

**Monmouth County Workforce Development Board
Minutes of December 3, 2020**

Members Present

Robert Connolly, Chairman
Patricia Carlesimo, Trustee
Brian Wallace, Trustee
John Brown
John Ciufu
Paul Dement
Wyatt Earp
Chris Femiano
Charles Ford
John Gagliano
Kay Harris
Dallas Hlatky
Rene Kurowski
Violeta Peters
Susan Rakoci-Anderson
Joseph Robinson
William Salcedo
Jeff Schwartz
Robert Shimko
David Stout
Judy Van Brunt
Benjamin Waldron
Cyndie Williams

Members Absent

Roseann Isasi
Lorraine Scheibener
Jeff Schwartz

Guests

Pamela Shepherd, Fiscal Supervisor
MCDWD

Staff Present

Larry Sternbach
Yolanda Taylor
Lucy Rivera

CALL TO ORDER & READING OF PUBLIC MEETING LAW:

- Robert Connolly, Chairman of the WDB, called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m. via a Zoom Meeting due to the Covid-19 Pandemic.
- N.J. Provisions of the Public Meeting Law, Chapter 231, P.L. 1975, and its revisions, were satisfied by publication of a Public Notice in Asbury Park Press and the Star Ledger newspapers.

ROLL CALL:

- Attendance was taken with sufficient number of WDB members present to constitute a quorum.

APPROVAL MINUTES:

- Mr. Connolly entertained a motion to approve the minutes of the September 3, 2020 WDB meeting. ***Patricia Carlesimo made a motion, which was seconded by Chris Femiano to approve the minutes of the September 3, 2020 WDB meeting as written***

and distributed. No corrections or changes were offered, and the motion was unanimously approved.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT:

- Mr. Connolly welcomed Charles Ford, Superintendent of the Monmouth County Vocational School who was appointed to the Workforce Development Board by the Monmouth County Board of Chosen Freeholders on October 8, 2020. Mr. Ford fills the seat which was previously held by Timothy McCorkell who retired on June 30, 2020.
- Mr. Connolly announced that Violeta Peters, CEO of AcuteCare Health System will be retiring as of December 30, 2020. Ms. Peters has been an active member of the board since 1995. Ms. Peters has expressed an interest in staying involved on the board volunteering to serve on several WDB committees.
- On November 10th, Mr. Connolly attended MODC Silver Gull Awards, whereby the Monmouth County Workforce Development Board was presented with an Economic Development Award. Mr. Connolly stated that it was a great event and he was honored to accept the award on behalf of the WDB.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

- **State of the County:**
 - The New Jersey Association of Counties (NJAC) is recommending that effective January 1, 2021 the term Board of Chosen Freeholders will change to Board of County Commissioners.
 - The Monmouth County Reorganization meeting will be held on January 7, 2021 at Brookdale Community College with limited attendance.
 - The WDB liaison, Patrick Impreveduto did not run for office, therefore, a change in the WDB liaison will be forthcoming.
 - CARES funding is still available from the County, but must be spent by December 30, 2020. Small businesses and towns the funding must be spent by December 18th.
- **Covid-19 Update:**
 - As per the Governor's Executive Order #192, Monmouth County is mandating that County employees do a health self-assessment each morning.
 - PPE kits and thermometers have been distributed to all County employees.
 - Vaccine Planning is underway by the Monmouth County Health Department and Office of Emergency Management. The State Department of Health will issue guidelines for inoculations with priority being given to healthcare workers. Pfizer and Moderna vaccines allotments are being anticipated upon approval.
 - Covid cases are expected to continue to increase over the winter. The recommendation is to avoid holiday parties and to continue to follow the CDC's guidelines of social distance, wear masks and wash hands.
 - NJBIA is offering an on-line course to provide "best practices" for a safe workplace on December 15th, January 5th and January 12th. Information and registration can be found at <https://njbiasafe/>
- **Unemployment Overview:**
 - The Monmouth County unemployment rate is 5.7% as of September 2020, compared to the 14.2% in May.

