

ABILITIES COMMITTEE MINUTES
THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 10, 2020 AT THE WDB OFFICE

ATTENDANCE – ABILITIES COMMITTEE

MEMBERS		12-Mar-20	9-Apr-20	14-May-20	11-Jun-20	9-Jul-20	13-Aug-20	10-Sep-20
Maggioncalda, Jim CHAIR	TFG Management Services	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Abrams, Barbara	Jewish Family & Children Service of Southern NJ							
Cirii, Frank	Local Area Operations Director	X	X	X	X	X		
Deitz, Jeffery	Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services							
Donato, Carl	Wawa		X	X	X	X		X
Forman, Lois	Bancroft	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Fugee, Antoinette	Center for Family Services							
Hale, Dawn	The Arc of Camden County		X	X	X			
Lucas, Angela	JEVS HireAbility			X			X	X
Marks, Karen	Jewish Family & Children Service of Southern NJ	X		X	X		X	
McClintock, Monica	Adjunct Professor, Rowan University	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Mills, Jay	NJ Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired				X			
Smith, Veda	Camden County Independent Living Center		X					
Taguwa, Denise	LWD-WDB Coord + Support		X			X		
Veneziani, Jennifer	Program Planning and Development Specialist, DVRS							
Swartz, Jeffrey S.	WDB Executive Director	X	X	X	X			X
Varallo Kathleen	WDB Administrative Assistant	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

WELCOME

Jim Maggioncalda, Abilities Chair, called the meeting to order at 8:40, welcomed attendees to the Zoom meeting and thanked them for attending. Kathleen Varallo, Administrative Assistant, WDB, said that Carl Donato, Wawa would be signing on the call in ten minutes so she suggested the committee start with personal updates.

COMMITTEE UPDATES

Angela Lucas, Jevs HireAbility, said their planning committee is still deciding how to host an online JEVS event in the fall so there is no news about whether it would be feasible to partner with the WDB on an event. She had no further updates.

Lois Forman, JFCS, reported Jewish Family and Children Services is providing a new service to local employers in Camden, Burlington and Gloucester Counties. JFCS is hosting a hyper local job board or portal on their website. They have a huge data base of followers. The Job Board soft roll-out happened this week. There are 30 jobs already posted on the board. Each job will be posted for a 30 day term, Lois said she will follow up with the employers to see if the position has been filled or if they want to continue posting. The JFCS marketing department will be placing ads in the Jewish “Voice” newspaper that is sent out to subscribers in early October. The Voice is a bi-weekly publication and has a very wide readership in the tri-county area. The article featuring the job board will be directed to both employers and jobseekers. The Job Board will be sent out via “FED Flash” which goes out digitally/email in a blast to all the partner agencies such as JCC, Jewish Community Relations, etc. The FED Flash reaches over 15,000 email subscribers. JFCS will also post the Job Board on all its social media sites including Instagram and Twitter. Follow the link for more information:

<https://jfcssnjjobs.org/>

Monica asked if the link can be shared. Lois confirmed the link is available to everyone in the tri-county area. It is not targeted to any one population and it is not taking away from any other state or public job portals. She encouraged the committee to share it with all their contacts and with HR organizations. Lois thanked Kathleen for including the flyer with the meeting materials. Lois also said that JFCS is really focused on serving local community needs such as food distribution, housing, senior services, and services like the job board. The Committee discussed the new job board, and all agreed it is needed because it seems to be very user friendly and a very good service to local employers. Jim asked if the service will be provided in Atlantic County. Lois said there are 13 JFCS centers that operate independently under one national umbrella. The Job Board is only currently operational in this tri-county region.

Carl Donato, Talent Acquisition Specialist, Wawa, entered the call. He reported Wawa is posting jobs on the JFCS job board. He asked the committee for additional contacts in the South Jersey area. He is having a tough time connecting with job services in that area. Kathleen said she will send Carl contacts the WDB Directors, Fran Kuhn, Atlantic County WDB and Allison Spinelli, Cape May, Cumberland, and Salem Counties. Carl reported there is a “clean team” in every Wawa store. The team makes sure that all public surfaces are regularly sanitized. They have had some challenges with store capacity in the stores. Business is getting back to a new normal and stores are following all the new guidelines and CDC regulations. The Wawa Company is continually looking for ways to improve service, especially in these challenging times. He also said that staff recruitment has been a challenge. The company is not getting applicants especially in the customer service associate and fuel attendant positions. He told Lois he would connect with her about further job posts. Carl told the committee to look for new products being introduced in the coming months and drive thru service.

