

Metro South/West Workforce Board Youth Committee Draft Minutes September 14, 2023

Members present: Chair, Brandy DeBarge, Kevin Lopez

Members on Zoom: Yemi Ajao, Jennifer Jackson, Nick Pavone

Members absent: Nancy Houle, Sasha Stadhard, Lexi Winter

Other: MassHire Metro South/West Workforce Board Staff: Meghan Burke, Greg Bunn, Patty Gorman, Tricia Lucier, Louise Meyer, Sheniqua Rogers. Admin Consultant: Cindy Cedrone

Review of Agenda, Welcome,

Brandy DeBarge welcomed everyone and reviewed the agenda.

Approval of December 2, 2021 and February 17, 2022 Minutes

Brandy asked for a motion to approve the December 2, 2021 minutes. Jennifer Jackson made a motion. Nick Pavone seconded. Motion passed. Brandy asked for a motion to approve the February 17, 2022 minutes. Jennifer Jackson made a motion. Nick Pavone seconded. Motion passed.

Trade and Construction Month

Meghan Burke reported that as part of the Trade and Construction month, the first “Trade and Construction Expo”, funded by Foundation for MetroWest, took place at the Best Western, on April 6, 2023 and was a huge success with 300 students, nine schools and 40 vendors participating. She said the students were able to learn about many careers and take part in hands-on activities. The second “Trade and Construction Expo” has been scheduled for April 3, 2024. She said there are plans for a Parents’ Night for parents to learn more about labor market information and also a job fair will be planned. Tricia Lucier reported that the second “Tools for the Trade” took place at during April 2023 school vacation, at the NE Laborer’s Training Center, targeted to high school seniors who were able to take part in simulated operations, in welding, scaffolding, carpentry and HVAC. She said in October, seven WIOA eligible students would be taking part in the annual six-week pre-apprentice construction program. Meghan and Trica both noted that all of these programs introduce students to careers in trade/construction. **The Youth Committee Members have been asked to join the Planning Committee to grow/expand the next expo and also to think of other ways to help in capital planning.**

Teen Mental Health

Greg Bunn said the board recently completed a Behavioral Health grant, that increased the capacity of behavioral health organizations to provide clinical supervision to employees seeking licensures. This created an opportunity to apply and receive a grant from Children’s Hospital. Six staff members have been trained as instructor in Teen Mental Health First Aid to train students to recognize signs of mental health need and provide resources for peers and high schools; this grant will also offer an opportunity for students to explore behavioral health careers. Sheniqua Rogers noted that the Teen Mental Health First Aid has been “tested” with Junior Rangers and Kevin Lopez will also be testing in the community through Hoops and Homework. **There is a need for other community organizations to host and the committee has been asked to get others involved.**

Transfr VR Implementation

Meghan noted that the Boys and Girls Club is using the virtual headsets for career exploration and there are plans for opening it up to schools. Greg noted that the five headsets are a subscription service from Transfr VR. **All committee members are encouraged to come to the MSW WB office to test different courses for content. Greg will send the course catalog.**

Metro South/West Youth Connections Rollout

Meghan noted the agenda had the new logo for Metro South/West Workforce Board to stand out from a “state entity” for capital planning and outreach. She reported that there will be a rollout of the combined youth programs which will be called “Metro South/West Youth Connections” for the youth programs to have their own identity. She presented two logos that had been top winners at the “Trade and Construction Expo”, submitted by two high school students. One logo will be used for MSW Youth Connections and the other will be for events. Greg noted that there will be a “ribbon-cutting” ceremony hosted by the MetroWest Chamber of Commerce.

Youth Committee Membership

Brandy asked the committee members to think of other youth-focused people to become members of the Youth Committee. Greg said they didn’t have to be the MSW area, and it was noted that there is no age restriction, that students could also be considered.

Next Meeting

Thursday, November 16, 2023, 10:00-11:00 a.m.

Adjourn

Brandy asked for a motion to adjourn. Jennifer made a motion. Yemi Ajao seconded. Meeting was adjourned at 11:00 a.m.