

EXECUTIVE & ONE STOP OPERATIONS

April 15, 2020

Conference Call Participants

Les Vail, WDB Chair

Anthony Bellia, Marketing & Business Outreach

Ralph Bingham, GC Library System

Robert DeMarco, NJLWD

Stephen Hart, DWD

Brigitte Satchell, RCSJ

Heather Simmons, Freeholder Liaison

Glen Donelson, MASCEC

Daniele Spence, Freeholder Office

Eileen Gallo, WDB Staff

Michael Girone, WDB Vice-Chair

Tom Bianco, GC Economic Development

Lisa Cerny, GC Human & Disability Services

Katie Doyle, GC Div. Social Services

Kimberly Quigley, St. John of God

Michelle Shirey, WDB Director

Stacey Smith, DVRS

Ricky O'Hara, NJLWD

Christina Velazquez, GC Planning

Bridget DiGiambattista, WDB Staff

Les opened the call at 2:30 pm

A motion to approve January 15, 2020 meeting minutes was made by M. Girone, seconded by T. Bianco.

New Business

COVID-19

The federal government released the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) on Friday, 4/3/20. The program provides small businesses with funds to pay up to 8 weeks of payroll costs including benefits, interest on mortgages, rent, and utility bills, this is for businesses with less than 500 employees.

The State of New Jersey offered an emergency assistance grant program to provide grants up to \$5,000 to small businesses to stabilize and reduce the need for layoffs.

The Federal government released program for self-employed workers, independent contractors, gig and platform workers. Guidance was provided on applying for NJ unemployment and the federal program for same type of worker

Waiting for release of federal program called Main Street Program, which is part 2 of the big stimulus program.

Les thanked Gloucester County Board of Chosen Freeholders, Freeholder Simmons and Tom for the launch of Gloucester County is Open for business dashboard which lists businesses that are open. Visit <https://arcg.is/1mmHTX>.

Unemployment Process

Michelle reported Statewide we have over 700,000 claims, half are going through without an agent intervention the other half need to speak with representative from unemployment. Michelle stated they are processing roughly 25,000 UI claims daily and currently has a two week backlog, therefore it could take claimant 2-3 weeks to receive their check. The Commissioner of Labor announced additional UI phone lines have opened to help with calls.

Gloucester County showed week ending 4/4/20 we had 4,733 claims filed for a total of 13,725 new claims filed since 3/16/20. Breakdown of claims: 11% in food service; 15% in office/administrative; 12% in sales; & 8% in personal services.

Michelle stated the State created website which www.jobs.covid19.nj.gov, which lists 695 companies with 51,713 jobs openings.

Stephen stated since 3/18/20 to present the AJC have answered 500 UI calls.

Robert stated he has been answering UI calls while at home and most questions / concerns with claims are similar.

Open Discussion

Brigette Satchell reported RCSJ is concerned with future enrollments and are asking partners help to increase marketing to individuals to potentially return to RCSJ for education or training. The college is currently pushing out a marketing video for local television channels. She stated any suggestions/ideas would be greatly appreciated. She asked if there was any information available from the State regarding online options for determining training eligibility or tuition waiver program. Michelle S. responded with UI being a huge barrier that has been topic of discussion but will bring up on next WDB Directors call. Michelle stated we can push any info out for RCSJ, especially programs that clients are enrolled in online currently. Brigette stated while great to have classes available online, there are students that do not have resources to do online classes versus using their cell phone. The college is looking at how to potentially provide lap tops to assist them with their technology needs. Brigette stated RCSJ is also looking to see how to conduct online / zoom info sessions, open house to stay in contact with potential customers. Michelle stated they have requested from the State list of individuals that have applied for unemployment from our county. Stephen stated he has heard of issues with individuals no access to wifi in addition to not have available technology resources (computer, cell phone, tablets). Some that have no wifi access, are going to local fast food chain parking lot. Brigette S. reported RCSJ main campus parking lot has wifi access. Ralph stated county library wifi is active, will have to park close to the branch buildings. Les asked if there is list of public wifi access, Tom stated he will contact K. Farinaccio of Comcast to see if they have list of open public hot spots with wifi accessibility. Brigette reported Comcast has internet essentials program which allows for customers the option to purchase a laptop or desktop computer at a discounted prices. The website is:

<https://www.internetessentials.com/low-cost-computer>

Glen stated MASCEC their food distribution program held every Thursday in Woodbury, located at 28 Harrison St., Woodbury, is going well.

Katie reported to apply for Social Services programs for anyone that does not have access to wifi or technology resources, they will take application over the phone and will do a telephonic signature.

Freeholder Simmons thanked everyone for their compassion in caring for everyone during such a stressful time.

Michelle S. stated for our next call we should start brainstorming about things we will need once recovery process begins:

What are things we will need in recovery;

What will we need at the AJC;

Will we need UI presence at AJC;

What will lines be like at AJC;

What are things we will need to get through recovery.

The next meeting is scheduled for July 15, 2020.

A motion for adjournment was made by B. Satchell, seconded by M. Girone.

Respectfully submitted,

Bridget A. DiGiambattista