Karen Marks, JFCS, was happy to report, as of yesterday, 15 clients have obtained supported employment jobs since the last meeting. Some have started and some are getting help to get on boarded to their new positions. The Job Coaches have gone from waiting to working and assisting clients throughout the county. The job positions range across the board from food service to warehouse to childcare and retail. Most clients who were furloughed are back at work. Some are awaiting start dates, a few will be going on toward placement in new positions and some are still not ready to return to work. There are some new clients being referred by the Division of Vocational and Rehabilitation Services (DVRS). Karen announced JFCS is preparing for the annual vocational breakfast which is scheduled for November 20, 2020. The breakfast will be held virtually and will honor the accomplishments of four clients and their employers.

Jeffrey S. Swartz, Executive Director, WDB, reminded the committee that the One-Stop is now open for virtual and by-appointment services. Some services may be conducted in office for those who do not have access to computers. A good majority of services are available and customer engagement is beginning to flow with ease. He referred to the Camden County website and the WDB website which posts a directory of virtual services. He noted there are funds for supportive services and training grants for industry valued credential courses and for Learning Link service, such as GED preparation.

Follow the link for more information.

Camden County One-Stop Virtual Services Directory

<https://www.camdencounty.com/service/employment/job-training-placement/>

Frank Cirii, Local Area Operation Director, said the best way to access the services of the One-Stop is to refer customers to the county website. There is a video orientation of services posted to the site as well. While most service can be accomplished virtually, some counseling and testing services can be conducted by appointment. Referrals are now starting to roll in and we are operating in a hybrid system where a majority of the onboarding can be accomplished virtually via zoom conferencing or by phone. Staff has been promoting the services of the One-Stop at the various food distribution sites hosted on Friday mornings around the County. They are giving out flyers and promoting services. Lois asked if the WDB could partner with employers to post jobs that training is being provided for. Frank said it is being done on the state job portal. The Department of Labor hosts a Covid Job Board that is linked to the NJ.Gov. Website. Carl asked for confirmation that the One-Stop information was included in an email letter sent to the Board by Bob Weil, WDB Chair. Frank confirmed and said the link to the website would be the best place to send customers for any updates to the contacts listed in the email.

Monica McClintock, Adjunct Professor, Rowan University, reported she had been in contact with the HR credit associate at Tri-State SHRM to inquire about the credit approval for last year's Abilities event. She said the bad news was they were not able to go back that far to approve the event for CEU credits. The good news is, those HR professionals that attended the event can still submit the hours they spent and what topics the speakers covered toward re-certification credit hours. Going forward, we should gather the information about the upcoming event and submit a proposal well in advance to get approval. Kathleen said she submitted last year's proposal in August 2019, which was three months in advance of that event. Jim thanked Monica for looking into final approval.

Monica announced she is gearing up for classes she will be teaching at Rowan as mentioned at the last meeting. She will be teaching three new freshman classes introducing students to all things to prepare them for Business College. She said it's her natural inclination to also work with them on their future careers and will share all the information she is hearing today at this meeting. She will be assisting them to look for part time work or whatever their case might be. The classes start on Monday, September 14th. Jim asked if the classes will be conducted virtually. Monica said she will be in the classroom and students will have the option to attend in-person or online.

EVENT UPDATES

Jim directed the committee back to discussions at the last meeting which was to plan some sort of virtual meeting to honor Steve Ravitz, Ravitz Family Markets, and recognize Disabilities Employment Awareness Month on Tuesday, October 27th. Jim said he was concerned about trying to plan an event in such a short time frame and wasn't sure about what would draw an audience to attend. He asked Kathleen to review the elements needed to put together a professional presentation. Jeff suggested that Steve Ravitz could be honored at the next WDB Quarterly Meeting on Wednesday September 23. He said there are not a lot of items on the agenda and there will be a fair amount of members in attendance. Kathleen said the materials needed to submit for proclamations have not been received yet and it will take at least 3-4 weeks, once received, to return the county and state request. Jeff said it can be accomplished at the December Quarterly. Kathleen reported she sent an email to the committee requesting the materials such as photos or video of essential workers on the job. The photos can be laid out into a Power Point slide show. The presentation can be uploaded to the WDB social

