

Burlington County Workforce Development Board (WDB) Minutes

Friday, December 9, 2022

Attendees:

Jon Sharp (Chair) – Hardenbergh Insurance Group (VM)

Kelly West – WDB (NVM)

Carl Donato – Wawa (VM)

Rich Temple – Deborah Heart and Lung (VM)

Leslie Reis – CVS (VM)

Caren Freyer – PSE&G (VM)

Matt Maiore – Shoprite (VM)

Curtis Myers – Aspire Youth Development (VM)

Rob Wells – Burlco Bridge Commission (VM)

Dr. Michael Cioce – RCBC (VM)

Dr. Jeff Keller – Federal Bureau of Prisons (VM)

Randy Brolo – Local 172 (VM)

Shirla Simpson – Office of Human Services (VM)

Anthony Phillips – Adult Basic Education (VM)

Ashley Bennett – Radwell International (VM)

Mark Boyd – Goodwill NJ (VM)

Randy Hamilton – Smith & Solomon (VM)

Christen Martorana – The Alternative Board (VM)

Martin Nock – One-Stop Manager (NVM)

Jesus Arestirado – One-Stop Operator (VM)

Barbara Weir – WDB (NVM)

Krystine Torreto – WDB (NVM)

Michelle Carnivale – WDB (NVM)

VM= Voting Member

NVM= Non-voting Member

Call to Order [8:35AM] – Jon Sharp

The Board Chair called the WDB meeting to order at 8:35 AM.

Sunshine Law – Barbara Weir

On November 9, 2022, advance written notice was posted on the bulletin board in the foyer of the county administration building. On November 9, 2022, advance written notice was filed with the county clerk of the board. On November 9, 2022, a legal notice was published in the Burlington County Times.

Approval of Minutes – Jon Sharp

Motion to approve, Randy Hamilton / 2nd Jeff Keller – Minutes Approved

Introduction of New Members – Jon Sharp

- No New Members
- Quick introduction of members

Annual WDB Chair Year in Review – Jon Sharp

- Provided highlights of the previous year
 - Engaged by Cell had over 40,000 texts in 2021.
 - Workforce Development Mobile site is very active.
 - We rolled out a destination career program as well for youth.
 - Dr. Gal, Rutgers, came to speak about federal funding to assist people with mental health issues, enrolling in career technical education programs and employers to support that program. She also mentioned that there was a federal fund that helped support it.
 - The Board reviewed, voted, and approved 20 policies that are posted on the website.
 - Barbara Weir became a Certified Public Manager through the County. Congratulations!
 - The Business Committee added a few new members.

- Engage by Cell being used incredibly, efficiently, and effectively and LinkedIn continues to be relevant.
- Caren Freyer is the new Chairwoman for the Youth Investment Council.

Executive Director Updates – Kelly West

Introduction of new staff

- Krystine Torreto and Michelle Carnivale, are new additions to the Workforce Development Board. Both Krystine and Michelle serve as administrative assistants for WDB and the Employment and Training Division.

NJ Local Governance Status Update

- As John mentioned, the policies required by Department of Labor and Workforce Development have been finalized and added to our website.
- We are updating our website to be transparent and in compliance with the NJ Department of Labor requirements.
- We just received the template for the One-Stop Career Center Partner Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). The process will be going through the next couple of months. It has been extended until 2024 of January; it will take about a year to get it completed.
- We will also need to update our Chief Elected Official MOU which is an agreement between the Workforce Development Board and the County Board of Commissioners. While the Chief Elected Official MOU is valid until June 30, 2023, we need to make sure it follows current requirements. Waiting for the Department of Labor to apprise the local areas with the new compliance requirements.
- The draft for One-Stop Career Services RFP is complete and will be going out for bid to have the necessary services in place by July 1, 2023.
- Our One-Stop Operator contract is current and valid through June 30, 2023. However, working on a draft proposal now so a new contract will in place by July 1, 2023.
- For all services, we must be in compliance with the Policy the state provided to all local areas, in May, for some serious governance changes.

Regional & Local Planning

- The Regional Plan is due January, and the Local Plan is due March; both valid through 2026.
- Burlington County is partnering with Atlantic, Cape May, Cumberland, Salem, Gloucester, Burlington, and Camden for a Regional Collaboration and Planning Document. The South Jersey group decided to hire a consultant to write the Regional Plan. The RFP for South Jersey's Regional Plan has been out for public review and is due back on the 15th of December.
- Kelly is working on both the Regional and Local Plans simultaneously.

