

**TOWN OF HEMPSTEAD/CITY OF LONG BEACH WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT  
BOARD YOUTH STANDING COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES**

**ZOOM VIDEO COFERENCING**

**June 3, 2020**

Attendees:

Elizabeth Ajasin, DOOR  
Myesha Arvon, DOOR  
Diane Bachor, NYU Winthrop Hospital  
Sara Griffith, Chairperson, Cerebral Palsy Association of Nassau County  
Henry Holley, Town of Hempstead Housing Authority  
Fran Iaquina, DOOR  
Edward Kenny, DOOR  
Rachel Lugo, EAC Network, Inc.  
Eric Mallette, Commissioner, WDB Director, DOOR  
Clevy Merchan, DOOR  
Yvonne Morrissey, DOOR  
Rosa Murciano, New York Community Bancorp  
Tania Peterson-Chandler, EAC Network, Inc.  
Kurt Rockensies, DOOR  
Veronica Rose-Craig, ACCES-VR, Chairperson  
Sal Scibetta, DOOR

*The meeting was held as a videoconference on Zoom. Before the meeting begin, Chairperson Veronica Rose-Craig asked Elizabeth Ajasin to provide the committee a few “housekeeping” rules. Ms. Ajasin explained that the meeting was being recorded. Because attendees are to be muted, she asked that attendees reserve their questions for after each presenter has finished.*

**I. Welcome and Introductions**

The meeting was called to order at 9:35 A.M. by Ms. Rose-Craig. At her request, each of the attendees introduced themselves.

**II. Review of Minutes**

Ms. Rose-Craig asked the members to review the minutes from the meeting of November 15, 2019. A motion to approve the minutes was offered by Rosa Murciano, seconded by Tania Peterson-Chandler, and accepted by the Committee.

**III. In-School Youth Services Proposal Review**

Ms. Rose-Craig invited Elizabeth to speak on the In-School Youth Services Proposal process. Ms. Ajasin described the Request for Proposals (RFP) process for In-School

Youth Program Services. The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) In-School Youth program is year-round with a summer component, while the Temporary Assistance to Need Families (TANF) program is for the summer only. Both programs provide internships to youth during the summer and was scheduled to begin on July 6, 2020; youth are to earn \$13.00 hour. She referred to the fact sheets, which summarize how the program would operate and how the proposal costs are calculated for each site's coordination.

Ms. Ajasin explained that the RFP was published in January 2020, and DOOR received proposals from Roosevelt, Hempstead, and Uniondale Public Schools, and Cerebral Palsy Association of Nassau County, Inc. Around mid-March, circumstances surrounding COVID-19 were getting worse, leading to state wide school and Town office closures.

In response, DOOR published an addendum to the original RFP, asking that the youth services providers design a virtual summer internship. DOOR received responses to the addendum from Uniondale and Hempstead Publics school, Cerebral Palsy Association of Nassau County, and Five Towns Community Center. They each designed a 4-week program in which youth will attend workshops for four hours a day, five days a week. The youth are to engage in job readiness and academic training.

While the summer program is not certain this year given the circumstances, DOOR has one prepared in case there is one. Ms. Ajasin asked that all the proposals, with their addendums, be recommended for approval by the Town of Hempstead/City of Long Beach Local Workforce Development Board.

Ms. Rose-Craig asked if the students for the summer program have been identified and how much they will be paid. Myesha Arvon said that coordinators have been recruiting since last program year. The enrollment forms have been converted into fillable PDFs and are being distributed to youth and their parents. The youth will be paid \$13 per hour.

Ms. Rose-Craig asked if there have been any issues with technology, as not all youth have a computer or the internet access needed to engage in the summer internships. Ms. Arvon responded that there have been youth with this difficulty. However, Hempstead school districts works with the 1 Million Project, which distributes refurbished computers and cell phones as internet hotspots. The other youth services providers also working on gathering this equipment.

