

MINUTES

Detroit Workforce Development (DWDB) Board
Disability Advisory Council Meeting
Tuesday, March 18, 2014

Time: 8:30 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.
Location: SEMCOG, 1001 Woodward Avenue, Suite 1400, Detroit
Facilitating: Gwen McNeal, Chair

Council Members Present: Verna Brocks, Jon Waller, Gwen McNeal, Andrea Tolle, Delora Williams, Anne Duncan, Daron Calhoun, Benne Baker, Venus Heard
Council Members Absent: Lena Barkley, Byron Carter, Aurora Harris, Jayna Jamerson, Patricia Little, George Parris, Felecia Simpson, Ammiel Thomas, Kenyetta Walker, John Williamson, Richard Carson, Shawn Burks, Angelique Kelly, Jannette Howard (excused), Steve Eglan (excused), Michael Trogan, Tiffany Cracchiolo
Staff Present: L'Tanya Clegg, Stephanie Nixon, Robin Johnston, Lynn Bell, Becky Eloby-Edwards, Victoria Anderson

The Meeting of Detroit Workforce Development Board's Disability Advisory Council was called to order at 8:55 a.m. by Ms. Gwen McNeal, Chair. Chair McNeal welcomed all to the meeting and asked for introductions around the room.

APPROVAL OF DRAFT AGENDA & DRAFT MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 17, 2013 AND DECEMBER 17, 2013

Due to the lack of a quorum, there was no approval of the Draft Agenda of Tuesday, March 18, 2014 nor Draft Minutes of September 17, 2013 or December 17, 2013.

AGENCY UPDATES

Chair McNeal allowed members an opportunity to provide brief agency updates.

UCP Update

Ms. Delora Williams shared that United Cerebral Palsy (UCP) is involved in a couple of new programs. Paid service and the Work Incentive Program (which helps individuals go back to work) are both doing well.

PTA Update

Ms. Verna Brocks spoke briefly about some of the activities the PTA is involved in and noted that she would like to present at an upcoming Disability Advisory Council meeting.

PTSA Update

Ms. Venus Heard shared that the PTSA is eventually merging with other PTAs in the network outside Detroit Public Schools, which is a work in progress. Ms. Heard stated that youth may stray from what they are taught but seldom stray away from what they know and noted that the PTSA is trying to make a difference. The PTSA could use all of the help it can get and encourages the support of this body in their endeavors.

MRS Update

Mr. Jon Ianucci Waller shared that Michigan Rehabilitation Services (MRS) is still working hard to get jobs for persons with disabilities and working with their community partners. With summer coming up, they are working with JVS on the summer program for youth in transition as well as working with Detroit Employment Solutions Corporation (DESC) to find ways to better serve each other by individually processing customers through the Michigan Works system. Mr. Waller explained that it has been a little chaotic due to their move from LARA to DHS, getting a new director and being in the process of redoing their entire system. However, MRS will continue to meet their mandates to find jobs for disabled individuals.

JVS Update

Ms. Andrea Tolle gave an update on Jewish Vocational Services (JVS), sharing that they are working with MRS in an introduction to the world of work for their special education students, which is similar to what was done last summer in an effort to give youth something to do until they return to school or college. JVS is excited about the program because they have good placements and success. Ms. Tolle shared that JVS was awarded a Pathways to Success Grant, which is an intensive program for students. It is a semester-long program and similar to Project Search, and she explained that this is a proven, evidenced-based project. JVS runs the program in Oakland County but hopes to eventually include Wayne County as well.

PRESENTATION: EMPLOYER DO'S AND DON'TS

Chair McNeal introduced the speaker for the meeting, Mr. Daron Calhoun, EEOC Supervisory Investigator. Mr. Calhoun explained that this presentation was designed to assist employers in what they need to do and how they can navigate information about the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

During his presentation, he explained that companies must make a good faith effort to provide reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities. A good faith effort is an employer documenting that they are trying to accommodate persons with disabilities but not to the extent that it would cause undue hardship to the employer. An employer does not have to provide an accommodation that would result in significant difficulty or expense, based on the employer's resources and the operation of the business. Mr. Calhoun explained that the average accommodation costs less than \$500.00 and there are organizations that will assist companies with accommodations. Some types of accommodations include accessible facilities, obtaining or modifying equipment, changing when and how essential job functions are performed, reassigning marginal tasks, incorporating part-time or modified schedules, and providing breaks or a private area to rest or to take medication.

Brief discussion ensued regarding specific issues that members are familiar with and Mr. Calhoun responded that there are no set in stone rules in a lot of situations and that a lot of cases are done on a case by case basis. However, in most situations, the employer is expected to make a reasonable effort.

Chair McNeal asked Mr. Calhoun if he would come back to an upcoming meeting to continue speaking on this particular topic. He agreed that he would.

OLD/NEW BUSINESS

The next meeting of the Disability Advisory Council is scheduled for Tuesday, June 17, 2014.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to come before the Disability Advisory Council, the meeting was adjourned at 10:05 a.m.

Submitted by: L'Tanya Clegg