Annual Report – Barbara Weir

- Program Year 2021 (July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2022), the New Jersey Labor and Workforce Development, Local Area Unemployment Statistics, 2021 saw a significant increase in the Labor Force and decrease unemployment in Burlington County. We saw a significant increase in the labor force and a decrease in unemployment claims. This decrease was approximately 14,500 claimants from 2020. Our unemployment rate went from 14% to 6% in 2021. It is currently 2.4%.
- Engage by Cell doubled subscribership from Program Year 2020. Over 46,000 text messages sent to over 600 subscribers; that's roughly 75 messages issued.
- The Mobile site had over 6,500 views, with over 2,200 users using the platform.

- Over 100 Mobile pages were developed for our businesses and job seekers, with an additional 50 pages closed due to end of event.
- Constant Contact began in January 2022, we have over 1,900 unemployed claimants subscribed, with an email open rate of 63%.
- We use LinkedIn account in August 2021, and quickly grew with over 160 followers. We are currently at 190 followers.
- We have posted 140 job openings posted on the County's Job Portal: <http://www.co.burlington.nj.us/Jobs.aspx>.
- We are continuing to use airSlate/SignNow an electronic legal signature platform. It's efficient, quick, and helped decrease the usage of paper.
- The American Job Center served over 5,400 individuals seeking a new career opportunity. There were 28 referrals to the Learning Link, 139 customers to CASAS testing, and Employment Services served 776 in a variety of services. There were 882 individuals referred to Division of Vocational Rehabilitation and 722 customers interested in training.
- Metrix Learning's Popular Skill Tracks include Business Skills, Digital Literacy, and Job Search/Career Skills. For PY2021, there were 1,194 registrations, 1,438 courses completed, and 322 career pathways identified.
- Our Youth Program had the opportunity to tour the CVS Health Distribution Center in Lumberton. They were given guided tour about viable career pathways within the CVS community. Several applied to jobs and received offers.
- Follow Us on [LinkedIn](#)

Committee Chair Reports:

Business Committee Engagement – Rich Temple

- The LinkedIn page is starting to grow and Engage by Cell has grown exponentially.
- The goal for Business Engagement is to be able to connect employers to prospective employees and connect prospective employees to employers.
- There are a lot of different ways of communicating with different stakeholders that we service such as LinkedIn, County Job portals, and other new portals.
- The Business Engagement Committee right now has this wonderful diversity of people from whole walks of life within Burlington County. We have government officials who are on the front lines doing things for us. We have people who are consulting with other small businesses, we have people in the private sector and healthcare, we have all different types of people, and we collaborate well.

Youth Council – Caren Freyer

- In terms of transportation and logistics as each warehouse opens, with that come opportunities not just for CDL licenses but for transportation.
- Logistics warehouses today are state of the art. They have robotics on the interiors and that could present a great opportunity for youth of the future with certifications to operate, whether it's robotics or mechatronics.
- A retooling workforce is vitally needed as there's a high demand on construction for future construction managers, constructors, people that will work inside the fence on projects and those that might have the aptitude. Also, the complete projects, whether it be landscaper, architect assistant, and cost management.
- The biggest tragedy that we have in New Jersey is we are one of the largest exporters of our students to out of state colleges. These students are being educated out of New Jersey and

leaving the state and taking opportunities out of state. In terms of our existing population, with our universities, we're seeing more and more of students that are leaving.

- The Youth Council will host a job fair in March. Please, if you are a business, consider assisting the Council to roll this out to help our youth.

Burlington County One-Stop Committee – Jesus Arestirado

- The Workforce Development System Oversight Committee is now called One-Stop Committee.
- There are about 20 dedicated committee partners that meet to better serve our customers in Burlington County.
- Meeting held Tuesday, December 6th, discussed linking the different departments and staff to find out what is needed from one another. Have had one-on-one meetings amongst different departments to for a better understanding of what each department offers.

