

COMMUNITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT/LITERACY/DISABILITY
July 25, 2019

Members Present

Kasmire Blazie, NJLWD
Lorrie Covolessky, Abilities Solutions
Wayne Love, Deptford Twp.
Calvin McFarland, GC Human & Disability Svcs.
Kimberly Quigley, St. John of God
Michelle Shirey, WDB Director
Karen Spieker, The Arc Gloucester
Eileen Gallo, WDB Staff

Tom Brown, MASCEC
Heather Faulkner, GC Housing Authority
Krista Lope, DVRS
Christopher McKelvey, NJLWD
Brigitte Satchell, RCSJ
Jim Sinclair, Div. Social Services
Christina Velazquez, GC Planning
Bridget DiGiambattista, WDB Staff

Members Absent

Tom Bianco, Co-Chair
Amy Busch, Mosaic Family Success Center
Dennis Cook, RCSJ
Rev. Frazier, FBO
Quincy Lee, NJLWD
Jennifer Mauro, Goodwill Industries
Scott Raynor, Elwyn NJ
Theresa Rohlfing, Center for Independent Living
Denise Taguwa, NJLWD
Michelle Yeager, Woodbury Public Library

Mark Boyd, Goodwill Industries
Jewell Hill, CBVI
Matt Ford, LiteracyNJ
Stephen Goodman, Volunteers of America
Angela Lucas, HireAbility
Crystal Noba, Ctr. for People in Transition
Gina Ridge, Ctr. for Family Services
Jeffrey Shisler, Goodwill Industries
Kristen Wilson, Ctr. for People in Transition
John Zukauskas, NewPoint Behavioral

Visitors

Derek Gatling, FBO

Frances Harwell, CBO

Michelle opened the meeting at 8:40 am.

A motion to approve May 23, 2019 meeting minutes was made by K. Quigley, seconded by K. Spieker.

A moment of silence was offered for Dr. King.

Michelle stated the committee meeting date may change due to scheduling conflict.

Status

Title II – Brigitte reported they served a total of 249 customers, 125 of them prepared for HSE, 124 were ESL students. Their funding for this year was reduced by \$16,520.00 but with supportive funding from the County, they were able to leverage resources so they did not have to lay off any employees. Due to lack of enrollment/results, they have discontinued services at St. Matthew's and will relocate currently enrolled students to the main campus. The HSE graduation was held on May 13, 2019, they highlighted a student – Joyce Clements – who had been in the program for 20 years. She started the program not knowing how to read or write and she has enrolled at RCSJ for this coming fall school year. Michelle stated we featured her story in our recent newsletter. Brigitte reported they recently merged with Cumberland County College and she will be overseeing workforce development on both campuses.

WLL – Kasmire reported since the last meeting, they had 21 new students enrolled; 15 currently attending; 4 moved on to training; 1 obtained employment; 2 referrals to RCSJ; & 6 complete.

Assessment/CASAS - Eileen stated she & Brigitte S. spoke and they would like to use CASAS for ESL at AJC. Eileen thought this may streamline referrals to RCSJ and under Title II it is ok to use CASAS for ESL.

Eileen stated she has to make sure the test monitor is trained. Michelle stated if this will streamline everything she will approve the expenditure.

Agency Updates

Abilities Solutions – Lorrie reported the youth paid summer internship has 26 students participating, 25 are funded by DVR grant & 1 is being funded by their school district and the program is going well. They have openings for their regular school year program. Work continues to be steady in the production department. The next Vetability luncheon will be August 8 at the Westville VFW.

St. John of God – Kimberly reported they hired a business specialist. Work has been steady in the fulfillment/production center. They have openings for extended employment, pre-vocational evaluations. She is waiting on the final word from DVRS for community-based work evaluations.

ACT – Brigitte reported they are currently finalizing enrollment for the upcoming school year, they anticipate having between 42-50 students. As a result of the recent merger, they are looking to expand the ACT program into Cumberland County in the fall of 2020. The program will be on a smaller scale focusing on workforce work readiness component.

Ex-Offenders-Re-Entry

MASCEC – Tom reported they have 6 Gloucester County inmates participating in their program at the Salem Correctional facility, 5 females & 1 male. The females are getting preparing to take ServeSafe Manager Certification test. The instructor recently received a note from a former female inmate who is currently working at a Shop Rite and is utilizing what she learned from the ServeSafe program. The next food distribution will be this afternoon and added at the food distribution held 2 weeks ago they had 170 individuals show up which was this largest number so far.

