

Greater Raritan One Stop Monthly Leadership Meeting
Minutes

Tuesday August 27, 2024
10:00AM

Attendance

Karen Araujo, Business Representative
Jazlis Perez, DVRS
Aminah Reeves, WFNJ – Supervisor
Maria Marnell, HCESC
Poo Lin, GROSCC Acting Manager
Monica Mulligan, Director Greater Raritan Career Training Services Center
Paul Grzella, Director Workforce Development Board
Jeanne Cassano, GRWDB
Fernandel Almonor, Greater Raritan One-Stop Operator

Operator Update

2024 Remaining Data Report Submission Deadlines

September 3, 2024 12pm
October 9, 2024 12pm
November 5, 2024 12pm
December 3, 2024 12pm

- WFNJ Employment Pipeline Pilot Business Outreach has launched. Outreach flier and registration form being drafted.
- Upcoming September check in meetings with CTS and ES.
- Outreaching RU MSW for interns to work with WFNJ administering client motivation assessments/reports.
- Planning to meet with One-Stop referral partners on a quarterly basis to encourage a consistent flow of customer referrals.
- Drafting a simplified flier for Home Based Childcare Provider training and support. Will send content to Paul for flier drafting.
- Tentatively scheduling Affordable Housing Brainstorm in January.

Department of Vocational Rehabilitation Services Update

- Jazlis Perez is representing DVRS at the August leadership meeting. She's leaving early at 10:45 am because of a previous work engagement.
- Counselor out on leave. Considering hiring another counselor, however, running out of space in their office. Has 2 counseling interns that will start in September. They are in a graduate program for rehabilitation counseling at Rutgers. They will be part time in the fall, full time in the spring. Head Clerk and Clerk position was advertised, and they're waiting for civil service to send resumes.
- PE Paid internship will start again in October, and they're gathering updated flyers to share with Jeanne. They'll continue to try and make connections with schools to get more referrals.

GRWDB Update

- IT working on the employer outreach flier for employment pipeline pilot, it should be done soon. It'll have a QR code on the flier that directs employers to the registration form. All completed forms are automatically forward to Fernandel (Operator) for review and follow up.
- The Summer Youth Program is wrapping up. Served 80 plus youth, getting good feedback on exit surveys. It's been a good year for the program.
- Completing all vendor contracts and awards.
- The Operations Committee approved a new state policy, all vendors using AOSOS must complete a security seminar every year. This is a requirement for AOSOS access.
- \$340K is scheduled to be awarded in ARP funding by the Somerset County Commissioners for First Steps Programming in 2025 and 2026.
- The state is getting ready to release a RFP for an adult literacy program to replace Learning Link funding which the state is ending this year.
- Additional 45 Chromebooks will be available in the next few weeks. Will be updating the lending system for customers getting Chromebooks.
- Evaluation team will meet this afternoon to review TANF Initiative RFP responses. Looking to have the contract/vendor in place in September.
- 25 organizations registered for the Oct 10th event Veterans Resource, Job and Resource Fair. Disability event registration (Oct 5th) has been slower.
- Exploring a replacement location for One-Stop Hunterdon office for next fiscal year, a new location more easily accessible to the public.

Business Services Update

- 2nd UPS recruitment event is tomorrow. The demand is high for this event.
- Hunterdon manufacturing job fair outreach is in effect. Received 2 confirmations to date.
- Waiting for the outreach flier to market pipeline employer recruitment.
- Has a meeting scheduled with the local library employer this week.
- Working with an organization that serves mothers and babies (Greater Expectations), exploring mutually beneficial partnership potential.
- Karen agreed to research local business recognition initiative. She'll follow up with Fernandel to develop a proposal. GoHunterdon does something similar, a recognition brunch.

Career Training Services Update

General Update and Successes

- The PY24 Budget was finalized with the GRWDB and has funds for the vacant Career Navigator position. We are working with HR to offer the position to one of the candidates we interviewed in June. More info to come once all is confirmed. Monica Mulligan thanked the GRWDB for making funds available to support this position.
- Funding for supportive services was included in the PY24 budget, so we are now able to assist eligible customers who need this additional financial support. Monica Mulligan thanked the GRWDB for their commitment to fund this service which supports customers who needed this additional assistance.
- Master Agreements have been secured with 37 training providers, allowing us to fund ITAs at these schools for eligible customers who need training.
- Members of the One Stop Career Training Services Center staff attended the following additional free trainings in July/August: Navigating Pregnant Workers Fairness Act (Job Accommodation Network); What's My Communication Style (HRDQ); National Apprenticeship Week (Workforce GPS) and Enhancing Skills and Support for Veterans (Workforce GPS).
- All One Stop Career Training Services Center team members are scheduled to attend the GSETA conference in October.

Challenges:

- New: We are scheduling new customers for orientation on 9/20/24. Once we have the new Career Navigator on board and trained, we can increase the number of new customers in each session.
- Carryover: AOSOS continues to have many technical issues that complicate things – NJDOL had indicated we should only be utilizing the new version but recently indicated the new version continues to have technical issues and we may need to use the old version as well. Using AOSOS continues to be a cumbersome task.
- Carryover: Increase in WFNJ referrals due to sanctions being put back into place. This has led to an increase in workload for One Stop Career Training Services Center staff.

Supports Requested:

- Continued connection with partners who interface with businesses to develop relationships that lead to employment opportunities for our customers.

Upcoming Events:

- Career Café will start back up in the fall with dates in September, October, and November.

Work First New Jersey Update

- Busy as usual with TANF and SNAP employment and training. Has 1 staff doing all SNAP support but currently out. Aminah is covering.
- The GA Supervisor position has been split from WFNJ. Aminah is overseeing the program.
- Just received a donation of 50 backpacks from Robert Wood Johnson.
- Will do prep work for TANF Initiative while waiting for RFP Vendor hire (identifying 10 participants to enroll/benefit)

Employment Services/One-Stop Office Update

- Still working through staffing challenges, but able to maintain its role as One-Stop first point of entry.
- Suggested WFNJ look into Akins Life Skills workshop.
- Collaborating with other departments on an internship program. Formulating the training, it's still in the works.
- Still busy with the RESA program.
- Currently has 3 staff out (2 on personal leave and 1 recently married).
- New ES Manager hired, starting on September 9th (Jenetta Mohamed). Poo will still be in the office, guiding and providing assistance.
- Video for RESA program is completed. Only being sent to individuals selected for RESA, will be open to the public in near future.
- GR One-Stop promotional video is in the works.

Middle Earth WIOA Youth Outreach and Work Based Learning Update

- Not in attendance.

Hunterdon County Polytech WIOA Youth Outreach Update

- Not in attendance.

Discussion Topics

Developing Customer Preference Dashboard

Business Services requested an update to the employment preference dashboard. They need additional data on entry, expert, management, or executive level.

- May need to define the distinction between entry, intermediate and expert.
- Business Services also requested tracking who has necessary certifications for preference selection.
- Must confirm that individuals that select intermediate and expert/management level have the necessary qualifications.
- Suggested creating separate spreadsheet capturing list of jobs from top 5 preference selections.
- May need to verify individuals are qualified for the entry level jobs.

Affordable Housing Brainstorm

Objective: Better understanding GR affordable housing challenges and all supportive services available. Engaging resource leaders with our customer challenges and collectively brainstorming solutions.

Operator requested panelist referrals for the brainstorm. It's tentatively scheduled in late January.

Next Meetings: Tuesday, September 24 @ 10am in 1st Floor Conference Room