

Monmouth County Workforce Development Board Minutes of December 2, 2021

Members Present

Robert Connolly, Chair
Brian Wallace, Trustee
John Ciufu
Chris Femiano (Zoom)
Charles Ford
John Gagliano
Kay Harris
Dallas Hlatky
Rene Kurowski (Zoom)
Geoff Perseley
Violeta Peters
Susan Rakoci-Anderson
Robert Shimko
David Stout
Benjamin Waldron

Members Absent

John Brown
Patricia Carlesimo
Paul Dement
Wyatt Earp
Roseann Isasi
Jay Robinson
William Salcedo
Lorraine Scheibener
Judy Van Brunt
Cyndie Williams

Staff Present

Larry Sternbach
Yolanda Taylor
Lucy Rivera

Guests

Susan Kiley, Deputy Director
Monmouth County Board of County
Commissioners and Liaison to the
Workforce Development Board

Christopher Marion, Deputy County
Administrator

CALL TO ORDER & READING OF PUBLIC MEETING LAW:

- Robert Connolly, Chair of the WDB, called the meeting to order at 10:45 a.m. at the New Jersey City University at Fort Monmouth located in Oceanport. NJ.
- 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 the Star Ledger newspaper.

ROLL CALL:

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

APPROVAL MINUTES:

- The minutes of the September 2, 2021 General Workforce Development Board meeting were distributed and approved by electronic vote.

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS:

- Robert Connolly, Chair of the Workforce Development Board welcomed and thanked everyone who took time from their busy schedules to join the WDB meeting. He also introduced and thanked Michael Edmonson, Dean, College of Professional Studies and Director of NJCU at Fort Monmouth and Michelle Vogt, Executive Assistant for hosting the meeting.
- Mr. Edmonson gave a brief overview of NJCU. He stated that NJCU officially opened its new location at Fort Monmouth on August 25th. He said that as the educational partner

in the revitalization of Fort Monmouth, NJCU's new location will expand bachelor's and master's degree offerings along the Jersey Shore, giving the university the only four-year public higher education program in the area.

- NJCU at Fort Monmouth is expected to serve hundreds of students per semester with future expansions possible.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

- **Economic Overview:**

- As of the end of September, the unemployment rate is as follows:
 - Monmouth County: 5/3%
 - New Jersey: 7.1%
 - United States: 4.8%
- The highest number of jobs are in the following industry sectors:
 - Leisure and Hospitality
 - Professional and Business Services
 - Manufacturing
- The labor participation rate is low – The labor force continues to struggle.
- The number of U.S. workers quitting their jobs has been the highest since 2000.
- The quit rate for the following industries are:
 - Manufacturing: 2.7%
 - Retail: 4.4%
 - Leisure: 6.4%
 - Professional: 3.3%
- There seems to be a "Great Mismatch" between what employers and job seekers want. Young people are looking for more flexibility i.e., working from home.

- **Dashboard:**

- PY'20 WIOA funding obligated is as follows as of September 30th:
 - Adult – 65%
 - Dislocated Worker – 82%
 - Youth – 64%
 - SYEP – 81%
 - Good news is WIOA funds can be carried over and the MCDWD will have two years to spend WIOA funding.

- PY'21 WIOA funding obligations have been solid. Currently they are:

- Adult – 51%
- Dislocated Worker – 48%
- Youth – 33%

- **Performance Measures:**

- The pandemic has had a tremendous impact on the performance measures, currently struggling with employment and credentials.
- The MCDWD is instituting protocols to try to get people back to work and is re-doubling efforts with their training providers.

- **Updates and Planning:**

- The Fall surge in customers did not materialized, but the MCDWD is still seeing a significant number of people despite the pandemic.
- To maximize the services offered to clients, the MCDWD will be creating a Hub & Spoke model that will start in January 2022.

- The MCDWD will be having a presence in the following areas of Monmouth County and will partner with various community-based organizations:
 - Neptune
 - Long Branch
 - Bayshore
 - Freehold
- The WFNJ mandatory activities return in January 2022. Currently there is a Request for Proposal out.
- **Lease Update:**
 - The lease to co-locate with the American Job Center at 60 Taylor Avenue in Neptune is under negotiations.
 - The building is undergoing major renovations to accommodate the Monmouth County Division of Workforce Development.
- **Partnership Awards:**
 - The 29th Annual Partnership Awards in which the WDB honored Covid-19 Heroes was held on September 29th at the Jumping Brook Country Club
 - Despite the pandemic, it was very well attended and the awardees were very appreciative.
 - The event raised a profit of approximately \$6,000, of which the Executive Committee is recommending to the WDB Board that \$5,000 be donated to the Brookdale Community College Foundation to award ten \$500.00 scholarship to deserving students. ***A motion was made by Rob Connolly, second by Brian Wallace to donate \$5,000 to the Brookdale Community College Foundation. The motion was unanimously approved, with Dr. David Stout abstaining.***
- **Alumni Awards:**
 - Will be delayed until the Spring 2022

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC: None

UPCOMING EVENTS:

- WDB General Board Meeting – March 3, 2022 – 10:00 AM – via Zoom

ADJOURNMENT:

- ***There being no further business to come before the WDB, the meeting was adjourned at 11:44 AM upon a motion from John Gagliano. The motion was seconded by Ben Waldron and unanimously approved.***