

YOUTH INVESTMENT COUNCIL
MEETING MINUTES
WEDNESDAY, JUNE 28, 2023, 9:00AM – ZOOM MEETING

Name	COMMITTEE INFORMATION AND ATTENDANCE							
	Organization	Trustee Member	24-Aug-22	26-Oct-22	25-Jan-23	22-Feb-23	26-Apr-23	28-Jun-23
Verney, Matthew (CHAIR)	Truist Bank	X						
Arroyo, Rosy	Camden County Youth Services Commission				X		X	X
Banks, Evangeline	Juvenile Justice Commission		X			X		X
Barbella, Sarah	Camden Probation Division		X					
Boucher, Shaneka	City of Camden		X	X	X			X
Cirii, Frank	Camden County One-Stop	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Crowe, Gary	Winslow Township High School				X	X		X
Godorov, Lori	The Work Group	X	X			X	X	X
Gorman, Ginger	Winslow Township High School			X	X			
Hill, Lauren	Camden County College			X	X	X	X	X
Ludizaca, Raul	NJDOL				X			X
Lofton, Vance	Respond, Inc.				X	X	X	X
Maguire, Laurie	Camden County One-Stop		X	X	X	X		
McGough, Jake	YMCA			X	X	X	X	
Pasiglaio, Marion	NJ Youth ChalleNGe Academy							
Peterson, Jyi	Camden County One-Stop		X	X	X	X	X	X
Roth-Gutman, Jill (VICE CHAIR)	Roth-Gutman Law, LLC				X	X	X	X
Selby, Andrew	CPAC		X	X	X	X	X	X
Sinclair, Nidia	Camden County One-Stop		X		X	X	X	X
Waller, Darchelle	Winslow Township High School		X					
Wardlow Hurley, Rhonda	HACC Youth Build		X	X	X	X	X	X
Wemple, Anita	CPAC				X	X		
Swartz, Jeffrey S.	WDB		X	X		X		X
Henderson, Bridget	WDB				X	X		X
Levitt, Alex	WDB		X	X	X	X	X	
Vaughn, Debra	WDB		X	X	X	X	X	X
Williams, Leslie	WDB		X					

Welcome

In Matt Verney’s absence, the meeting was opened by Jeffrey Swartz at 9:03 am. Jeff welcomed attendees and introduced Jill Roth-Gutman as the new Vice Chair of the Youth Committee. She introduced herself and asked meeting attendees to do the same.

Jill asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the April 26, 2023 meeting. Motion was made by Evangeline Banks, seconded by Lori Godorov. By majority vote to the affirmative, the motion carried and the minutes for April 26, 2023, were approved.

Committee Goals

Jill stated the two goals for the Youth Committee are the Youth Sub-Committee Focus Group and the Summer Youth Employment Program.

- In Alex’s absence, Jeff provided an update. The purpose of the focus group is to have an ongoing, authentic youth voice represented in the Youth Committee’s planning process.

Youth Sub-Committee Focus Group

Lori Godorov

- Lori Godorov commented the plan was set for the focus groups (in two areas of the county) and the assistance of WDB staff would be needed for logistic and coordination support for execution. The One-Stop will be involved in choosing the composition for youth representation in the focus group. Rosy Arroyo will supply the funds for participant stipends.

Shaneka Boucher and Andrew Selby will facilitate the focus group. Rosy proposed holding the focus groups in September or October, then putting together a report and a participant survey.

- A draft of a flyer for the focus group was reviewed and will be edited with updated information as it becomes available. The flyer will only be circulated within agencies involved with the targeted participants. The focus group plan, as previously discussed, was for the program to begin at 5:30 pm at the Work Group location, with a meal provided. The questions have been selected and stipend resources for 10-15 youth participants have been identified. The amount of the stipends for participants will be determined after Rosy Arroyo reviews her budget.

WDB Summer Youth Employment Program

Jeff Swartz, Executive Director

- Jeff provided an update on the Summer Youth Employment Program 2023. Work-readiness training began on Monday for 50 youth participating in the program at work-learn sites in various areas of the county.
 - The State changed the way working papers were obtained. The schools are no longer involved in the process, and the employers, youth and parents are now responsible for completing required tasks online.
 - Jill asked that the work-readiness curriculum be distributed to committee members:
 - The curriculum for the Summer Youth Employment Program is from a WDB in Texas and had to be slightly modified for CCWDB use. The original curriculum can be viewed using this link: <https://www.livebinders.com/play/play?id=2172994>.

UPDATES/DISCUSSION

Camden County One-Stop Career Center

Jyi Peterson, Youth Counselor

- The second Youth Work Experience cohort will conclude next week.
 - Scheduled for orientation - 15
 - Attended orientation and became eligible - 12
 - Participated in worksite learning experience - 7
- The third Youth Work Experience cohort began with orientation last week. Worksite learning begins next week.
 - Scheduled for orientation - 22
 - Attended orientation - 18
 - Participating in worksite learning experience - 7
 - In school - 5

All of the participants in each cohort have an opportunity to continue their education. Continuing education is not completed in real time, meaning that some participants in a cohort may not be enrolled into training until the end of the next cohort. Every participant's process may be different, depending on what support that they may need (for example, a participant may need remediation to increase their basic skills/NRS levels). The learning curve for each participant will be different, which will affect the time of completion.

