

## Burlington County Workforce Development Board (WDB) Minutes

Friday, May 10, 2024

### Meeting via Zoom

#### Attendees

Rob Wells – Economic Development (VM)

Caren Freyer – PSEG (VM)

Dr. Michael Cioce – RCBC (VM)

Anthony Phillips – RCBC (VM)

Sophia Laporte – NJDOL Employment Services (VM)

Mariya Burnell – TD Bank (VM)

Luis Gomez – Laborers Local 55 (VM)

Rich Temple – Business Engagement (VM)

Lila Myers – Board of Social Services (VM)

Rhonda Jordan – Virtua (VM)

Dr. Christopher Nagy – BCIT/Special Services (VM)

Mark Boyd – Goodwill Industries of Southern NJ/PA (VM)

Ursula Unger – YMCA (VM)

Joe Tredinnick – Cornerstone Bank (VM)

Jennifer Veneziani – Division Vocational Rehab Svcs. (VM)

Chris Avallone – Local Union 7 Tile, Marble, & Terrazzo (VM)

Jesus Arestirado – One-Stop Operator (VM)

Barbara Weir – WDB (NVM)

VM= Voting Member

NVM= Non-voting Member

#### **I. Call to Order** – Rob Wells

The Board Chair called the WDB meeting to order at 8:03AM.

#### **II. Sunshine Law** – Barbara Weir

This virtual meeting is being held in accordance with the provisions of the Open Public Meetings Act, N.J.S.A. 10:4-6 – 10:4-21.

A public notice announcing this meeting has been posted on the Burlington County website and in the Burlington County Clerk's office.

#### **III. Committee Meeting Time/Location Discussion** – Full Board

Prior to the beginning of the meeting many discussed the possibility of hosting meetings later. An explanation was provided as to why we have an 8 AM start; many businesses felt if meetings were later there would be the possibility of missing a meeting to handle business. Attending a meeting first thing was agreed upon by the Board. The Board would have to discuss and come to a consensus to move the time.

- Hold virtual meetings at 8:30 AM – Vote YES
- Make 2 of the 4 quarterly meetings in-person – Vote YES

Rob inquired if anyone would like to host in-person meetings; RCBC, PSEG, YMCA, and Goodwill volunteered. TD will check with corporate.

#### **IV. Business Discussion** – Full Board

3 questions asked: 1) Biggest Challenge for Hiring, 2) Biggest Challenge within your Business, and 3) Biggest Promise...

Biggest Challenge for Hiring:

- **YMCA** – No response to outreach. Receive multiple applications for multiple positions, but the individual does not respond to the outreach from the Y to set up an interview, etc. May have a great candidate, but they don't follow through.

- **Employment Service** – Individuals only looking for Hybrid employment.
- **Job Center** – Drug use is an issue and customers are not getting the message that just because it is legal doesn't mean you can.
- **DVRS** – Talent shortage. Need Direct Support Professionals (DSP) to aid clients while on-the-job. DSP is a lot of work for little money, so it has been difficult to find. Clients will have employment ready, but due to the wait to find a DSP the employer fills the position.
- **PSEG** – Shortage of skilled workers, i.e., Construction, GIS, Engineering, etc. PSEG is recruiting at High School and Vocational Schools. Current workers are aging out and taking their institutional knowledge with them.

Biggest Challenge within your Business:

- **Economic Development** – Cost of Goods, Supply Chain issues, short staff (leaving for more money even if it is a nickel).
- **Deborah Heart & Lung** – Navigating through the mounds of applications. The online application process is easy, so many apply to positions they are not qualified for. This gums up the process. Weeding out the few from the many is exhausting.
- **PSEG** – Mindset issue. Individuals perceive Utilities for having deep pockets, but with regulations this is not always true. Costly training and then the person jumps ship. Training is paid and a skill is earned.
- **Goodwill** – Customers are resistant to the price increases.
- **Virtua** – Employee expectations are not realistic. Hiring entry-level skilled positions has been difficult.

