



**Camden County  
Workforce Development Board**  
*Supporting the Development and Retention of a World Class Workforce*

Gregg T. DeBaere, Chair  
Jeffrey S. Swartz, Executive Director

**LITERACY COMMITTEE MEETING  
MINUTES, JUNE 6<sup>TH</sup>, 2017**

**ATTENDANCE**

MEMBERS		12-Sep	4-Oct	1-Nov	6-Dec	3-Jan	7-Feb	7-Mar-17	4-Apr-17	9-May-17	6-Jun-17
<b>Brahl, Ken CHAIR</b>	Ravitz Family Shoprites	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Abrams, Barbara	Jewish Family & Children Service of Southern NJ	X		X	X		X			X	
Beach, Patti	Camden County One-Stop	X	X	X	X	X		X			
Dann, Carol	Camden County College		X		X	X	X		X		
Kalitan, Marilyn	Kalitan Consulting		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Knopf, Dick	Marketing Professional Services	X		X		X			X	X	
Young, Jennifer	Verizon		X		X		X				X
Weaver, Thomas	Mayor, Clementon Borough				X						
Goodman, Steve	Volunteers of America, Del Valley				X	X				X	X
Welder, Laura	JEVS			X	X	X					
Walton, Marcie	VOA-Face Forward				X						
Powell, Michelle	Camden County College				X						
Pryor, Regina	DOL-Employment and Training	X	X		X	X	X	X			X
Desiderio, Daniela	Housing Authority, City of Camden							X			
Naila Tanczak	DOS La Quinta Inn & Suites									X	
Swartz, Jeffrey S., Exec. Director	WDB	X		X	X			X		X	
Stubblefield, Lelia	WDB										
Varallo, Kathleen	WDB	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Williams, Leslie J	WDB	X									
Naroden, Eric	WDB Intern	X									
Debbie Friedner	Camden County One-Stop Career Counselor						X				
Laurie Maguire	CCRC-Workforce Learning Link									X	

**WELCOME**

Ken Brahl called the meeting to order, welcomed attendees and asked for roundtable introductions.

- LITERACY NEEDS ASSESSMENT UPDATE (LNA)**

Ken reported that he and Jeff attended a meeting with Jonathon Young, Freeholder Liaison to our local area. He previously served on the Literacy Committee and is very supportive of Literacy needs in the county. We presented the Literacy Needs Assessment to Freeholder Young with a request that he assist us in creating an awareness in the County of its findings. Freeholder Young suggested that the WDB present the LNA at an upcoming Camden County Mayor’s Association meeting. Once the date is scheduled, he offered the Freeholder’s will reserve an open spot on the association’s agenda. Ken said Jeff followed up after the meeting to contact the Mayor’s Association. Since the July meeting is an informal barbeque, it was suggested the WDB schedule a presentation for the fall meeting.

- LITERACY DAY UPDATE**

Ken said they also discussed with Freeholder Young, the offer by Mayor Thomas Weaver to plan a model program, Literacy Day at the Clementon Library. Freeholder Young is in support of the idea and will help in any way he can.

Regina Prior, DOL Employment and Training Specialist, said she sent Mayor Weaver a lot of grant information about WIOA funding dedicated to helping local Libraries expand their programs to include workforce and literacy services.

Steve Goodman, Volunteers of America, Delaware Valley, suggested that the committee should get a second contact at the library once Mayor Weaver gives his support of the plan. Kathleen Varallo, WDB Administrative Assistant, said she will follow up to get contact information and the exact name and location of the Library. She also suggested that we could arrange for a sight visit once we get the ok to proceed. National Literacy Day is on the calendar for Friday, September 8<sup>th</sup>, 2017. She asked the committee if this date is still being considered. The committee discussed some logistics and agreed that as long as Mayor Weaver was in agreement that date would work. Ken said that we have plenty of notes and meeting minutes that include activities and plans for the Literacy Day. We can move forward with the planning as soon as we get approval from Mayor Weaver and contact with the Library. Ken said he will contact Mayor Weaver and personally invite him to the next Literacy Committee meeting.

Regina reported on the response back from a request to have Scholastic Books attend the Literacy Day. In order for them to come out to a Library, it would require a commitment of \$1,200.00 or twelve hundred dollars in sales. She also heard about a program called “Bags of Books” that was started by a young lady living in Camden County. Alexa Gabrielle, collects books for children. She then plans visits to schools and libraries with the donated books. Every book collected is directly transferred to a child’s hand. At events, children are given a bag. They visit the different tables to choose whatever books they want to take home and build a library of their own. There is no cost for the “Bags of Books” to visit an event. Ken said that Ravitz Family Markets would donate the bags. He also said that he could run a book drive at the Ravitz Shoprite locations. He would be happy to post notices to employees as well as customers. Promoting such a book drive to customers might create an overwhelming response. Jennifer Young, Verizon said it would probably take only one day to fulfill the need for the event as well as a hefty overflow. Regina said she will follow up and find out more details about the program. More information can be found on the website; [www.bagsofbooks.org](http://www.bagsofbooks.org). She has also contacted Pizza Hut about their book pass program. The committee agreed these were two great possibilities and all had additional books to donate to the effort.

Jennifer Young, said that Libraries often have sales of books they are no longer using. She said the Mount Laurel Library branch has a lobby full of books. The books normally sell for \$1.00-\$1.50 per book. This may present an opportunity to shift the resources of unused books. She said the books are in great condition.

Steve Goodman, Volunteers of America (VOA) said there is a library being constructed at their Atlantic City shelter with the help of a scout troop. They plan to build more libraries in other shelters or facilities for transitional housing so that their clients have reading materials. He said that VOA would be happy to accept any overflow of books from the event. Jennifer said this Literacy Committee initiative could be an ongoing activity that would really promote the efforts of the WDB in the community. Steve said VOA could help on the day of a book drive. They have a facilities team with van vehicles that could help transport the books.

The committee discussed more logistics of holding a book drive. Ken said the committee would move forward with a book drive at a Ravitz Family Market location prior to the Literacy Day event. “Bags of Books” and Volunteers of America could help with storage and transportation of the books. They would be the recipients any overflow of books from the Literacy Day event. Steve said that he has Eagle Scout candidates that would also help as part of their project to build book shelves at one of their shelters.

Ken summarized by saying we should be able to agree on a date for the Literacy Day at the next meeting as well as more of an idea of time frame and plan for organizing a book drive that would include collecting books for “Bags of Books” and the VOA shelters. We will definitely need to create a flyer that includes the WDB logo and recipients of the effort. Kathleen suggested that the flyer include direction to the website and the Literacy Needs Assessment.

- **DISABILTITES EVENT UPDATE**

**“Dispelling the Myths” – Taking Steps Toward Inclusion in the Workplace**

At the last joint meeting held on May 9<sup>th</sup>, the location and some of the speaker and panelists were confirmed. We are still waiting for one more employer confirmation to speak on the panel. It was agreed that there should be at least two employers who are engaging in inclusive hiring practices included in the panel discussion at the event. The event will take place at last year’s location, with the same “Soups and Sweets” Culinary Training Program catering the continental breakfast. The Jewish Federation Commons Building, 1721 Springdale Road, Cherry Hill, NJ 08003 is the confirmed event location. The same video/audio team will be contracted as well. An electronic invite/flyer will be ready for distribution once we have the commitment of sponsorship from Bancroft.

**NEXT MEETING**

The next Literacy Committee meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, July 11<sup>th</sup>, at 8:30am at the CCWDB office.

Submitted by,

*Kathleen Varallo,*

Administrative Assistant,

Camden County Workforce Development Board