

Town of Hempstead/City of Long Beach Local Workforce Development Board Meeting Minutes
Zoom Video Conferencing
January 27, 2021

I. Welcome and Introductions

The meeting was called to order by the Town of Hempstead/City of Long Beach Local Workforce Development Board (LWDB) Chairperson Sara Griffith at 9:35 A.M. She asked each of the attendees to introduce themselves.

II. Review of Minutes

Ms. Griffith asked the members to review the minutes from the meeting of October 7, 2020. A motion to approve the minutes was offered by Tania Peterson-Chandler, seconded by Mark Goldstein, and approved by the Board.

III. Policy and Procedures for the Marketing, Procurement and Operation of On-the-Job Training, Customized Training, Incumbent Worker Training and Internship Programs

Ms. Griffith explained that the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) requires that the Board have a policy and procedure for the marketing, procurement, and operation of On-the-Job training, customized training, incumbent worker training and internship programs. The policy was revised, and she invited Elizabeth Ajasin to describe it.

Ms. Ajasin explained that the goal of WIOA is to increase access to opportunities for the employment, education, training and supportive services customers need to succeed in the workforce, especially for those with barriers to employment. WIOA makes provisions for training services that include:

1. Incumbent Worker Training (IWT) – existing employees are trained in the skills needed for promotion to a higher paid and higher skilled position within a company
2. Customized Training (CT) – employees are trained in skills that meet the specific needs of the company
3. On-the-job (OJT) Training – customers are trained in the skills needed to perform the job for which they are training
4. Internships – customers gain hands on experience in a field of interest

Ms. Ajasin explained that before participating in any training services, employers must meet certain criteria. Employers who want to participate in IWT and CT are selected through a competitive procurement process. For OJTs and internships, employers must complete a Pre-Award Business Application or Work Experience/Internship Work Site Application, both of which determine that the employer is in compliance with all labor laws, and that working conditions are safe, healthy, and conducive to training. To

determine if a training service is appropriate for a customer, career counselors refer to an interview and comprehensive assessment of the participants' skills, experience, and career goals.

In addition, Ms. Ajasin explained that the duration of training for IWT and CT is the length of training conducted by a training provider, and employers are reimbursed up to 50% of the employee's training cost. The duration of OJTs and Internships are determined by the content of training, customers' prior work experience, and their individual employment plan; however, training should not exceed 6 months for OJTs or 4 months for internships. To ensure uniformity in determining the length of training, we refer to the O'Net Specific Vocational Preparation (SVP) range and then compare the range to the Length of Training Guide. In OJTs, the employer is reimbursed up to 50% of the OJT participant's wage rate, and for internships, WIOA funding covers 100% of the intern's wages.

Mr. Kenny added that given the circumstances surrounding COVID-19, these training services can create a bridge between classroom trainings and employment through work-based training. They can develop and enhance relationships with businesses and create new opportunities for jobs that would not exist without them.

Ms. Griffith asked for a motion to approve the revised policy. A motion was offered by Ms. Peterson-Chandler, seconded by May-Whei Lin, and approved by the Board.

IV. PY'20 Veteran's Program Incentive Office Award

Ms. Griffith indicated that the New York State Department of Labor (NYSDOL) was awarded with the Program Year 2019 Veteran's Program Incentive Office Award for the Hicksville and Hempstead offices. She invited May-Whei Lin, Employment Services Manager in our region, to discuss the award.

Ms. Lin explained that the United States Department of Labor (USDOL) requires that the one-stop career centers within each Local Workforce Development Area (LWDA) provide priority of service to veterans and eligible spouses. The priority of service policy must be displayed at these sites and on their websites. When a customer self-identifies as a veteran, the next available career center staff must serve them. No verification of veteran's status is needed at the point of entry. Staff also works to identify employers interested in hiring veterans.

Ms. Lin stated that the Hicksville and Hempstead offices received the award in Program Year 2019 (July 1, 2019 through June 30, 2020) because they honor the priority of service policy; staff provided an initial assessment to a greater percentage of veterans than to non-veterans, and compared to non-veterans, veterans had a lower unemployment rate and better employment/training outcomes. Ms. Lin showed the Board the plaque award, as well as other small tokens from USDOL including a business card holder, masks, and challenge coins. She thanked the HempsteadWorks career center staff for providing priority services to veterans.

V. PY'20 Memorandum of Understanding

Ms. Griffith explained that NYSDOL requires that each local area execute a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). On January 26, we convened a meeting of the negotiators for the partner organizations included in the MOU to discuss the draft. She asked Mr. Kenny to discuss the MOU. He referred to the PowerPoint presentation shared at the MOU negotiator's meeting.

Mr. Kenny explained that the MOU provides a description of partner services and the manner in which services are to be coordinated and delivered. It indicates the methods used to address the needs of customers. The budget section of the MOU shows how much each partner spends funds in providing services and how infrastructure costs are shared. The methodology used to calculate infrastructure costs takes into account staff Full-Time Equivalency (FTE) and square footage. Because money is not exchanged with the MOU, this method helps find a way to reconcile costs.

Mr. Kenny indicated that the MOU is not a legal contract and the terms of existing contracts remain unaffected. Only co-located partner organizations are included in calculations that are based on pre-COVID calculations, but only partners with shares greater than 10% are included in final calculations.

