

MINUTES

Detroit Employment Solutions Corporation Board
Disability Advisory Council Meeting
Tuesday, September 17, 2013

Time: 8:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.
Location: 707 West Milwaukee Street, 2nd Floor, Room 2A
Facilitating: Gwen McNeal, Chair

Members Present: Gwen McNeal, Verna Brocks, Richard Carson, Shawn Burch, Jannette Howard, Felecia Simpson, Jon Waller, Nonzwakazi Hill, Andrea Tolle, Michael Trogan, Tiffany Cracchiolo, Steve Eglund

Members Absent: John Williamson, Byron Carter, Aurora Harris, Jayna Jamerson, Patricia Little, Ammiel Thomas, Kenyetta Walker, Tracey Marks, Katrina Gordon, Delora Williams, Lena Barkley, Daron Calhoun, Angelique Kelly, Wilda Haney, Ammiel Thomas

Guests: Tim Hinkle, Digital Media Producer, MCCI

Staff Present: Stephanie Nixon, Kristin Bailey, Lester Gayden, Robin Johnston, L'Tanya Clegg, Becky Eloby-Edwards

The meeting of the Detroit Employment Solutions Corporation Disability Advisory Council was called to order at 8:35 a.m. by Ms. Gwen McNeal, Chair. Chair McNeal welcomed everyone and asked for introductions around the room.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND DRAFT MINUTES OF JUNE 11, 2013

Chair McNeal noted one correction to the minutes in that Bureau of Services for Blind Persons (BSBP) was also involved with MRS and JVS in Project Search. A motion was made by Member Richard Carson to approve the Draft Agenda of September 17, 2013 and the Draft Minutes of June 11, 2013, supported by Member Verna Brocks with necessary correction(s). Motion Carried Unanimously.

AGENCY UPDATES

Chair McNeal allowed each member an opportunity to give a brief update on their agency.

Michigan Rehabilitation Services (MRS)

Member Jon Waller explained that MRS continues to serve individuals with disabilities throughout Detroit and the State although the economy is providing fewer job opportunities. MRS is doing well as they will meet all of their targeted numbers, which is an indicator of their success. MRS is looking forward to hopefully more jobs next year.

Detroit Public Schools (DPS)

Member Tiffany Cracchiolo is working closely with the Transition Specialist to ensure that all students receive transition services and are connected with an agency that all can get into the workforce before age 26. Member Steve Eglund shared as a central office of Transition Specialist for DPS, they serve 23 high schools including Drew and middle schools since the transition plan begins at the end of 7th grade as federal law dictates age 16 and earlier if deemed appropriate. Regarding Drew, DPS is looking at putting together a roundtable with MRS and other agencies to focus on having as many students as possible eligible with work skills as they exit. Typically, there are about 70-75 graduates per year. DPS is looking at working with Community Mental Health (CMH) to ensure that the majority of youth are focused and have skill-building options.

Equal Opportunity Employer/Program
Funded by The Michigan Department of Licensing & Regulatory Affairs
Workforce Development Agency
Auxiliary Aids and Services Available Upon Request to Individuals With Disabilities

Dave Bing, Mayor

Member Richard Carson is working with Devin Facilities Management, a company providing facility maintenance and janitorial services for manufacturing companies throughout the country. Devin's only Michigan facility is in Saline, which means that transportation is an issue in getting workers to Saline from Detroit. A grant was recently funded to provide transportation for veterans and the company is looking into using work opportunity tax credits and other options to possibly get van service, and getting persons with disabilities employed with this company.

Detroit Employment Solutions Corporation (DESC)

Member Stephanie Nixon, Director of Contract Administration, explained that DESC's goal within the One Stop system is to ensure that individuals with disabilities have access to all services and also ensure that there are quality services to access. It is one thing to enroll, but it is another to offer services that allow persons with disabilities to come out self-sufficient. Ms. Nixon shared that DESC is working hard to develop the Year-Round Youth Program, which is the relationship with DPS and Drew Transition Center to make sure that youth are engaged in specialized activities year-round with year-round providers. Mr. Lester Gayden, Program Analyst with DESC, emphasized the relationship DESC has with Drew, stating that not only was DESC able to service youth that attend Drew, but Drew was also a work site for work experience and for DESC's Year-Round Youth Program. Mr. Gayden would like to continue this partnership since DESC's programs are for ages 14-21 and Drew goes to age 26. DESC would like to be able to expand this program beyond the 21-year old age group to ages 22-26 if they are utilizing the services of the One-Stops.

Grant Associates

Ms. Shawn Burch, Grant Associates, explained that a main focus for Grant Associates this year has been more education for their account managers and career advisors on their approach in marketing persons with disabilities to employers. As account managers go out to work with employers, they are finding it to be a challenge to discuss the customers they are trying to place in jobs. Ms. Burch noted that Grant could use the expertise of those around the table, possibly coming to meetings and speaking with their account managers so that the managers can be armed with the proper information they need to enable them to speak confidently to employers. Account managers are still speaking with employers and have resumes being sent to them and appreciate all of the referrals.

Jewish Vocational Services (JVSC)

Member Andrea Tolle shared that JVS had a summer program through a partnership with DPS and MRS and had approximately forty-three students that participated in soft-skills training, including showing them what it would be like to lunch with an employer. Youth were also taken to job sites in small groups of three or four individuals and placed in actual paid internships based on their choice of where they would like to go. Some youth worked for non-profits, some went into placements and some were hired through JVS through the janitorial contract which was awarded to JVS for Cadillac Place, the largest state building in the State of Michigan. Two of the youth from Project Search went immediately into placements, which is what they wanted to do. Some are being placed in other employment at other sites and others are going on to further vocational training or college.

