

Leadership Meeting Minutes

Date: 8/26/25

Location: 27 Warren St. (County Building 1st Floor Conference Room)

Facilitator: Paul Grzella (GRWDB)

Attendance: Jeanne Cassano (GRWDB), Karen Araujo (NJDOL BS), Jeanne Page-Soncrant (NJDOL BS), Chris Peake (CTS), Debbie Voria, Barbara Stockton(NJDOL BS), Isabel Jimenez (NJDOL), Ike Onyejiaka (Middle Earth), Jeanette Muhammad (Employment Services), Paul Grzella (GRWDB), Maria Marnell (HCECSC)



1. Welcome and Introductions:

- Karen opened the meeting, introducing herself as the Business Representative for Somerset and Hunterdon Counties.
- Attendees introduced themselves, sharing their roles and affiliations with various workforce development programs, outreach teams, and business services.

2. Updates on Upcoming Events:

- **Healthcare Recruitment Event (September 25):**
 - 12 employers confirmed; 6 will conduct on-site interviews.
 - Job Seeker Registration Form released; resumes are being collected.
 - Logistics in place, including a pre-event "Lunch & Learn" for employers on September 9.
- **Disability Awareness Event (October 29):**
 - Virtual event focusing on Certified Home Health Aides (CHHAs).
 - Employers unable to attend the September event will participate.
 - Emphasis on training pathways and opportunities for job seekers.

3. Marketing and Promotion:

- Promos created using AI technology; significant cost-effectiveness noted.
- Marketing materials distributed via workforce board websites, social media, and email blasts.
- Flyers and outreach materials available at partner sites.

4. Registration and Resume Management:

- Job seekers encouraged to submit resumes for employer review before events.
- Discussion on providing resume review support to improve candidate quality.

5. Workforce Development Initiatives:

- **Title II Funding & Literacy Services:**
 - Funding reinstated; recruitment of staff underway.
 - Focus shifting towards job placement alongside educational improvements.
- **WFNJ Program:**
 - Fully funded through September 30.
 - RFP process underway for future funding.
- **Summer Youth Program:**
 - 94 youth served across 36 employers.
 - Positive feedback and plans to continue next year.

6. Business Outreach:

- Employers provided feedback highlighting transportation and resume quality as barriers.
- Strategies discussed to enhance job readiness programs.

7. Additional Updates:

- **Local Area Plan:**
 - Update due October 31 with partnership and public input opportunities.
- **Job Seeker Support:**
 - Resume workshops planned, including potential employer-led sessions.
 - Collaboration with training services for continuous improvement.

Career Training Services General Update and Successes

- Greater Raritan One Stop Career Training Services Center has been open business at our new location at 8 Bartles Corner Road since 7/21/25.
- Served 181 new customers between 7/1/25 – 7/31/25.
- Sent out information on services and events to 802 new UI filers between 7/1/24 – 7/31/25 (Lists from June and July).
- Presented 3 free job seeker workshops to 52 residents between 7/1/25 and 7/31/25.
- Partnering with Franklin Food Bank: Tabled for second time on 8/25/25.
- Partnering with Hillsborough Food Bank: Tabled for second time on 8/26/25
- Partnering with SC Human Services: Tabled at Somerset County 4-H Fair (August 6, 2025 – August 8, 2025)
- Presenting at the Senior Center in Bridgewater on 9/22/25 (collab with SC Office on Aging)
- Team members attended the following trainings in the last month:
 - 7/21/25 Motivational Interviewing for Empowering Youth (Minnesota Medical Association)
 - 7/23/25 People, Culture, and results (National organization on Disability)
 - 7/23/25 Burnout Management and Prevention (GSETA)

Challenges:

- New: Two team members out on leave for the month of August. Coverage being provided by other One Stop Career Training Services Center team members.

- Carryover: Increase in WFNJ referrals has led to an increase in workload for One Stop Career Training Services Center teams members.
- Carryover: Waiting to find out more about impacts to services that will result as a reduction in SNAP and/or TANF after 1st quarter
- Carryover: Waiting to find out about impacts of proposed Medicaid “to-work” mandates on the One Stop system.

Supports Requested:

- None

Upcoming Events:

- Open House at new Flemington location (late September – date TBD)
- Holiday Open House in Somerville (December – date TBD)
- 9/18/25 Thrive During Transition and Change (collab with GRWDB’s September recruitment event). Flyer attached.
- 9/25/25 Creating a Dynamic Job Portfolio (collab with SCLS, Watchung). Flyer in progress
- 10/2/25 Multiple Natures in (North Branch Library, Clinton). Flyer in progress
- 10/23/25 Mastering the Interview (collab with SCLS, Watchung). Flyer in progress
- 11/6/25 Business Etiquette (collab with SCLS, Watchung). Flyer in progress
- 11/20/25 Thrive During Transition and Change (North Branch Library, Clinton). Flyer in progress

8. Action Items:

- Finalize logistics for September and October events.
- Distribute event flyers widely through partner networks.
- Continue monitoring registration and resume submissions.
- Follow up on funding opportunities and program updates.

9. Adjournment:

- Meeting concluded with a reminder of upcoming events and appreciation for participant contributions.



Next Meeting: 9/23/25 10am

Facilitator: Fernandel Almonor