Evelyn Ortiz indicated that Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance's (OTDA) funds for the summer program is currently held up. She asked if our youth coordinates are able to provide real work experiences at this time. Ed Kenny responded that the coordinators do not yet have the capacity. Ms. Ortiz asked if they can provide work experiences remotely, and Mr. Kenny responded that we will query the coordinators; however, he suggested that in order to continue to prepare to implement the program, the

proposals should be recommended to the Board for approval, provided OTDA's guidance on work experiences.

A motion to recommend the proposals was offered by Ms. Peterson-Chandler, seconded by Ms. Murciano, and accepted by the Committee, with Sara Griffith recused.

#### **IV. COVID-19 Updates**

Ms. Rose-Craig said that since closing on March 20, 2020, DOOR worked to maintain services to job seekers during the COVID-19 pandemic and invited Elizabeth to give an update on DOOR's activities. Ms. Ajasin referred to two letters submitted to the Board and Committee that list all of DOOR's activities in making the transition to delivering online services:

- A request for job search and assistance form has been made available online, and other enrollments forms have been converted into fillable PDFs. Staff is also accessible by phone to job seekers.
- We have assisted United Way of Long Island with its United Together Program, which has helped individuals meet their basic needs. The program ended on Monday, June 1, 2020.
- Job seekers have access to virtual career development and computer skills training workshops online, including resume-building, interviewing strategies and Microsoft Word and Excel.
- Training providers are offering some of their courses online, and DOOR continues to enroll participants in occupational skills training,
- Ms. Arvon, continues to work with the Out-of-School Youth services providers, EAC Network and Nassau BOCES. Maria Lombardi, Disability Resource Coordinator, is also fully engaged in the Disability Employment Initiative project. In addition, Yvonne Morrissey supports our Opioid grant, which serves dislocated workers impacted by the opioid crisis.
- We purchased 200 subscriptions for Metrix Learning, an online learning tool. Metrix has 1000s of videos in a variety of industry tracks and career pathways, and users can earn industry-recognized credentials.
- We purchased and used Zoom to hold meetings and keep our Board, committees and partners aware of DOOR activities

Ms. Ajasin added that Mr. Kenny has been participating in discussions at the State level. He indicated that the New York State Department of Labor (NYSDOL) has biweekly conference calls. NYSDOL has been inundated in unemployment insurance work, and the focus so far has not been on workforce. Most recently, on behalf of three Long Island Local Workforce Development areas, Hempstead submitted a request for national emergency grant funding. The

State had applied and received these funds, with a plan to use it for contact tracing employment. Yet, Long Island is in great need of the funds, given the 21% cut in formula funding and an employment rate that has risen to 16%.

Commissioner Mallette appreciated DOOR staff for its hard work in making the transition to serving job seekers online.

## **V. Business Services Updates**

Ms. Rose-Craig explained that since closing, DOOR has maintained services to businesses on Long Island. Mary Drangel has been serving as interim Business Services Representative for DOOR. She explained that she has been interacting with businesses to determine their hiring needs. She reaches out to them on LinkedIn or through cold calls. She creates job orders and has them posted to NYSDOL's website for free.

Since closing, Ms. Drangel has obtained 57 job orders. She finds that most new opportunities have been in health care field, such as register nurses, home health aides and caregivers. Attentive Care has hired a couple of youth participants as home health aides, and a few youth were also hired by the Mitchel Field Commissary with a starting pay of \$17. Ms. Drangel also finds that the food industry is looking to hire banquet sales and operations managers. She is hosting a virtual event for DII Discount Store on Monday, June 8, and one for Amber Court Assisted Living on Wednesday, June 17.

Mr. Kenny took a moment to commend Ms. Drangel for all she has been doing.

## **VI. Out-School and In-School Youth Programs Report**

Ms. Rose-Craig invited Ms. Arvon to provide a summary and report of the WIOA out-of-School and In-School Youth programs.