Youth Development Commission (YDC)

Member Michael Trogan stated that since the last Advisory Council meeting, YDC is up to 61 youth being WIA-certified, which isn't a huge number but is a 61% increase from where they were previously. There are still issues with self-identification of persons with disabilities. If the youth do not give YDC an Individualized Education Program (IEP), that information is not known. As YDC case managers work with youth during the summer and engage in one-on-one conversations, they will be able to better identify more youth with disabilities so that YDC can make sure that youth are getting the supportive services they need. Through the Career Awareness and Readiness Equals Success (CARES) Program, there are probably an additional 35-40 youth that have been identified and enrolled in that program and that will be enrolled in year-round services.

Member Nonzwakazi Hill explained that YDC had a great summer, having the opportunity to host some in-house orientations but also were able to go out to some of the different sites like Bureau of Services for Blind Persons for Parent's Night. YDC held an orientation, certified all youth that attended and all received their summer work experience. YDC held some special certifications for youth that were deaf or hard of hearing with all the youth being certified. It was able to hire one of the youth at YDC that is deaf since they were able to support YDC with some of

the walk-ins. YDC was able to provide additional services needed for some of the youth, which helped as well and will continue to move forward and look for more worksites that will host youth not only during the summer but also year-round.

Ms. Stephanie Nixon shared information about the CARES Program, a pilot program where DESC partners with the Educational Achievement Authority (EAA) and DPS. The CARES Program is a school-based career readiness program for youth in the 11th and 12th grades with EAA and 10th, 11th and 12th at DPS. EAA has engaged with Henry Ford Community College, Wayne County Community College District and FOCUS Hope so that youth will have an opportunity to take a half-day of core training and the other half of the day would be in the selected career track. Youth select areas by which they will receive college credits as well as professional certificates. Ms. Nixon explained that by the time youth graduate high school, many of them would be ready with a vocational certificate or college credits. To participate in this program, youth must be on track to graduate on time. Member Eglan and Ms. Nixon agreed to discuss this program further and hopefully expand it to more DPS schools.

PTA

Ms. Verna Brocks shared that before the summer, PTA worked with special needs youth that had been referred to juvenile court for truancy which included youth that might have been cancer and HIV/Aids patients that would be out of school due to their illness. In this process, no one was tracking to make sure these youth were out of school with good reason. PTA was able to find some good people to work with them to hopefully make the process work better. PTA recently partnered with McDonald World and hosted a chess workshop to help educators understand innovative ways to teach youth through chess. Test and reading scores went up for participating youth.

Detroit/Wayne County Community Mental Health Agency

Member Felecia Simpson reminded members that as of October 1, 2013, they will be known as Detroit/Wayne County Mental Health Authority, which means they will no longer be connected with Wayne County and will be considered a private entity although their funding will continue to come from the State of Michigan. Detroit/Wayne County Mental Health Authority will continue to collaborate and partner with all partners here and will work to increase opportunities for persons with disabilities. Within the next year, specifically October 1, 2013 through October 1, 2014, the Authority will have a year to transition. Member Simpson stated they are proud to announce their newly appointed director, Mr. Tom Watkins. Substance Abuse will be integrating into Community Mental Health, which is directed by the Department of Community Health and the State of Michigan, this transition is ongoing. Ms. Simpson also made members aware of upcoming town hall meetings to inform the public on the changes that are occurring.

September 26	Community Living Services	5-6:30pm	35425 Michigan, Wayne, MI
October 3	Northwest Activities Center	5-6:30pm	18100 Meyers, Detroit, MI
October 10	The Guidance Center	5-6:30pm	19401 Northline, Southgate, MI
October 17	Northeast Guidance Center	5-6:30pm	2900 Conner, Detroit, MI

Bureau of Services for Blind Persons (BSBP)

Chair McNeal shared that BSBP also worked with their summer youth program for Detroit as well as the ones that ran statewide. Chair McNeal explained that youth were instructed in technology above and beyond what is done by DPS, in areas such as cooking and personal management to enable them to become more independent in the home. Work readiness training and leisure time activities were offered as well. During their work readiness training, they offered college and/or vocational tech tours and other options that will help point youth in the direction they want to go from here. BSBP is excited that youth will be going into the year-round program and will provide any assistance they can.

PRESENTATION: AN ACCESSIBLE ONLINE EXPERIENCE

Mr. Tim Hinkle, Digital Media Producer, Mort Crim Communications (MCCI), has been contracted by DESC to redevelop/re-launch the website. The go-live date for the website is November 30, 2013 and MCCI is working diligently to meet this deadline. One of the main reasons for redeveloping the site is to make it accessible for everyone, including persons with disabilities. MCCI has been in business for 20 years, founded by Mort Crim, a former WDIV anchor. As a web development company, MCCI probably has more experience and knowledge than most. Mr. Hinkle

suggested that once MCI is in beta testing, he would like to refer to this body for volunteers to assist to make sure what they are doing is what is needed and works accurately. Mr. Hinkle reviewed some options they are looking into and explained the processes in detail. Mr. Johnston will invite Mr. Hinkle back for the December meeting when the site should be live and members will be able to view it and add input for updates if needed. Chair McNeal suggested members take this information to their individual organizations so that they can benefit from the site. Mr. Hinkle will make his presentation available to the group.

GOOD AND WELFARE

Member Carson noted that the group should be aware of the newly expanded Medicaid for those that are uninsured and underinsured and that there should be some outreach efforts to try to get persons into the marketplace after October 2013. He noted the importance of ensuring that individuals have the right information they will need to make the correct choices about their healthcare.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to come before the Council, the meeting was adjourned at 9:40 a.m.

Submitted by: L'Tanya Clegg