

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

HempsteadWorks Career Center

June 8, 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 9:36 A.M. She asked each of the attendees to introduce themselves.

**II. Review of Minutes from February 2, 2022 Meeting**

Ms. Griffith asked the members to review the minutes from the meeting of October 6, 2021. In the minutes, Doron Spleen indicated that Morrison Mentors provides monthly workshops to the Uniondale, and not Hempstead, public library. A motion to approve the minutes with this correction was moved by Tania Peterson-Chandler, seconded by Diane Bachor, and approved by the Board.

**III. Budget Summary for PY'22**

Ms. Griffith explained that the Town of Hempstead Department of Occupational Resources (DOOR) has drafted its budget for Program Year 2022. She invited Kurt Rockensies, Deputy Commissioner, to discuss the budget. He explained that the budget summary is preliminary and will be in effect from July 1, 2022 to June 30, 2023. He discussed the various funding streams under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and other grants awarded to DOOR. These include Consolidated Funding Application (CFA), Perkins, and the New York State Systems Change and Inclusive Opportunities Network (SCION). Expenses on the budget include staff salaries, benefits, contractor fees and utilities.

Veronica Rose-Craig asked what is included under “supportive services.” Mr. Rockensies answered that they generally include transportation, childcare, and training-related costs, such as exam fees, books, and uniforms. He added that under the Gun Violence Initiative (GVPI) Grant, funding was provided to DOOR to help 205 youth in priority zip codes obtain employment. We contracted with four vendors to provide these youth supportive services in criminal justice/legal advisement, mental health and substance abuse assistance, essential needs, and economic empowerment. Ms. Bachor asked what the age group for GVP participants is. Mr. Rockensies responded that youth participants are ages 18-24, and the priority zip codes were identified by the State. May-Whei Lin observed that there was no dollar amount listed under “CFA 9.0”, and Mr. Rockensies responded that funding under this grant covers 50% of the cost of selected training programs. The cost is reimbursed to

DOOR. He also added that DOOR had been awarded funding under the Opioid Crisis National Dislocated Worker Grant, which ends June 30, 2022. DOOR was awarded \$600,000 more money than the initial award after the State reappropriated unused funding from other Boards. Dr. Martin Murphy asked why there are no expenses under CFA. Mr. Rockensies responded that there are no expenses because vouchers have not yet been submitted.

A motion to approve the minutes with this correction was moved by Ms. Rose-Craig, seconded by Rosa Murciano, and approved by the Board.

#### **IV. Incentives Policy**

Ms. Griffith indicated that WIOA permits local workforce development boards to have a policy on incentives. She invited Elizabeth Ajasin to explain the policy.

Ms. Ajasin discussed that the purpose of the policy is to help motivate In- and Out-of-School Youth to achieve their education and employment goals while participating in the WIOA program. Incentive payments may be granted to youth whose achievements are directly tied to the WIOA Primary Indicators of Performance. Allowable achievements for incentive payments are attainment of a high school diploma or high school equivalency; completion of an internship or on-the-job training program; completion of first semester in college or university; completion of an occupational skills training program; obtainment of a measurable skills gain; obtainment of an industry-recognized credential; and retaining full-time or part-time unsubsidized employment. Ms. Ajasin explained that incentive payments are not an entitlement and are subject to both the availability of funds and the youth's standing in their respective programs.

Afterwards, Ms. Ajasin explained the procedure for processing incentive payments. Youth services providers will submit to DOOR an incentives request form. Enclosed with this form will be supporting documentation that the milestone was met. Included in DOOR's enrollment packet for youth will be an incentives plan contract that informs youth of the incentives they may receive upon meeting the specified milestones. Deidre Duke asked if the incentive payments will be taxed, and Mr. Rockensies responded that youth will receive the full amount of the incentive, as the payments are not considered as income. Ms. Rose-Craig asked if the documentation required to prove that a milestone was met can be forwarded to DOOR electronically. Ms. Ajasin responded that the supporting documentation must be a hard copy. Yvonne Morrissey asked if incentives can be awarded for youth participants who enroll in college or when they complete the semester. Ms. Ajasin added that youth can receive the incentive when they complete their first full semester in college or university. Their semester GPA must also be at a 2.0.

