

MINUTES

Detroit Employment Solutions Corporation (DESC) Board
Program Services Committee Meeting
Thursday, June 13, 2013

Time: 9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.
Location: 455 West Fort Street, Detroit, MI
Facilitating: Malinda Jensen, Chair

Directors Present: Malinda Jensen, Dr. Veronica Madrigal
Directors Absent: Kenyetta Bridges, Shawn Crump, Yvette Harris, Dwayne Haywood,
Staff Present: Pamela Moore, Jose Reyes, Stephanie Nixon, Kristin Bailey, L'Tanya Clegg
Guest Present: Larry Good/Corporation for a Skilled Workforce, Doug Cotter/Grant Associates
Richard Acosta/Grant Associates

PROCEEDINGS

The Meeting of the Detroit Employment Solutions Corporation Board's Program Services Committee was called to order at 9:15 a.m. by Ms. Malinda Jensen, Chair.

Chair Jensen welcomed all to the 2nd meeting of the Program Services Committee for the year, but explained due to the lack of a quorum no actions can be taken today, including approval of minutes from the March 21, 2013 meeting (although the minutes will be shared with the Policy Board during their meeting, Friday, June 14, 2013).

Chair Jensen noted that the agenda will be adjusted to allow Ms. Stephanie Nixon, Director of Contracts Administration at DESC, to first present her report in its entirety, followed by discussion with Mr. Doug Cotter, Director at Grant Associates.

PROGRAM REPORTS AND PERFORMANCE OUTCOMES

DESC SPECIAL INITIATIVES

Ms. Stephanie Nixon, Director of Contracts Administration, explained that a lot of detail was provided at the last Program Services Committee meeting on DESC programs and its data. Today, she is providing updates for each program.

Partnership.Accountability.Training.Hope. (PATH)

The PATH Program is a work readiness program for those receiving benefits through DHS. In order to continue to receive benefits, individuals must participate in the PATH Program. The largest challenge with this program is that the work participation rate is at 50%, but that doesn't indicate that 50% of the participants are working. Instead, it indicates that 50% are engaged in a work-approved activity. This could be job search, work experience, and even community service. Real placement data is currently at 19%, so DESC has to plan a strategy for improvement.

Discussion continued regarding the number of individuals from PATH that were sent out for interviews and those placed in employment. Mr. Doug Cotter stated that Grant Associates is now looking at ways to track the numbers. They are also looking at partner referral tickets to include a release of information. This process will run smoother in October when PATH participants are active on G-Stars. They will automatically upload as soon as they walk in the door.

Ms. Nixon shared two other initiatives under PATH: one is Pathways to Potential (P2P), an initiative coming out of the Governor's office where access points are in eighty-nine (89) schools around the city of Detroit. DESC has been asked to provide workforce development services and support in these schools as we do access points within the community. Since DESC does not have the resources to provide this service we have chosen to train PATH participants to be access point coordinators. The first group of 15 is being trained in basic computer skills, customer service and etiquette. They also will be referred to Dress for Success to get suits so that when they go into the schools they will be well prepared.

Discussion continued that these will be people that live in the neighborhoods. This process will enable individuals to meet their work participation demands. The program is a non-paid work experience but staff is looking into some form of stipend to assist these participants.

Ms. Nixon explained the 2nd piece under the PATH Program is the 21-Day Application Eligibility Period (AEP). The 21-day AEP requires that anyone applying for assistance has to comply with 21 days of activities or they are deemed not eligible to receive benefits. Ms. Nixon shared her concerns that people in need are being weeded out in this process and this could cause an undue hardship. Mr. Jose Reyes stated that during the 21-day incubation period, some individuals are finding employment, and it would appear that this is a positive outcome, but it is not as far as the state is concerned because the person is not officially enrolled in PATH and not receiving credit. This process also needs a closer look.

Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Year Round Youth Program

Ms. Nixon summarized reports coming from the state each quarter, explaining that this is the 3rd quarter and DESC has met and exceeded all measures explaining this was a challenging program. Ms. Nixon explained the issue has always been the number of youth exited without positive outcomes.

Mr. Larry Good, Consultant from Corporation for a Skilled Workforce, asked if this is an example of what it is all over that youth employment is down or if it is possibly a performance issue that can be managed. Ms. Nixon explained that youth employment is down but what can be done on DESC's end is enrollment in some form of secondary training where youth can earn a credential and/or employment. There are other options for youth and DESC will look at these in order to hopefully see the numbers grow.

Ms. Nixon explained that staff is ramping up the summer youth program now where youth work for 6 weeks at \$7.50 per hour. Start dates are staggered because schools are closing at different times. DESC is looking to place approximately 1,500 youth this summer.

Employment Services

Ms. Nixon reviewed the Employment Services System design which consists of bringing together individuals seeking jobs and employers seeking workers as the core of the labor exchange system in accordance with Wagner-Peyser (funding) regulations. These services are provided at no cost to employers and job seekers. Information is shared with appropriate agencies to facilitate labor exchange activities and ensure compliance with federal and state regulations. Ms. Nixon briefly reviewed the number of clients spread across the three DESC sites (Fort, Milwaukee and Conner).

Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) Program

The TAA Program is a federal program that assists U.S. workers that have lost jobs as a result of foreign trade. This program seeks to provide trade-affected workers with opportunities to obtain skills, resources and support to become reemployed.

