

Metro South/West Career Center Committee
Minutes January 9, 2024

Members on Zoom Conferencing: Bob Bower, Chair, John Bogdan, Chris Brennan, Patrick Davis, Shannon Laingen, Louise Lynch

Members absent: Rosemary Alexander, Sue Medeiros

Other present: MassHire Metro South/West Workforce Board staff: Henry Bryson, Greg Bunn, Louise Meyer;
MassHire Metro South/West Career Center: Zoie Jaklitsch,
VOA: Shannon Teles; Admin Consultant, Cindy Cedrone

Welcome and Approval of December 5, 2023 Minutes

Greg Bunn welcomed the members and turned the meeting over to Bob Bower. Bob asked for a motion to approve the December 5, 2023 minutes. Louise Lynch made a motion, John Bogdan seconded. Motion passed.

Career Center Updates

Zoie Jaklitsch reported that the Business Services Team is still in the process of rebuilding, with three vacant positions to be filled. Greg noted that the new position, Director of Business Partnership, was in round two of interviews. He voiced frustration with not being able to hire a capable candidate from within, who had received national recognition. Bob said he had shared the frustration with the Secretary's Chief of Staff.

Zoie said there were three recruitment events happening in January with more to come. She noted that there are more postings on social media to promote visibility. She said she was working with Henry on changes to the website which will link the career center, the board and youth.

Zoie reported that they were in the process of updating the RESEA process to make it easier for customers to meet required deadlines and were being careful not to impact customers in the process.

Shelter Funding for Career Centers

Greg reported that workforce boards had been notified last Thursday that there would be funding for assisting migrant workers and supporting the shelters, the amount pending how many were being served. He said MSW WB was expected to receive \$266K., that had to be spent by June 30. He said another requirement was to hire a dedicated bilingual FTE, which would be difficult given the time restraint and that many of the migrant workers speak only Haitian/Creole. He said it was also difficult to find employers willing to hire Haitian/Creole speaking migrants. Shannon Teles suggested contacting Haitian/Creole churches and faith-based organizations in the area to assist. Bob said he was working with UMass/Amherst and suggested using QR codes for videos in every language. He also said he would send information of the contact person for "English for New Bostonians". John Bogdan said Local 26 provided ESL instruction. Shannon asked about contacting MWRTA for transportation assistance and Greg said they had been very helpful. He said he was looking at ways to contract the money out to gather baseline assessments and partner with organizations such as Newton Wellesley Hospital which has a pilot program that needs assistance. Greg said comments had been submitted to DCS and a workplan would be submitted by January 17.

Future Career Center Configuration Discussion

Greg presented the following chart to open the discussion about what the best service delivery process could be for future career centers: walk-in, remote or a combination, and whether to reduce brick and mortar spaces by not renewing some leases and/or operating satellite locations. He asked Zoie to give an overview of RESEA services. She said there was still a waiver in place from the State allowing Zoom meetings for the required workshops and one-on-one follow-up appointments as long as the person can be seen, and they show their ID. She said there has been an increased number of walk-ins on "in-person" Tuesdays, that there are seminars in every location, and said

that most walk-ins come back for in-person follow-up appointments. She also said she felt both in-person and remote receive the same quality service. Chris Brennan asked why force face-to-face in deciding remote vs. in-person. Greg said hybrid would most likely be the best scenario, with Zoie saying more customers can be served by remote workshops because of staff capacity and stressed that there are networking groups with remote services. Greg noted that Wagner-Peyser (WIOA Title III) was regional, that customers could go to any career center and wants to follow the customer flow for those services as part of future meetings. Greg said the next meeting would focus on Unemployment Services/DUA after Bob reported that the workforce boards sent a letter to the administration for one-day-a-week presence at the career centers for UI assistance.

Career Center Activity Chart

PROGRAM	FUNCTION	DELIVERY PROCESS ??
(WIOA Title I) Training Enrollments	Administration of training funds and case management of participants	
(WIOA Title III) Wagner – Peyser	Basic Career Center Services: Resource Room, Walk-in Job Search Assistance, Workshops	
Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA)	Required orientation workshop and follow up one-on-one appointments to verify unemployment requirements are being met by claimants receiving checks	TBD
Disabled Veterans Outreach Program (DVOP)	Services to Veterans with an SBE (Significant Barrier to Employment)	
Business Services	Employer Services: Job posting, recruitments, job fairs and navigation of grant or tax incentives	
Unemployment Services / DUA	Application/Adjunction of unemployment benefits. We currently only have limited read only access to this system	

Bob asked for a motion to adjourn. Chris Brennan made the motion. Patrick Davis seconded it. The meeting was adjourned at 11:05 a.m.

The next meeting is scheduled for February 6, 2024, at 10:00 a.m.