Ms. Lin and Ms. Rose-Craig expressed that awarding youth with incentives for certain achievements is a great idea. A motion to approve the incentives policy was moved by Ms. Duke, seconded by Ms. Rose-Craig, and approved by the Board.

## **V. In-School Youth Program Proposal Review and Morrison Mentors Presentation**

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 had 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 the successful vendor will have demonstrated its experience with and capability to serve youth and help them reach their goals. In addition, the selected vendor has a greater capacity to assign multiple staff and contract services to youth.

Mr. Spleen explained that Morrison Mentors' mission is to advance underserved communities through the mobilizations and development of dedicated mentors that provide academic and career support for STEAM-influenced training, career exploration, and activities. He explained that:

- Youth will be recruited through the school districts, partner organizations, speaking engagements, alternative schools, bus and train station signage, and social media.
- The onboarding process will be comprised of interviews, surveys and assessments (e.g. comfort and experience with technology). This process determines which activities will work most appropriately for each youth participants, who will each be divided into leadership teams.
- Youth participate in STEM Academy in which they are assigned a peer mentor. They can enter training, participate in professional development, and receive supportive services. Mr. Spleen provided a proposed timeline of activities for in-school youth during the program year.

A motion to approve Arthur Morrison Mentor's proposals was moved by Ms. Duke, seconded by Ms. Bachor, and approved by the Board.

## **VI. TANF Program Update**

Ms. Griffith said that in the upcoming program year, DOOR restructured the Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP), and she invited Myesha Arvon to discuss the program. Ms. Arvon explained that in the past, the local school districts recruited and coordinated youth in the program; however, this year, DOOR staff is recruiting and enrolling youth participants, as well as placing them at business worksites. The application for SYEP is downloadable on our website, and youth are instructed to supply all necessary documentation (e.g. birth certificate).

Youth participants will be paid \$16 an hour for the six-week program, and during their orientation, they will attend a financial literacy workshop conducted by New York Community Bank, a presentation from Nassau Library systems, and presentations from various businesses in the Town of Hempstead. On the last day of the program, youth will participate in a Career Day event, where they will engage in hands-on activities with businesses. The event will have music, food trucks, and a small ceremony to honor youth.

Ms. Arvon indicated that even though the school districts are no longer coordinating the program, they are still serving as worksites. She said although DOOR has opened worksites to include private companies and public agencies, many parents have expressed a desire for their children to work at their schools.

Ms. Griffith thanked DOOR for restricting the program. Mr. Rockensies added that for the first time, Town Departments have applied to become worksites, including Highways, Parks and Recreation, Animal Shelter, Traffic Control, and Water. After the program ends, some youth will be placed in a permanent job at their worksites.

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

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 NY SCION project will better serve individuals with disabilities through New York State career centers. She invited Maria Lombardi, Disability Resource Coordinator (DRC), to speak more on the project.

Ms. Lombardi explained that since its conception 11 years ago, Disability Employment Initiative (DEI) projects have served over 30,000 individuals with disabilities throughout the State. DEI Round 8, which specifically served youth with disabilities, was so successful in serving youth and establishing partnership and collaboration that the State elected to replicate the project in each of the local areas; each area will have its own DRC. Mr. Rockensies said that Hempstead was one of three local areas in the State to receive funding under Round 8, and we helped set the groundwork for this project. Ms. Lombardi said that the three DRCs of

Round 8 are working with the State to create SCION training modules for all new and existing DRCs in the State.

**VIII. Old Business/New Business**

Commissioner Mallette reminded Board members that a retirement party will be held to honor Ana-Maria Hurtado, Gregory Becker, Edward Kenny and Abraham Sabbas at the Coral House in Baldwin, NY, the evening of June 16, 2022. Afterwards, he thanked New York Community Bank, represented by Ms. Murciano on the Board, for donating \$2,500 to support SYEP for program year 2022. Lastly, he announced Nene Alameda as HempsteadWorks' new Business Services Representative.

**IX. Adjournment**

A motion to adjourn was offered by Ms. Duke, seconded by Ms. Rose-Craig, and approved by the board. The meeting was adjourned at 10:30 A.M.