He added that a draft MOU will be submitted to the state for approval. After it is approved, it will be shared with partner organizations for signature. The MOU serves as an opportunity to rekindle partner relations. Each has a strong program on its own, but working together would strengthen the workforce system.

VI. Disability Employment Initiative (DEI) Updates

Ms. Griffith explained that in September 2020, NYSDOL approved a one-year, no-cost extension for DEI. She invited Maria Lombardi, Disability Resource Coordinator, to provide grant updates. Ms. Lombardi shared the following:

- The three areas participating in the DEI project (Hempstead; Chenango, Delaware, Otsego; and Thompkins) presented the project at a conference hosted by the New York Association of Training Employment Professionals (NYATEP). Two youth participants were invited to attend, and they shared their success stories. The three areas also conducted presentations for Your Dream Your Team, a resource that helps participants build a network of individuals who can help them meet their career goals.
- Career and Employment Options, Inc., DEI project consultant, completed 22 career pathways maps and updated the resource map. It includes a variety of partners agencies and organizations in the community.
- Ms. Lombardi is seeking organizations that can provide an LGBTQ training series.
- Sustainability is crucial to this phase of the project. Business outreach has been a major focus of sustainability, as the ultimate goal for participants is employment.

A reverse career fair was hosted in September 2020 and the second is later this morning. Kerry Wiley, state lead for the DEI project, was invited to attend the fair.

VII. Grants Updates

Ms. Griffith indicated that DOOR has received several grants that help serve job seekers in the Town of Hempstead and City of Long Beach. She invited Yvonne Morrissey to give updates on DOOR's active grants.

Ms. Morrissey explained that customers work with counselors to determine which grant can serve them best. DOOR's grants include:

- Empire State Poverty Reduction Initiative (ESPRI): the grant is administered by United Way of Long Island, and its objective is to reduce poverty in the Village of Hempstead. Our goal was to serve 275 Village residents with career services, and we have served 305. We also planned to enroll 37 customers into occupational skills training, and 50 were enrolled. 18 of those enrolled obtained employment, and 16 have retained employment
- Trade and Economic Transition (TET): about 48 dislocated workers have been trained so far
- National Emergency Grant to address the opioid crisis: those eligible are dislocated workers who have been impacted by the opioid crisis or dislocated workers who want to enter careers in the addiction field, such substance abuse counseling. 49 customers have been trained under this grant.
- Consolidated Funding Application grant: DOOR was awarded two grants. The goal of the first grant is to train 55 un/underemployed customers for jobs in high-demand industries (e.g., healthcare, IT and business services). 10 have been trained so far. The second grant is in the contracting phase, but it will train customers for careers in the healthcare industry

Mr. Kenny added that DOOR's grants are used to supplement WIOA funding. NYATEP and lobbyists have arranged meetings with representatives of Congress, which is looking at the stimulus legislation, and we have been asked to inform them of funding issues regarding workforce development. DOOR received a \$236,761 national dislocated worker emergency grant under the economic recovery program and is hoping to receive more through advocacy.

Veronica Rose-Craig asked if people have been requesting training and if schools are offering classes virtually. Ms. Morrissey responded that customers have been seeking training and have been participating in virtual career and computer workshops and job fairs. Customers are also requesting funded training. Some schools have managed to conduct their more hands-on courses safely, while others are offering courses that are completely virtual or are a hybrid of virtual and in-person instruction.

VIII. Summer Youth Employment Program – Letter from Veronica Ortiz, Five Towns Community Center

Ms. Griffith indicated that Five Towns Community Center (FTCC) has served for years as a worksite for the summer youth employment program. Ms. Veronica Ortiz was the youth coordinator at Five Towns for the program and was scheduled to speak about the Board meeting, but she is now working at Evergreen Charter School in Hempstead, NY. She submitted a letter to the Board that emphasized the positive impact the program has had on youth in her 11 years coordinating the program. Ms. Ajasin read the letter to the Board. Afterward, Ms. Griffith responded that Ms. Ortiz will be missed and agrees that the summer program has been important for youth, having participated as a youth coordinator for years as well.

IX. Presentation – We-Connect-the-Dots

We Connect-the-Dots is an organization that provides students with the workforce settings needed to cultivate their skills and develop long-term career goals. Ms. Griffith invited Laurie Carey, Founder and Executive Director at We-Connect-the-Dots, to give a presentation.

Ms. Carey explained that the Nebula program is internationally recognized. The program is designed to help participants build the necessary skills to address the skills gap in the workforce, specifically in modern technology and STEAM careers. On a national level, We-Connect-the-Dots engages with the tech industry to understand challenges, translate them into skills, and deliver intensive training to students. Participants learn hard skills such as coding and web development. Soft skills training includes communication, working in teams, and presenting themselves to employers (e.g., building resumes and mock interviewing). Graduates of the program are able to demonstrate their skills in real-world capstone projects, which helps them build the confidence and experience they need to transition from capstone, to apprenticeships and ultimately to sustainable careers.

X. Old Business

No old business was discussed.

XI. New Business

No new business was discussed.

XII. Adjournment

A motion to adjourn was offered by Ms. Lin, seconded by Ms. Peterson-Chandler, and approved by the Board. The meeting was adjourned at 11:09 A.M.