



Supporting the Development and Retention of a World Class Workforce

Jeffrey S. Swartz, Executive Director

Matthew Verney, Board Chair

LITERACY COMMITTEE  
MEETING MINUTES  
TUESDAY, APRIL 4, 2023  
ZOOM MEETING

ATTENDANCE

COMMITTEE INFORMATION AND ATTENDANCE								
NAME	ORGANIZATION	TRUSTEE MEMBER	4-Oct-22	6-Dec-22	3-Jan-23	7-Feb-23	7-Mar-23	4-Apr-23
Kalitan, Marlyn Chair	Kalitan Consulting	x	X	X	X	X	X	X
Abrams, Larry	BookSmiles				X	X	X	
Beach, Patti	Goodwill		X	X	X		X	
Brahl, Ken	Ravitz Family ShopRites	x	X	X	X	X		
Chisolm, Victoria	Literacy Volunteers of America			X		X	X	
Cirii, Frank	Camden County One Stop	x	X	X	X	X		
Dann, Carol	HopeWorks Camden		X	X		X	X	
Daunoras, Heidi	Pine Hill School District		X	X	x	X	X	
Druce, Jennifer	Camden County Library							
Egrie, Gabrielle	Watermark Communities		X	X		X		X
Fithian, Danielle	Goodwill			X		X		
Fugee, Antoinette	Cooper Healthcare				X		X	
Hill, Lauren Dr.	Camden County College		X	x	X		X	
Knopf, Dick	Marketing Professional Services		X	X	X	X		X
Mauro, Jennifer	Goodwill		X	X	X	X	X	
McKelvey, Christopher	Councilman, Clementon Borough				X	X	X	X
Norman, Tahja	Orchards Family Success Center							
Page-Soncrant, Jeanne	Dept. of Labor							X
Rutzler, Eugene	Literacy Needs Assessment Intern			X				
Sinclair, Nidia	Camden County One-Stop		X					X
Soira, Lizette	Orchards Family Success Center							
Strobl, Holly	Councilwoman, Clementon Borough							
Young, Jennifer	Verizon		X			X	X	
Willmann, Michael	WMSH				X	X	X	X
Levitt, Alex	WDB		X	X	x	X	X	X
Swartz, Jeffrey S.	WDB		X	X	X	X	X	X
Vaughn, Debra	WDB		X	X	X	X	X	X

**WELCOME**

Marlyn Kalitan, Chair, greeted the attendees and opened the meeting at 8:30 am. Making note of corrections to be made, she asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the March 7, 2023 meeting. The motion was made Dick Knopf, seconded by Michael Willmann. By majority vote to the affirmative, the motion was carried, and the minutes for March 7, 2023 were approved.

**ONE-STOP & LEARNING LINK UPDATES**

Nidia Sinclair, Manager

- The Learning Link has been approved to begin GED testing, in addition to HiSET testing already in use. There were 22 people who sat for the HiSet. Staff are undergoing training in keeping with changes made on the State level. Nidia shared that the state was pulling away from using the HiSet and was returning to the use of GED as the testing tool. The Learning Link continues providing basic skills assistance virtually and in person to customers.
- The One-Stop will be working with an organization in Woodlynne to begin a pre-apprenticeship in carpentry. The program will be offered to people 18-25. Testing and additional support will be provided through the Learning Link.
- Jeff commented that the State will be providing Camden and other areas additional funding for their Learning Links. This funding can be utilized for staffing, administration or services to clients.

## **COMMITTEE DISCUSSION**

- Marlyn stated that she, Heidi Danouras and Chris McKelvey attended an open house at the Clementon Memorial Library. The event was held to recruit volunteers to assist with opening and maintaining the currently closed library. Among the issues noticed was the library being in disarray and non-functioning bathrooms. Library cards cannot be issued because the computers on site do not work.
  - A WDB staff member will visit the library for a walk-through. Signage purchased for a 2022 Literacy Committee event can be reused.
  - The library has been provided with a list of items that needed to remain in place for the planned scavenger hunt.
  - Zallie Foundation (ShopRite) will provide \$250 in ShopRite gift cards. Bottled water and shopping bags for carrying books have also been requested and are expected to be authorized.
  - Linda Devlin of Camden County Library will be contacted to see what can be done for getting library cards for people who attend the event.
  - Social Service agencies will have tables in the lower level, along with BookSmiles Agencies attending the event: Center for Family Services, Hispanic Family Center, Building Bridges Family Success Center & Displaced Homemakers organization, CamCare, One-Stop
- Media presence at the library event would have to be authorized by the county, which may also involve inviting an elected official. Jeff offered to reach out to Jonathan Young to see if he would be available to attend the event.
- Michael Willman proposed a beta test of a project called “STARR” for Strategies Targeting Accelerated Reading Readiness which could be scaled if it is successful. He cited a book called “How to Raise a Reader” and that the premise of STARR is to create a utility that is interracial, inter-generational and that capitalizes on bi-lingual skills, and to match high performing students with older, retired men from Haddonfield65 for mentorship and reading readiness. Two-person teams would commit to a period of time to work with students. He explored the provision of a stipend to youth who participated.
  - Jeff mentioned that he read Michael’s proposal and noted that there are corporate foundations that support literacy such as Dollar General which may provide funding for stipends. Foundation funding would be less restrictive than WIOA dollars and stipends would not impact family income.
  - Information will be circulated to committee members for further consideration.

NJ DOL– Jeanne Page-Soncrant, Business Services Representative/Camden County

- Jeanne described her duties assisting employers with recruiting employees and providing services to assist them with OJT and incumbent training needs including literacy assistance. She offered to send information about areas of her work to the committee members and mentioned that she may stop by the Clementon Library event.

Chris McKelvey, Councilman, Clementon Borough

- Chris commented that the quarterly board meeting was very informative and that he was glad Marlyn had the opportunity to speak about the Literacy Committee.

## **WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD**

Jeff Swartz, Executive Director

- The WDB was notified that it was awarded a grant to run the summer youth employment program. The program is open to Camden County residents ages 16 to 24 years old, with no income restrictions to apply. A stipend equivalent to \$15/per hour will be paid over the 8-week program, including one week of work-readiness training. Worksite agreements will be prepared and provided to employers. Promotional materials will be circulated as soon as they are finalized. Jeff invited committee members to participate in the work-readiness training, teaching the provided curriculum.

- Jeff extended an invitation to members of the committee to attend and assist with the upcoming literacy event at Clementon Library.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Marlyn asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was made by Michael Willmann and seconded by Dick Knopf. By majority vote to the affirmative, the motion was carried, and the meeting adjourned at 9:23 am.

### **NEXT MEETING**

The next Literacy Committee meeting will be held Tuesday, May 2, 2023, at 8:30am via Zoom. Meeting materials and Zoom conferencing information will be distributed prior to the meeting.

Submitted by: Debra Vaughn  
Administrative Assistant to the Executive Director