drug test.

Ms. Ajasin added that DOOR also plans to host an “industry/career” day for youth in which speakers from different industries will discuss industry occupations and the requisite education and experience needed to enter the field. Potential industries/careers include robotics, sports management, social media influencing, IT, and aerospace. She requested that Board members apply to become worksites.

Jeffrey Johnson asked how HempsteadWorks will promote SYEP and if youth are being recruiting through the school districts. Ms. Ajasin replied that we published an RFP for an organization that can perform media and radio promotions. DOOR will also use Town of Hempstead mailings and the school districts to promote the program. Ms. Rose-Craig asked if eligibility for SYEP participants will be the same as they have been in previous years, and Ms. Ajasin concurred. Mr. Rockensies added that WIOA funds can be used to supplement SYEP.

#### **VI. Morrison Mentors Presentation – Doron Spleen, Executive Director and Sherika Adams, Executive Advisor**

Ms. Griffith indicated that Morrison Mentors is a non-profit organization that offers STEAM-based programs (science, technology, engineering, arts, and mathematics) to youth in the community. She invited Morrison Mentor’s Executive Director, Doron Spleen, and Sherika Adams, Executive Advisor to speak about their programs.

Mr. Spleen presented a short video of the program and services offered at Morrison Mentors (MM), whose goal is to invest in underserved communities. His organization started in 2012 with assisting students with homework. Youth participants are from the neighboring school districts and are recruited for MM’s STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics) Program. Students learn how to build websites, robotics, and they develop other computer and technology skills. The students are also trained in soft skills such as mock interviewing, resume-building, and dressing for success. Mr. Spleen explained that internships are conducted with past summer students who teach students skills they had developed during their participation in the program.

Ms. Duke asked Mr. Spleen if his programs are conducted in the local libraries. Mr. Spleen replied that he does two workshops each month in the Hempstead Public libraries. Deputy Commissioner Rockensies asked if there were any costs involved or associated with the libraries to host these workshops. Mr. Spleen replied that the libraries receive fundings through STEAM grants.

**VII. Announcement – New York Systems Change and Inclusive Opportunities Network (NY SCION) Project**

Ms. Griffith explained that in October 2021, Governor Hochul announced a commitment of \$11.1 million in federal workforce development funding over the next three years to expand the successful work completed under Disability Employment Initiative (DEI) Round 8. With this funding, the New York Systems Change and Inclusive Opportunities Network (NY SCION) project will better serve individuals with disabilities through New York State career centers. Deputy Commissioner Rockensies explained that HempsteadWorks was one of three local areas in the state of New York that received the DEI grant in 2017. He explained that Ms. Lombardi, Disability Resource Coordinator, played an integral role in making it an immense success, along with the support of Yvonne Morrissey and Myesha Arvon. Ms. Ajasin said that Ms. Lombardi will share more about the SCION project at the next Board meeting.

Eric Mallette, Commissioner, commended and congratulated Deputy Commissioner Rockensies and HempsteadWorks staff.

**VIII. Old/New Business**

No new or old business was shared.

**IX. Adjournment**

A motion to adjourn was offered by Ms. Peterson-Chandler, seconded by Ms. Duke, and approved by the board. The meeting was adjourned at 11:34 A.M.