



WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

Supporting the Development and Retention of a World Class Workforce

Jeffrey S. Swartz, Executive Director

Carl A. Donato Jr., Chair

**BUSINESS SERVICES AND OUTREACH TEAM MEETING MINUTES
THURSDAY, JULY 20, 2023, 2:00 PM (ZOOM CONFERENCING)
1111 MARLKRESS ROAD, SUITE 101, CHERRY HILL, NJ 08003**

ATTENDANCE

COMMITTEE INFORMATION AND ATTENDANCE								
Name	Organization	Trustee Member	16-Mar-23	20-Apr-23	18-May-23	15-Jun-23	20-Jul-23	17-Aug-23
Thompson Ryan	Truist Bank, BSOT Chair		X	X			X	
Adams, Darrel	Camden County 55+ Program							X
Askie-Rosario, Andrea	CC Commission of the Blind				X	X		X
Baer, Jessika	NJ DOL			X				
Bass, Henry	NJ DOL						X	
Cirii, Frank	CCOSCC	X		X	X			
Davis, Gerald	CCOSCC				X	X		
Davis, Taylor	KIPP New Jersey		X	X				
Deitz, Jeff	DVRS			X		X		
Farrar, Gary	Transportation		X					
Field, Nicole	NJDOL					X	X	
Forman, Lois	Jewish Family & Children's Service							X
Fugee, Antoinette	Cooper			X		X		
Gaskins, Melanie	Camden County College							
Laguna, Connie	Truist Bank		X					
Law, Quinton	Camden Community Partnership						X	
Leonetti, Mike	CCOSCC		X					
Lex, Jim	Camden County Improvement Authority		X					
Lord, Lisa	CCTS							X
McCormick, Carol	Camden County College		X		X	X		X
Moen, Bill	Camden County College		X	X				X
Page-Soncrant, Jeanne	NJ DOL, Business Rep.		X	X	X			X
Perez, Irene	DVRS		X			X	X	X
Quinores, Cris	WAWA							
Regensburger, Robert	Lockheed Martin	X	X	X	X	X		X
Shafer, Derena	Camden County College		X		X	X	X	
Sinclair, Nidia	Camden County One-Stop						X	
Spector, David	NJDOL				X		X	
Urkowitz, Ronda	Cross County Connection TMA							
Weil, Robert	Connor, Strong, and Bucklew	X	X		X	X	X	
Yares, Yoni								
Henderson, Bridget	WDB							X
Levitt, Alex	WDB		X	X	X	X	X	X
Swartz, Jeffrey S.	WDB		X	X		X	X	X
Vaughn, Debra	WDB		X	X	X	X	X	X
Williams, Leslie	WDB							

WELCOME

Ryan Thompson, Chair, opened the meeting at 2:00 pm, and greeted the members and guests. She welcomed Carl Donato, WDB Chair, to the meeting. Carl introduced himself to the meeting attendees.

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

Ryan asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the June 15, 2023 meeting. Motion was made by Jeff Swartz and seconded by Derena Shafer. By a unanimous vote to the affirmative, the minutes for the June 15, 2023 meeting were approved. Ryan asked attendees to introduce themselves.

The meeting began with an update about Camden’s new rideshare service initiative, the “Camden Loop”.

TRANSPORTATION

Camden Community Partnership (CCCP)

Quinton Law, Project Manager/Workforce Development

Quinton Law, of CCCP, provided information about the Camden Loop Initiative. The new “Camden Loop” is a small fleet of minivans serving as 'micro-transit' to fill transportation gaps in Camden that enables residents to travel to other neighborhoods around the city at very little cost. The service launched last Thursday (7/13), with the first official press conference. In the first 30 days, during a beta testing period, over 4,000 rides were logged with five vans. Over 1,000 active riders have taken at least one ride. The Camden Loop is a hybrid of an Uber, a bus and a taxi, and does have wheelchair accessible vans. An app downloaded from the Apple Store or Google Play is used to book and pay for a ride, which costs \$2.00 plus an additional \$1.00 for an accompanying passenger. The app informs the customer how far away the closest ride is at that time. With 4 of 5 vehicles that are usually in service, the average wait time is currently 20 to 30 minutes. Demand is being met 50% of the time with 20,000 requests made. The rider can make a request, see the estimated pick-up time and have an option to cancel the ride. The service must begin or end in Camden City, either to or from the designated out-of-district station, also called “digital bus stops.” People have been receptive to considering the wait-time in their plans to use the service. On average, each person has to walk a block or two to their station. Once the passenger has been picked up, their ride is approximately 10 minutes. Stations are equitably placed across every neighborhood in the city, allowing passengers to any neighborhood in the city.