The program is important because it is tied to individual's benefits and it is mandatory that individuals participate in this program in order to receive the benefits. There are letters and documents that we must provide in an attempt to make sure we reach those eligible individuals. An issue with this population is that these persons are receiving income (UI) and don't feel the need to participate in training until their benefits are about to run out.

Ms. Pamela Moore, President/CEO at DESC, asked if training dollars are tied to the individual can we force that individual to use the dollars to get the training the employer wants them to receive. Mr. Jose Reyes, Chief Operating Officer at DESC, noted that people cannot be forced to use the dollars but it is explained to them that this is an opportunity for them to get the job if they complete this training.

GED Testing & Assessment Services

Ms. Nixon shared that GED Testing and Assessment Services (currently under the operation of Marygrove College) provide standardized basic skills and GED Testing to a minimum 720 Adults, 320 Dislocated Workers, 300 Older Youth and 320 Younger Youth for the purpose of determining academic skill levels and GED readiness. A total minimum of 1,660 Workforce Investment Act (WIA) participants will receive testing and assessment services for the program year July 1, 2012 through June 30, 2013. Ms. Nixon suggested that DESC should take notice and encourage participants that come in to pursue their GED. One issue here is that people want and need to make money. They are not offered any incentive while they prepare to take the test for their GED.

Adult Basic Education and GED Preparatory Program

DESC is committed to assisting individuals with developing career plans and linking them to the best available job opportunities leading to economic self-sufficiency. Ms. Nixon shared one method of doing so is by partnering with DPS to offer a program providing ABE, GED, High School Completion and ESL classes at three (3) locations in the city of Detroit. Services offered at these locations provide participants with an opportunity to successfully re-enter the education system.

Food Assistance Employment & Training (FAE&T)

Ms. Nixon briefly reviewed the FAE&T program which provides employment skills, job search, job placement training and literacy and academic skills training for Able Bodied Adults without Dependents (ABAWDs) during the contract period of October 1, 2103 through September 30, 2013. The program's goal is to place at least 60% of those enrolled into unsubsidized employment at no less than \$8.00 per hour and at least 55% will retain employment for at least 90 calendar days. This is a volunteer program for persons that are receiving food stamps.

PROGRAM REPORTS AND PERFORMANCE OUTCOMES

SPECIAL POPULATION SERVICE DELIVERY/OUTCOMES

Mr. Richard Acosta from Grant Associates reviewed the latest One Stop Services Report. The report reflects year to date numbers, explaining Grant Associates is at an 80% referral rate for outbound partner referral. The special population status has shown a stark increase in numbers the last quarter stating he feels the reason for this is that people are more comfortable in sharing certain information. Mr. Acosta noted that the 50-and-older population is always a high turnout population that is entering or reentering the workforce.

Mr. Cotter explained that to date, there are over 2,100 placements in the system and one thing cited in the report he feels is exciting is that the model is a very collaborative model with over 600 of those 2100 placements coming through partnerships.

Mr. Cotter shared that over 35 individuals have been placed with Henry Ford Health Systems explaining that Henry Ford has been an intricate partner with cohort training as well. Henry Ford has expressed an interest in having some internships and externships afterwards. Grant Associates is also interested in speaking with Henry Ford regarding the DRAPP Program to see how this program can be integrated into the system.

Mr. Cotter noted that Meijer will be opening a new store in July. Six hundred (600) individuals from the Conner location were interviewed and Meijer was really impressed with them. Meijer brought about fifty staff members for the event and interviewed the 600 individuals and of that number, 315 were extended offers pending the results of drug and background checks. Grant Associates is confident that the numbers of those hired will be significant.

Mr. Cotter shared the success with Detroit Manufacturing System (DMS) since they placed approximately 475 individuals with them. DMS has been a great partner as well because they have helped Grant Associates in the area of getting individuals prepared for positions by working on soft skills that individuals need to be successful. Grant Associates has rolled out a Work Readiness and Simulation Training which is being delivered by FOCUS Hope. This program has worked so well that DMS has requested that all new hires go through this training. Mr. Cotter explained this is not exclusive for DMS, persons can go through this training and be placed with other manufacturers as well. Chair Jensen asked Mr. Cotter to contact her since she has some ideas on a way to broaden the process.

Mr. Cotter shared that he, Ms. Nixon and Mr. Reyes had a series of meetings with Chrysler and believes that the meetings went well. Chrysler is interested in DESC possibly taking over their assessment piece for all persons that are screening for hire. Chrysler has a program in Toledo that they have developed, adding that there is a price tag attached to this piece. DESC and Grant Associates suggested bringing the other two from the “Big Three” to the table and present this assessment piece as an automotive-specific readiness training.

Chrysler wanted to discuss this internally and will get back with staff in the near future.

Mr. Cotter stated that to date, DRAPP and other specialized training has had over 565 Detroit residents trained, explaining of all those going through the training the average wage is \$17.98. This is an 89% completion rate. A veterans task force has been put together that is meeting on a quarterly basis. There has been one veteran recruitment event and Grant Associates is considering

maintaining this on a quarterly basis and possibly rolling this model out for returning citizens as well.

Chair Jensen asked that with the year-end approaching, if DESC is in danger of losing funds and was assured that this was not an issue.

GOOD AND WELFARE

Ms. Moore shared highlights of her presentation to the Kresge Foundation later this morning and other ventures DESC is involved in.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to come before the Program Services Committee, the meeting was adjourned at 11:11 a.m.

Submitted by: L'Tanya Clegg