Adult Literacy – Anthony Phillips

- Working with Kelly and Barbara to reinstitute and bring back the Literacy Committee.
- The Burlington County Consortium meets on the 4th Wednesday of each month to discuss developments with our agencies and certain community reference to high school ESL and job training. The goal is to get the literacy committee back up and running. The Consortium discussed the possibility of integrating with the current committee. We are going to finalize the plan to be able to have meetings next year. Bring in more libraries to the table.
- If there's any individual here who would like to be part of a Literacy Committee for Burlington County, share your information with Barbara.
- Approximately 30 individuals in 2022 that have achieved their high school diplomas through HSE classes; with an additional 20 individuals currently in the process of preparing to take the HiSet to obtain their HSE.
- The HiSet exam is the current exam individuals use, but the company was sold so there will be a replacement soon.
- Recently moved from the Willingboro campus to Mt. Laurel campus. No major issues to report.

General Discussion/Questions/Announcements – General Membership

Dr. Jeff Keller, Federal Bureau of Prisons

- The Federal Bureau of Prisons hosts a Job Fair on the first Saturday of every month from 9:00 AM to 2:00 PM.
- Currently in need for people in Health Services, Custody/ COs (Corrections Officer), and Education Teachers/Specialists.
- COs are the most needed right now, starting salary about \$53,000 with levels of increases.
- There is an automatic non-compete promotion in the federal government. One can get four promotions consecutively without having to compete for the next one.

Dr. Michael Cioce, Rowan College at Burlington County

- 12th graders depart at a greater sort of clip than any other state in the country. More students are opting out and go to out of state colleges and universities.
- Burlington County Chamber is hosting a Nonprofit Opportunity Fair in January, date will be provided once it is confirmed. The Opportunity will be on the Mt. Laurel Campus, and it is open to all nonprofits.

- There has been a lot of learning loss in the K-12 sector. When asked for volunteers for the Literacy Group, please consider, because the developmental Math and developmental English data are not positive outcomes. All 26 High Schools in the county have graduated students who are not on level.
- We lead the country on Brain Drain.
- Will follow up with Caren and the Youth Council, RCBC can host the Job Fair for students in the Spring.

Rob Wells, Burlington County Bridge Commission/Economic Development

- The out-of-state schools are significantly more aggressive compared to NJ colleges and universities.
- Many out-of-state schools are offering in-state tuition, scholarship opportunities, etc.
- It has been consistent across the board that the out of state schools have been way more aggressive off the bat and even recruiting them afterwards.

Caren Freyer, PSE&G

- There are programs that develop future students, 1) to go into trade, 2) entrepreneurial, and 3) in instances where these programs with the community colleges working very closely at the high school level, students can graduate from high school with an Associate's Degree, apprenticeship under their belt, and walk out the door, possibly earning \$100,000 a year - at no cost to the student.

Kelly West

- Without foundational skills in literacy, being able to speak, communicate, read, write, and do math, one cannot progress - whether going to college or going into a career pathway or vocational trade.
- In 2007, the Literacy Committee did a deep dive into the literacy issues in Burlington County. Surprising to some, it was found Evesham and Medford had the lowest level literacy rate. Most assumed it would be Pemberton, Browns Mills, Willingboro, and Burlington City, but the biggest pocket of illiteracy was in the Marlton and Medford area.
- Teaching reading and communication skills virtually is easy, but it is very difficult to teach Math virtually. It must be a one on one or small group type setting.
- Significant need to partner with all the libraries, with community-based organizations, and faith-based organizations that are in those communities that need it.
- Digital literacy and being able to communicate and look people in the eye are additional issues.

Curtis Myers, Aspire Youth Development

- Digital skills need to be added to basic skills, because so much education is delivered remotely. If one cannot operate a computer, they are in trouble.

Ashley Bennett, Radwell International

- Due to Covid, kids have started at a young age to do schoolwork on computers. Instead of doing Reading, History, or Math on paper, students are expected to login on their computer and complete/submit work.
- It may be prove difficult when students begin work to have the basic, proper interaction with others because everything learned in school was done using the computer.

Barbara Weir

Announced the need for a Chairperson for the WDB's Disability Committee.

Jon Sharp, Hardenbergh Insurance Group

With sadness, Jon announced he is resigning his position of WDB Chair. We will be looking forward to a nomination for a new chair.

Motion to Adjourn

Motion: Jeff Keller/ 2nd Curtis Myers – Meeting Adjourned 9:32 AM

Next Meeting

March 10, 2023