### In-School Youth Program

Ms. Arvon indicated that in-school youth are those who are Town of Hempstead residents, between the ages of 16 and 20, are low-income, and have a barrier. This year, the school districts and agencies proposed a virtual summer program for the youth in response to the school closures. They have proposed job readiness training and academics, as well as workshops that will educate them about COVID-19. The youth will participate in a one-day orientation in which they will learn how to use CareerZone, and they will take part in a workshop on leadership and education. Ms. Arvon is also working with Nassau Library Systems for a way to collaborate. She has been receiving calls from youth about their working papers. Rachel Lugo said that EAC Network has the application available at its site. Diane Bachor added that doctors' offices are open and available for youth to get their physicals.

Ms. Rose-Craig asked if there are youth services available that address their mental wellbeing during the pandemic. Ms. Arvon answered that she has been attending webinars that address these issues and has been sharing the resources with youth.

#### Out-of-School Youth Program

DOOR contracts with EAC Network and Nassau BOCES to provide services to out-of-school youth. The providers have been conducting one-on-one virtual intake sessions, and peer “zoominars” where youth speak to other participants about their skills training courses. The youth also have access to various workshops including resume-writing, interviewing strategies and mental health. The youth are also Town of Hempstead residents, between the ages of 18 and 24, with a barrier. Youth have graduated recently from Hunter Business School’s Information Technology course and Molloy College’s Human Resources Management course. Ms. Arvon explained that youth also engage in on-the-job training and internships.

### **VII. Disability Employment Initiative (DEI) Round 8 Update**

Ms. Rose-Craig explained that in the meeting materials, committee members received a copy of the Disability Employment Initiative April 2020 monthly report, and she invited Ms. Morrissey to share some updates on Ms. Lombardi’s behalf. Ms. Morrissey referred to the report and provided the following updates:

- Ms. Lombardi has been working with several agencies on addressing problems youth with disabilities currently face, specifically regarding computers and internet access. She is connecting with several agencies to obtain computers that participants can use while learning from home. These agencies include 1 Million Project, Power My Learning, and TRAIID.
- Ms. Lombardi has been working with Elizabeth Justesen, Esq. to provide online workshops for participants who have history with the criminal justice systems or are ex-offenders. Workshop attendees learn how to re-enter the workforce and clean up their RAP sheets
- She is working to schedule staff training with the Young Adult Institute (YAI), which will provide training on supporting individual with autism and developmental disabilities at work
- Ms. Lombardi also will attend NYATEP’s Learning Lab virtual conference

Ms. Rose-Craig asked if the grant will conclude in September as scheduled, and Mr. Kenny responded that DOOR has submitted a request for an extension.

Mr. Kenny asked Antoinette Edmonston to share information about the Business Breakfast event. Ms. Edmonston responded that Career and Employment Options, Inc. (CEO) has been reaching out to business originally scheduled to attend, while

encouraging news ones as well. Mr. Kenny added that CEO is also currently working on developing career pathways schematics and marketing the concept of expanding career pathways to youth and businesses. The business breakfast was originally planned for March, but has been rescheduled to hold virtually on Wednesday, June 24. Ms. Drangel is working with CEO also to recruit more businesses to attend.

#### **VIII. Old/New Business**

Ms. Rose-Craig opened the floor for attendees to share any old or new business:

- Mr. Kenny explained the Empire State Poverty Reduction Initiative (ESPRI) grant, which is aimed to serve Village of Hempstead residents who are poor. The project was extended with \$80,000 additional funding. An intake form for the project has been added to the website.
- Ms. Rose-Craig said that ACCES-VR is currently working remotely but making plans for returning to the office. However, participants will not meet in person for some time. Also, on June 19, ACCES-VR has an event with Hofstra University and Nassau Placement Network in which they will discuss self-care and engaging business in a virtual world.

#### **IX. Adjournment**

After a motion to adjourn was made by Ms. Peterson-Chandler, seconded by Ms. Murciano, and carried by the Committee, the meeting was adjourned at 11:00 A.M.