Biggest Promise (what is a positive)

- **Employment Service** – Individuals are eager to get back to work or get trained for skills.
- **Cornerstone** – Not too much on the positive... sees employees have too many expectations. Based on the current climate financial institutions are beginning to consolidate. Bigger banks are taking over smaller ones like Fulton Bank recently acquiring Republic. We may see an influx of financial professionals looking for work.
- **Mariya** – High regulations and consolidations have many retiring.
- **Anthony** – Seeing an increase in individuals wanting to obtain their GED and those returning to post-secondary education. He is grateful the WDB has reenergized the Literacy Committee to help identify the service gaps and barriers.

#### V. **American Job Center Workshops** – Barbara Weir

We are getting back to in-person workshops to assist and engage individuals with the fundamentals and guidance which can lead to great outcomes. Workshops such as Tips for Building a Resume, Preparing for a Successful Interview, Transferrable Skills, Cleaning up Digital Dirt, Basic Computer Skills (from Keyboard to sending an email) are just a few the group has been working on. Looking to launch July 1. Rob asked if there were any business members interested in attending a workshop or two to drive home the importance of not wearing pajamas and a crocs to an interview. Rich, Caren, and Rob all volunteered to assist.

#### VI. **Committee Review** – Rob Wells

Revamping how the WDB meeting's function, reducing report outs from Committee Chairs. Requesting chairs send in a brief overview of the goals/plans their committee is executing. We will compile and send them to the group for review prior to the meeting.

- **Youth Council** – Held a Youth Job Fair on 4/11/24; over 35 employers and 110 youth participants. **Next Meeting: May 17, 2024, at 10AM, via Zoom.**
- **Literacy Committee** – Focus on identifying gaps and services; and services offered by each partner. There has also been discussion around Remote GED testing. **Next Meeting: September 5, 2024, at 9:30AM, In-Person at the Human Services Facility.**
- **Business Engagement Team** – Discussion around what the group has been seeing in the Employment Space. How can we connect with businesses to increase employer participation in WDB activities to better serve our community. **Next Meeting: May 23, 2024, at 9AM, via Zoom.**
- **Abilities Committee** – Focus on making sure all parties have information on internships, benefits counseling, pre-employment, project search activities, and additional resources for their clientele. Will host another Employment and Resource Fair on Monday, October 21<sup>st</sup> recognize National Disability Employment Awareness Month. **Next Meeting: September 11, 2024, at 9:30AM, via Zoom.**
- **One-Stop Partner Committee** – Averaging over 900 customers being served in the American Job Center. **Next meeting will be August 27, 2024, at 9:30AM, via Zoom.**
- **Fiscal Committee** – First meeting was held. Discussion of format and timing of the meetings.

**ANYONE with interest in participating in the Committees of the WDB, please reach out to Barbara at [bweir@co.burlington.nj.us](mailto:bweir@co.burlington.nj.us) to be added to the distribution list.**

## **VII. General Discussion**

- Our local Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is complete and signed off by several partners and the Chief Elected Official (via a formal resolution). The MOU will be sent to the group immediately following the meeting.
- Started our WDB Certification process; due June 2024. There is only one item outstanding of the ten items needing to be submitted for Certification. Without a Certified Workforce Development Board, we may not receive the funding dollars to serve customers.
- Virtua will be starting their Medical Assistant Program.
- For TD, most of their training is for employees, but for an advanced individual the American Bankers Association has training programs.
- The County of Burlington and Economic Development will host a Small Business Resource Fair next week on Weds., May 15<sup>th</sup> from 10 to Noon at the Human Services Facility. This will bring together county and state agencies that can help small businesses thrive. Participants include: RCBC, NJ DOL, NJ BAC, NJ EDA, CBAC, UCEDC, Burlington County Library, Workforce Development Board, TRC(PSEG) and more. – **Flyer will be sent after the meeting**
- On June 11<sup>th</sup>, Economic Development will host a Business-to-Business Social at Splitz Bar and Grill, Maple Shade from 5:30 to 7:30. This is a networking opportunity. No cost to attend, no membership or invite needed. Come together, hang out, swap cards, and hopefully make business connections. – **Flyer will be sent after the meeting**

**The next meeting, September 13, 2024, will be in-person, location to be determined.**

## **VIII. Adjourn - Meeting Adjourned 8:55 AM**