

MINUTES

Detroit Employment Solutions Corporation (DESC) Board
Program Services Committee Meeting
Thursday, February 5, 2015

Time: 9:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.
Location: 440 East Congress, Suite 400, Detroit, MI 48226
Facilitating: Mark Gaffney, Chair

Directors Present: Mark Gaffney, Kenyetta Bridges, Yvette Harris, Malinda Jensen, Dr. Veronica Madrigal
DESC Staff Present: Pamela Moore, Kristin Bailey, L'Tanya Clegg, Robert Shimkoski, Barkley Scott,
Carla Phelps, Chauncey Samuel, Cassandra Ricks, Robin Johnston

Proceedings

Mr. Mark Gaffney, Chair, asked for introductions around the room. The meeting of Detroit Employment Solutions Corporation (DESC) Board's Program Services Committee was called to order at 9:40 a.m. by Chair Gaffney. A motion was made by Director Veronica Madrigal to approve the Draft Agenda of February 5, 2015, Draft Minutes of March 21, 2013 and Draft Minutes of June 13, 2013, supported by Director Melinda Jensen. Motion Carried Unanimously.

Federal Programs Update

Ms. Stephanie Nixon, Director of Program and Service Innovation, DESC, provided an update on the agency's federal programs:

One-Stop Career Center Services: This is DESC's core business and is funded under the Workforce Investment Act (WIA). There are three full-service centers and two satellites in the city. The One-Stop Centers offer a three-tier approach to service delivery model: Core Services, Intensive Services, and Training Services.

Ms. Pamela Moore, President/CEO, DESC, noted that a major change under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act (WIOA) is less money allocated for in-school youth and more money allocated for out-of-school youth, ages 18-24. The State of Michigan might ask for a waiver on this issue so that the funds are 50/50 rather than 30/70 as currently proposed.

Ms. Nixon noted that in Program Year 2014, 14,000 individuals came through the One-Stop centers with 29,000 visits. Chair Gaffney inquired about how the agency services its customers, specifically whether the customers are assisted immediately or if there is an alternative process in place. Ms. Nixon noted that this depends mostly on the needs of the individual customer, but most of them are attended to on the same day. At most, the wait time is a day or two depending on the service needs of the customer.

The committee discussed the agency's method of tracking individuals that sign up for unemployment. Ms. Moore noted that DESC aims to do a better job of tracking and reaching out to these individuals. Chair Gaffney asked if there is a staff member at DESC specifically tasked with contacting individuals to encourage their involvement in a training program. Ms. Moore noted that the agency's vendors are tasked with this responsibility. The committee then discussed the need to do a better job with outreach efforts for individuals receiving unemployment benefits and encouraging them to receive some type of training while unemployed. Also, Director Madrigal recommended that staff prepare a document highlighting the agency's current difficulties/challenges.

Partnership.Accountability.Training.Hope (P.A.T.H.) – The PATH program is a work readiness program for individuals receiving benefits through the Department of Human Services (DHS). Participants must be the custodial parent to receive cash assistance with DHS. There is a 21-day eligibility process, where the participant must engage in core services that are eligible to count towards work participation. There are 10 sites, 9 providers and 5 contracts this program year, with all sites in close proximity to DHS offices. There is a 50% participant requirement, and DESC is currently at 63%.

Director Yvette Harris shared that the State of Michigan’s caseloads are down 30 to 50%. Discussion followed that participants are able to participate in other activities after the 48-month maximum but do not receive the additional assistance accessible through the PATH program (e.g., child care support, cash assistance). In-depth discussion followed on potential policy recommendations.

Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Year-Round Youth Program – DESC works with youth ages 14 – 21, which will be extended to age 24 under the new legislation. The youth are divided as in- and out-of-school, and the concern regarding the new legislation is the 30/70 split (as referenced earlier in the meeting). There are five service providers offering the programs and they are procured. Staff have been selective on the placement of these providers in the communities to enable youth with easy access to the locations.

Employment Services – These services are housed within the One-Stop service centers. Individuals come in and register for unemployment benefits when they are laid off. Ms. Nixon explained that this system is designed to bring together individuals seeking jobs and employers seeking workers as the core of the labor exchange system in accordance with Wagner-Peyser funding regulations. Just over 17,000 individuals came into the One-Stop center for the quarter and received services.

Adult Basic Education – These services are for individuals that come in and test below 8th grade level. DESC has a contract with Detroit Public Schools (DPS) to provide these services which are provided at DESC’s two satellite centers (Lappin Street and Ashbury Park).

Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) Program – The TAA Program is for persons that have been displaced due to their jobs moving overseas. This program is tracked by the number of individuals that DESC enrolls. A company must be certified-eligible and there are time limits on when a person can participate. Familiar with the TAA Program, Chair Gaffney shared some insights into the process as it relates to unions and certifications.

Food Assistance and Employment Training (FAET) - This program assists able-bodied adults without dependents who are receiving food assistance. This is a job readiness and job placement program. Generally, individuals that come through this program are men that have hard times with certain barriers (e.g., criminal records, substance abuse). The average wage for these participants is approximately \$9.04 per hour. Ms. Nixon shared that DESC has two providers that offer this service.

Privately-Funded Programs Update

Chair Gaffney noted that this agenda item will focus on the private, non-restrictive dollars that come into the agency, and asked the committee if they would like to assume responsibility for overseeing these funds. The committee responded in the affirmative.

Ms. Nixon provided an update on the agency’s privately-funded programs:

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
Mike Duggan, Mayor

JPMorgan Chase – JP Morgan Chase has awarded DESC \$400,000.00 over two (2) years. These funds support apprenticeship training through the Detroit Registered Apprenticeship Program (DRAP).

DTE Foundation – \$250,000.00 per year over four (4) years provides wages to support Year-Round Youth Work Experience within City of Detroit Recreation Centers.

Aspen Institute – Provides funding to support a collective impact approach to providing Career Pathways for Opportunity Youth.

USA Funds – Provides the Jobs for America’s Graduates (JAG) Program. There are specialists in the classrooms in the schools in Cody and Osborn. JAG fits under the “My Brother’s Keeper” initiative.

EPA/Environmental Workforce and Job Training Grant – Provides asbestos abatement, lead abatement and HAZWOPER training and job placement services to eligible participants. This is a grant that the city received and DESC is the training component.

The committee asked that funding amounts be added to committee documentation for these programs going forward. A motion was made by Director Madrigal for the Program Services Committee to oversee the private, non-formula programs, supported by Director Harris. Motion Carried Unanimously.

Chair Gaffney shared that the committee should report out to the Board on the performance of these privately-funded programs.

Discussion: Mission/Vision of the Committee

The Committee agreed to review and mission, vision and goals of this committee. Ms. Kristin Bailey, Compliance Manager, DESC, noted that the Corporation Board Bylaws include the duties and responsibilities for this committee and shared that information with the group. She also agreed to email out this information to the committee.

Director Malinda Jensen recommended that the agency assesses how it is serving the business community, and recommended that DESC creates a report on the type of requests made by businesses and how DESC is servicing those requests.

Director Madrigal noted that DESC must be strategic in thinking and that the city’s youth must be prepared beyond high school.

The Committee agreed that Director Bridges would present to the Corporation Board on behalf of the Program Services Committee.

Adjournment

With no further business to come before the Program Services Committee, the meeting was adjourned at 11:16 a.m.

Prepared by: L’Tanya Clegg