Re-Entry Coalition - Eileen explained that she belongs to SJ Community Re-Entry Coalition, and she recently attended a meeting and learned the some of the libraries in the State (Gloucester County did not) receive part of a \$625,000 grant to hire case managers and a project manager to help “returning citizens,” since they find that ex-offenders hang out at libraries to look for work. Pathstone has received funding to help adjudicated (court-involved) youth 18-24 years old with education and other needs. There is another Re-Entry simulation to be held at Rowan University this fall. The Cumberland County Prosecutor’s office has put together a “Public Awareness Program” to help families and returning citizens find information to help them find employment and other services. GSETA has talked about creating a navigator for ex-offenders and will ask the State for funding. Chris reported under the State they are trying to get a re-entry specialist in each of the AJCs. After speaking with different agencies/departments over the years, the issue they are finding is there are many silos, therefore, they have been offering cross-training to the agencies/departments to help with client flow. Eileen reported the issue has been with pre-release, it will be easier if the inmates can have various services offered while incarcerated, not just following the inmates’ release. Chris stated the inmates can now start the SNAP process while incarcerated but the effective date will be the date they are released. Another issue is getting the inmates to participate. Calvin reported the Commissioner of Dept. of Human Services has put forth a 60-day rule notice change on emergency assistance and how to make it easier for clients to move through the system of filing for assistance.

New Business

Michelle reported we have had a good response from employers to participate in the Disability Employment Job Fair being held tomorrow. She asked for volunteers to attend & help with the job seekers as it is a good experience to help someone through what could be a difficult experience. At last Full WDB Membership, we had a brainstorming session and one topic that came out of the session was the need to do more in-depth community outreach. She asked those present for suggestions on what types of outreach we can do within the communities, churches, etc. Michelle stated if we are aware of events ahead of time, we can schedule to attend in advance throughout the

year. At the next Full WDB Membership conference in September, our brainstorming will be specifically on activities, prioritize, then starting planning.

Eileen would like to compile an inventory of adult literacy services within the county. Michelle suggested while at a community service events to survey non-clients of what are they seeing as their needs thus allowing feedback directly from them. We have also upgraded Constant Contact to include a survey, so if we can capture email addresses we can forward information. Kim suggested having information available at municipal community day/national night out. Michelle stated the County sets up a booth at these events, she will ask permission to have a case manager attend to personally explain our services. Pastor Gatling stated their church offers a senior nutrition site and they can relay info to relatives/friends he also suggested attending a picnic they have every year with about 600 people attend. Fran stated they schedule agencies to visit, not only on Sunday, where they have offered a disability awareness day where various agencies attend with information; a County Senior Services rep has attended to offer info to the senior citizens; various financial institutions, etc. Michelle has asked everyone to email Bridget any community days or events they know of, and if scheduling allows we can schedule to have a staff person attend. Michelle mentioned a project for this committee will be for planning for 2019/2020 to gather information on any community days or event and email the dates to Bridget and if scheduling allows we can schedule to have a staff person attend. Heather stated when she has info flyers, she contacts the schools for teachers to send flyers home with the students. Brigitte suggested designing a faith-based initiative to gather input and have them be part of a committee so we can determine what their needs are, what services they provide since they are in touch with more people on any given day. Fran suggested having each school districts' Superintendent approve any information flyers, this guarantees the flyers must be given out to the students. Michelle asked for a volunteer from the committee to attend the Full WDB Membership conference on Sept. 11 and share some of the ideas discussed today on community outreach - Brigitte Satchell & Pastor Gatling volunteered.

GC Housing - Heather announced applications for the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program will be open for registrations and handed out applications. The GC Housing Authority and Glassboro Housing Authority will be taking the applications by mail or on-line. She stated applying online will be faster than mailing in applications. Heather reported when individuals register throughout the year, they get a lot of Social Services clients and they register for other programs which does not include the Section 8 program because it is closed, so unless someone checks their status they will not know they are not registered for Section 8 because most do not read the material. Michelle asked Jim to take the applications and make sure to distribute to the case managers so they can share with clients, we will do same on our site for clients in WFNJ and are now in employment services. Gloucester County Social Services TRA program has a 2 year time limit. The TRA clients register for public Housing and never apply for the S8 Housing Choice Voucher program once the waiting list opens.

GC Human & Disability Svcs. – Calvin reported the 2019 Point in Time Survey Results are in review and results will soon be available. The NJ Dept. of Children & Families is in process of finalizing its needs assessment process and Gloucester County will be one of the first of 7 counties doing the process and expect to be completed in spring of 2020.

A motion for adjournment was made by W. Love, seconded by L. Covolesky.

The next meeting will be held on September 26, 2019.

Respectfully submitted,

Bridget A. DiGiambattista, WDB Staff