- Jyi stated there are currently 7 employer worksites which are close, niche employers. He commented that it is important that the participating employers have an understanding of the process and are compassionate about working with youth who have barriers and are learning work values and employable skills.
- Jyi thanked Leslie Williams, WDB Comptroller, for being supportive and assisting with payroll for the stipends that were part of the Youth Work Experience. He also thanked Dr. Lauren Hill for being an integral part of the Youth Work Experience using the cohort mechanism for its students and staff. The cohort model enables the youth to network, share experiences, motivate and assist one another.
- Frank Cirii complimented Jyi's work and commented that he is pleased that the Youth Work Experience (YWE) has come such a long way since its inception 8 months ago. The program successfully fills an area that previously was a problematic audit exception, for falling short of serving the need for youth work experience.
- Lori Godorov commented that one of the things The Work Group runs into from time to time is having to provide a student with a letter explaining that a stipend is an educational learning allowance, not a wage. She suggested that the Youth Work Experience may want to have a standard letter prepared if such a situation arises with a participant receiving a stipend.
- Jeff commented that while WIOA funds are primarily spent on out-of-school youth, the WIOA law allows for spending for in-school youth.

NJDOL

Raul Ludizaca

- On-site monitoring is going well.
- Planning continues for PY 23, and new tasks will likely be connected to ideas and activities that arise.
- Jeff mentioned that in speaking with his counterparts, in terms of WIOA reauthorization, there have been some suggestions for options to increase the percentages of youth spending. The WIOA Bill has been stalled in Committee, but hopefully will be reauthorized again.

The Work Group

Lori Godorov

- The Work Group is starting a new corps program called the Delaware River Climate Corps. There are ten across the Delaware River watershed in New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, and New York. Described as a domestic version of a Peace Corps, it is funded for the first 3 years by the William Penn Foundation. It is a full-time service program that is engaging young adults, all of whom will be graduates of the program in full-time climate resiliency-related service. Participants will make commitments from 4 months up to a year and will be provided with a stipend based on the rate of \$18.00 an hour.
 - Starting in July, The first cohort is going to have 6 participants in its first cycle. There are no restrictions on the program. It will be considered a second stage opportunity for folks who finished The Work Group program.
 - Currently, youth who have been through The Work Group's Youth Court Program are being targeted exclusively for the first phase of the new corps program. There is no age restriction for participants, but the target age range is 16 to 20's or 30's.

- The program will be 4.5 days of full-time service, with half-days of some ancillary training, such as OSHA, CPR, horticulture, etc.

Housing Authority of the City of Camden (HACC)

Rhonda Wardlow Hurley

- Echelon Care and Rehab Center will hold a community health fair tomorrow (6/29) from 12:00 pm to 2:00 pm at 1302 Laurel Oak Rd in Voorhees. Vendors at the event will offer wellness checks, vaccines, resource tables, music and massages.
- Lori Godorov thanked Rhonda for her assistance with a transportation grant for The Work Group, and noted they would be doing a project in Lawnside over the summer. She also offered the assistance of her students for events as part of their service projects. Rhonda commented that if anyone had any youth who needed community service projects for the Housing Authority or for the Borough of Lawnside, to let her know.

Camden City YMCA

Ivy Dingle

- The YWCA is still seeking counselors, age 16 and up, to work at their cycle and science camp in Palmyra and its “Safe Places to Play” program in the Dudley Grange, Alberta Woods, and Cornelius Martin parks in Camden. The hourly wage for the counselor positions starts at \$15 per hour. The jobs and other information can be found at www.philaymca.org.

Camden County College (CCC)/Adult Basic Skills Program

Dr. Lauren Hill

- The application process for FY 2024 starts online beginning at 9:00 am on Aug 14th on the College website on the Adult Basic Skills webpage. Support will be available for people needing assistance with the application.
- This year, the Adult Basic Skills (ABS) Program graduated 54 students and surpassed its 1000th graduate record. The One-Stop’s Learning Link had 8 students among the ABS graduates at the standing-room only ceremony.
- Lori inquired about availability for GED testing at the college. The Work Group has students waiting to be tested. Dr. Hill responded that CCC is still in the application process, so testing is not available.
 - Frank Cirii commented that the County IT forbid providing the GED vendor with a password that never expires and access to its accounting computer system. In May, the County mandated that the One-Stop create a network only for Learning Link and its public users, which also required additional software and hardware expenses. The conversion to GED has been cumbersome with the additional expense to create a separate local area network, upgrading the Comcast contract for additional bandwidth and the additional wiring must be done. The One-Stop is waiting for a Defender anti-hacking software password. Implementation is expected to take place in August.
 - Lori commented that the Department of Education’s decision to eliminate HiSET was based on issues surrounding the vendor’s change in ownership that were either resolved or have significantly improved since the ownership transition took place. Frank commented that there should have been an extension period for HiSET to cover the transition to GED Testing, and that not having the flexibility of using 2 vendors is a potentially serious problem. Lori added that if GED has an issue or pulls out, New Jersey has no other option.

- Rhonda Wardlow Hurley suggested approaching legislators regarding the Department of Education's mandate to eliminate HiSET reversed and offered to spearhead the effort. She invited Jill, Shaneka Boucher and Rosy Arroyo to participate in her efforts and suggested inviting local legislators to the committee meetings to hear first-hand about the issues and impact of the decision to end HiSET testing.

Camden County Workforce Development (CCWDB)

Jeff Swartz, Executive Director

- Jeff commented that WDB staff would be attending multiple events in communities, such as National Night Out, and are available to attend other events. Committee members are welcome to join WDB staff at community events.

Adjournment

Jill asked for a motion to adjourn. Motion was made by Lori Godorov and seconded by Dr. Lauren Hill. By a majority vote to the affirmative, the meeting adjourned 10:20 am.

Next Meeting

The next Youth Committee meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, August 23, 2023, at 9:00 am via Zoom.

Submitted by:

Debra Vaughn

Administrative Assistant to the Executive Director