The program operates Monday through Friday, from 6:00 am to 8:00 pm. Currently, the only out-of-district location that has been surprisingly utilized is ShopRite and the New Jersey Transit Cherry Hill Train Station (which can be accessed to travel to Atlantic City), which are both located in the shopping plaza on Route 70 in Cherry Hill. People were expected to use that particular stop, but the utilization rate is much higher than was anticipated. In response to questions about how this service intertwines with other transit connecting options, there has been an effort to work with the State in connecting the Camden Loop service to the River Line, and monitoring how many people are going to the PATCO stations.

The Camden Loop rideshare service currently has 22 drivers, 19 of whom are Camden residents. Additional driver positions will first be filled by Camden residents. CDL licenses are not required for applicants, since they are driving a van, but they must undergo background and driving record checks. Drivers are paid \$22.00 per hour for what is a part-time job but additional hours have been available based on demand. Drivers do not carry or collect cash. There are similar rideshare companies in the country that accept cash but, unless there's a pressing need from the residents, Camden's customers will continue to be encouraged to use the app.

Jeff commented that he considers the Camden Loop an opportunity to transport people to the high-speed line for them to continue to the One-Stop. He commented that the cost of a trip to the One-Stop is reimbursable and that the cost of a Camden Loop ride may be something that could also be included. Quinton noted that the CCCP did receive additional funding from the State in this budget to continue the Camden Loop program and the next phase could include promo codes or monthly packages for Camden residents to get to the Board of Social Services, Employment Services or One-Stop services.

CCCP worked directly with Via, a private global transportation company, to design the full program and build out the app. When Via started the hiring process, it was decided that Camden residents would first be considered for driver job. Via's feedback was that this is one of the closest cohort of drivers that they have because the drivers are Camden residents. The benefit of employing residents is that the drivers are likely familiar enough to know the unsafe places to drop passengers off. Drivers are trained in conflict resolution and encouraged to prioritize their personal safety, including canceling a ride when necessary. While the transport service is for people 18 or older, drivers are currently not screening teenagers using the rideshare app.

NJ DOL Business Services

Jeanne Page Soncrant, Business Services Representative

All of the business representatives were assigned to the working papers project in May. Effective June 1st, the working papers process for minors is now under the purview of the DOL. The process is now completed online, with the youth and parent/guardian/caregiver creating a profile and the employers are also involved.

Jeanne has been training Henry Bass, Ricky O'Hara's replacement, as Veterans Business Representative for

Burlington, Camden and Gloucester Counties. She continues to circulate information and hiring announcements.

- **Outreach**

- Jeanne attended a meeting with American Water to discuss their initiative to hire disabled individuals.
- Garland Foods, a Florida-based manufacturing company will be hiring in August for its new facility in Pennsauken.
- Jeanne introduced Citizens Bank to Irene Perez of DVRS to discuss hiring opportunities for disabled.
- Foresight Brilliant Collaborative is hiring direct support professionals (DSP) for \$17-22/hour to assist employees with moderately or high-functioning disabilities. The DSP is responsible for making sure the disabled employee is safely transported to/from and is working safely at their worksite. The company has job openings throughout southern NJ, particularly in Cape May County.
- Jeanne has reached out to JFCS and affiliate agencies.

- **Irene Perez, DVRS**

Irene provided the following update:

- DVRS held a targeted hiring event on June 28th with federal contractors. The event was both in-person and virtual with veterans, disabled veterans, and DVR clients attending. Hiring outcomes have not been determined.
- American Water has recently developed an initiative to hire disabled individuals. A recent meeting included Jeanne Page Soncrant, Irene and a representative from the Commission for the Blind. Irene hopes to hold a targeted hiring event at American Water.
- Irene was invited to tour Citizens Bank.