- New Jersey has paid \$19 billion in claims since March 2020. 1.5 million people have filed for initial unemployment claims, with over 117 residents from Monmouth County residents who have filed.
- According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics Data, Atlantic County, at 43.2% has suffered the biggest job loss in the U.S.
- Monmouth County ranks the second highest in New Jersey at 18.1%
- **Performance Measures:**
 - As of the 4th Quarter of 2019, the numbers are exceptionally good. Currently exceeding the performance measures for Adult, DLW, Youth thanks to the “Think Green” initiative.
- **Operations Update:**
 - Monmouth County Division of Workforce Development (MCDWD) continues to virtual operations
 - Limited in-person appointments since June 2020.
 - Spending has been sluggish this year. Because of the pandemic, people are afraid to go out in public.
 - Aggressively marketing MCDWD services through Constant Contact and the NJDOL AOSOS database by emailing the public to make them aware of the availability of the following programs.
 - \$5,000 Get-Back-to-Work Training Grants.
 - Microsoft Skill Up Monmouth – currently over 9200 people have registered to take on-line classes.
 - New Hire Incentive Program – Businesses can receive up to \$10,000 for each new hire.
- **Budget:**
 - Budget will need to be revised due to the November 30th NJDOL announcement that Monmouth County is being awarded \$395,000 CARES funding for dislocated Workers.
 - This funding can be retroactive thru March 1, 2020
 - Must be expended by December 31, 2020 and it can cover the following costs:
 - Salaries
 - ITA's
 - SkillUp Monmouth platform
 - Approval of the PY'20 WDB Budget will take place via electronic vote.
- **Central Jersey Drive Thru Job Fair:**
 - The Central Region Job Fair in partnership with Middlesex and Ocean Counties was held on October 15, 2020 at Brookdale Community College. Monmouth County recruited over 107 employers who sent in materials to be distributed. A total of 379 packets were distributed as job seekers drove thru.
 - Thank you to Brookdale Community College for accommodating the outdoor space for the Job Fair.
- **Pathways to Recovery 2:**
 - Received an additional \$187,000 to extend the grant thru December 31, 2020. This grant will assist anyone who has been impacted by the opioid crisis and will afford them unsubsidized employment opportunities and retention as a result of grant supported activities.

- **Summer Youth Employment Program:**
 - The Summer Youth Employment Program was very successful in providing approximately 140 youth with a meaningful summer youth work experience.
- **Skill-Up Monmouth:**
 - Contracted with Metrix for an online-learning platform.
 - As of December 1st, over 1,200 Monmouth County residents have enrolled for online courses.
- **Board Discussion on how to Rebuild Monmouth County:**
 - Board members expressed the following concerns and recommendations:
 - Working mothers are struggling with school closures and are concerned about childcare and getting back to work. Larry will reach out to Judy Van Brunt and Patti for discussion on using County CARES Act funding for childcare.
 - Post traumatic counseling be offered to employees. They are fearful of going to work.
 - Rapid Covid testing for employees each day before going to work will reduce the number of Covid cases.
 - Update the Monmouth WDB website so that people can look into the programs that are being offered.
- **Co-Location & Rebranding:**
 - County and State American Job Center are mandated to be co-located by August 2022.
 - County is to lead the co-location effort.
 - Currently looking to rebrand and come up with a new logo. Mr. Sternbach asked for recommendations from the board. The board unanimously agreed that the new logo should read: “Job Center of Monmouth County”. Lucy will design some logos for Board approval.

HOLIDAY PROGRAMS:

- John Ciufu, Executive Director of the Monmouth County Office of Economic Development announced that the County is focusing on the following:
 - The new launching of the Made in Monmouth Directory.
 - Helping small businesses.
 - Working closely with the towns to help promote events

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC: None

UPCOMING EVENTS:

- WDB General Board Meeting – March 4, 2021 – 10:00 AM – via Zoom

ADJOURNMENT:

- *There being no further business to come before the WDB, the meeting was adjourned at 11:05 AM upon a motion from Judy Van Brunt. The motion was seconded by Renee Kurowski and unanimously approved.*