media sites or a Zoom meeting could be organized inviting participants from former Abilities events. She said if the committee decides to present a video it will be more difficult for her to organize. It will need to be edited professionally into a video presentation. It's a question of quality whether the video segments can be edited to a version that can be presented on a Zoom call. Kathleen offered another option to revisit the footage that was taken at former events. That footage was captured professionally and can be uploaded to a You-Tube presentation. She also did some research and found some You-Tube videos of Deb Dagit, Professional Disabilities Consultant, who spoke at the Abilities event in 2018. Segments of the footage including the employer panel discussion could be used to create an updated presentation. As everyone would recall, the panel featured employers who successfully started inclusive hiring programs at their place of employment. Kathleen offered these options for discussion.

Karen asked if the employee photos had to be limited to Ravitz, Shoprites. She has a lot of working clients that can be featured but they do not work at that location. Kathleen said photos of essential workers can be taken from any location. It's about putting together a nice presentation celebrating the successful employment of these local individuals. Lois said that Wawa continues to be a great supporter of hiring people with special abilities. It will be nice to feature individuals working at Wawa. Carl said he will make it easy by offering photos of his daughter who is successfully employed at Wawa. He cautioned that photo releases or waivers would need to be obtained from the individuals or their guardian in order to use their image in any promotional or public use presentation. Kathleen said the WDB does have a standard photo/video release form that can be sent to the committee. Lois remembered that clients of JFCS are asked to sign a media release form included in their onboarding packet.

Jim said he was still concerned about the timeframe for putting all of this together or rushing the project. He suggested that the committee look to complete the project in time for the December WDB meeting. Lois asked if the committee will still be planning the Veterans PTSD event in the spring. Jim confirmed that event is still on the books for the spring. He will be continuing discussions with the team at Cooper University Healthcare. He asked Kathleen to get some dates of availability from the team. Carl suggested scheduling the event around Memorial Day might be an appropriate time to host a program about Veterans. He also suggested utilizing some of the past event footage, along with a brief slide show and lead up to the idea that "no one did it better than Steve Ravitz". This would be planned for the December meeting. All agreed with the December plan. Lois suggested that something still be promoted to recognize Disability Employment Awareness month, even if it is a simple email blast, so the focus does not get lost. All agreed with Lois. Kathleen said she can post anything the committee would like to offer as well as create an email that can be sent to past attendees of the Abilities events. She will still want to begin collecting photos with photo release well in advance of the December meeting. A powerful slide show can be better than a long video to keep audiences engaged in the message. The WDB Quarterly Meeting is scheduled on Wednesday, December 16th.

Jim said the committee should use the extra time to plan the best presentation possible. The Committee discussed and agreed to set a deadline. Kathleen said the sooner the better so she can begin preparing posts for October and the presentation for December. The Committee agreed to set a goal of forwarding all visuals materials to the WDB office by Friday, October 16th. The Committee also confirmed visuals will include essential workers in all possible worksites around Camden County. Jeff said the focus will be recognizing

essential workers with disabilities with a special tribute to Steve Ravitz who has hired and was a strong supporter of this population for many many years. Karen asked how many photos would be needed. Jeff said the presentation would be best timed at 5-6 minutes along with a 2-3 minute testimonial about Steve Ravitz. Kathleen said the photo delay in a slide show can be timed either way so the more photos to work with the better. The Committee further discussed the length and content of the presentation and agreed to leave time for members the Ravitz family to accept the recognition and comment. Kathleen said she will invite the Freeholder and Congressman to present the proclamations and say a few words. Lois said she will contact Dawn Hale, ARC of Camden County, for some of her client photos. Kathleen will send a reminder email.

Jim noted the call was great and he appreciated the committee's efforts. Jeff reminded the committee that the next WDB Quarterly Meeting will be held via Zoom on Wednesday, September 23rd at 8:30am.

NEXT MEETING

The next Abilities Committee meeting is scheduled on Thursday, October 8th at 8:30am. This meeting will be conducted via Zoom conferencing. A notice will be sent with the link and dial-in information.

Submitted by

Kathleen Varallo

Administrative Assistant