- **Camden County One-Stop**

Nidia Sinclair, Career Center Manager

Nidia had no audio, so Jeff provided a brief update for the One-Stop.

- The number of visitors at the One-Stop is picking up, with an average of approximately 154 people coming in per day.
- The One-Stop's performance measures are all being met or exceeded (in yellow or green).
- Employment Services reported serving 7,700 customers from July 1, 2022 to June 30, 2023.

- **Workforce Development Board /Regional Updates**

Jeffrey Swartz, Executive Director

- The WDB is assisting Atlantic City Electric (ACE) with their summer "SPARK," program. SPARK is an internship for young people, as well as an externship for teachers that want to participate in the program. ACE identified the companies to host the interns and the WDB referred young people from applicants to its own summer youth employment program.
- The WDB's summer youth employment program is in week 4. There are 49 interns assigned to 23 work-learn sites.
- WDB staff will attend community National Night Out events in Cherry Hill and Pine Hill on August 1st, and in Clementon on August 7th. The WDB will participate in the County's job fair at Cherry Hill Mall on Sept. 15th, Unity Fun Day at Cooper River Park on Sept 16th (hosted by the Camden County Prosecutors Office) and the 2023 Stand Down of SJ at the Cherry Hill Armory on Sept 22nd. Jeff invited Henry Bass, the new Veteran Business Service Representative to attend the Stand Down event with him. On October 21st. WDB staff will attend the Winslow Township Job Fair on October 21st. Committee members are welcome to join the WDB staff at community events.
- Garden State Employment and Training Association (GSETA) will be having its annual conference on October 18th & 19th at the Hard Rock Hotel in Atlantic City. Registration can be done online at www.gseta.org (follow the prompts for the conference registration). The event offers national and regional

presenters, during two full days of workforce learning and networking opportunities.

Committee Member Updates

Ryan Thompson, Truist Bank

Truist Bank has been working on an initiative with Hopeworks, both in Philadelphia and Camden. The initiative provides workshops for interview skills, mock interviews and mentoring 101. As part of the initiative, donations will be collected in Camden and Philadelphia to create clothing closets to provide students with professional attire for interviews and beginning employment. Ryan commented that, on a recent visit to a workshop at the Philadelphia location, students were very engaged in recent work initiatives with American Water. She asked anyone who has a donation or is interested participating in the program to contact her.

Derena Shafer, Camden County College (CCC)

- Planning for the Fall term is on-going.

Nicole Field, NJDOL/Office of Apprenticeship

- Nicole stated the first K-12 teacher and teacher aide apprenticeship program was approved by the State of New Jersey. A press conference and signing ceremony took place at Camden City Hall on July 6th. The program will be run through “Camden U,” a nonprofit organization in Camden. The initiative will be expanded throughout the state. Nicole commented she will also be working with other school districts and hopes some funding becomes available to assist future educators with certification fees.

David Spector, NJDOL/Office of Apprenticeship

- For fiscal year 2023, over \$8.6 million in pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship grants were awarded by the State.
- Other funding streams for fiscal year 2024 are expected to be released in the Fall. David commented that he would keep the committee updated and information would be available on the Office of Apprenticeship’s website.

Jeffrey Swartz, Workforce Development Board

- The Quarterly Board Meeting will be held on September 20, 2023 via Zoom at 9:00 am. A quorum is needed to settle important items on the agenda, including approval of the budget for the fiscal year, so Board members are asked to confirm attendance.

THE NEXT MEETING

The next Business Services and Outreach Team meeting is scheduled on Thursday, August 17, 2023, at 2:00 pm via Zoom.

ADJOURNMENT

Ryan asked for the motion to adjourn. Derena Shafer made the motion, seconded by Bob Weil. By unanimous vote to the affirmative, the motion was carried, and the meeting adjourned at 2:44 pm.

SUBMITTED BY:

Debra Vaughn
Administrative Assistant to the Executive Director