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## **Future Workforce Services Committee**

### **February 4, 2010**

**Attendees:** James Stanley, Chair; Jason Stanley, Vice Chair; D. Anwar Al-Ghani, Eileen Peltier, Gerry Berthiaume, Hector Rivera (for Bob Rath), John Shemo, Paulette Fox and Carlos Figueroa

**Staff:** Alex Johnson, Jim Boucher, Sandy Rodriguez, Julie Geyer, Tom Phillips and Vivian Rivera

#### **I. Call to Order**

Vice Chair Jason Howey called the meeting to order at 8:05 a.m.

#### **II. Consent Item:**

##### **a. Approval of Minutes**

A motion was made to approve the minutes from December 15, 2009. Gerry Berthiaume asked for clarification on page #3 of the minutes, adding that we need to be more clear on which youths we are targeting from within our summer youth employment recruitment and outreach. Other members agreed that the eligibility requirements need to be more clearly defined. There is also concern of students who are failing and still qualify for services. Staff clarified that those are the students who need to be captured and targeted.

Jim Boucher gave a recap of the minutes and a final report on the Summer Youth Employment Learning Program and added that this report is being submitted to the Board. The report talks about the overall need that youth have for employment experiences and the positive experiences and process youth went through to achieve work readiness gains during the past year. We need to continue to improve this system and look at it as a program rich in youth development, with special consideration for each competency. It was also explained that further background recommendations were delineated as further clarification that the committee's recommendations were seriously acted upon and that staff is actively following through on this.

*A motion was made to accept the minutes; motion was carried.*

#### **III. Presentation:**

##### **a. Advocacy: Status and Review**

Lessons Learned/Question: The ongoing uncertainty of funding from Federal, State and Local Municipalities for youth employment funding for summer and year-round continues to make it very difficult to plan and implement career competency development strategies; how should CWP best develop advocacy strategies in this environment?

Jim gave an update on the "Best Practice" on advocacy. Jim clarified that CWP is not certain that there will be any funding for the summer. CWP current funds are being challenged. The U.S. Congress passed a jobs bill that is currently pending action by the Senate. It was further stated that we probably would find out in March which makes it yet another challenge.

It was reported that on February 24, 2010 that CWP was joining a statewide effort to address "Connecticut's Future Workforce and the Crisis in Youth Employment" at the Legislative Office Building. The presentation will include information on results from last year's State Youth Employment and Learning Program, information from state legislative leaders on protecting the state's investment in youth and testimonies from businesses and youth.

It was reported that CWP is also involved in an effort to develop a subsidized employment proposal for SYELP through TANF emergency fund of \$5 billion. There has to be a leverage of the funds and the state of Connecticut has not used the money as of yet. There are opportunities out there that we can look at. Other states have developed proposals that contain funding for subsidized employment programming similar to SYELP Tier III (ie.: worksites) funding. The concern is the start up time and the usage of a communication strategy. There is considerable support from legislation. This is a matter of getting the necessary information to handle this in a timely manner and needs to be part of the advocacy. We need to deliver rapid and consistent communication. This is necessary as a youth strategy and needs to be organized to relay the message effectively.

To pursue these funds CWP is participating in the Governors TANF ECF Task Force, where our CEO, Tom Phillips is involved. This taskforce is responsible for submitting the application for funding that would include SYELP. There are also eligibility requirements which requires maximizing of state youth employment funds and worksite supervision to enable this proposal to work. One member asked about what legislators should be approached on this matter, and Jim Boucher updated the Committee on what legislators were being contacted.

D. Anwar Al-Ghani commented on how our past numbers of summer youth employment participants were higher than the present years' numbers and how this might continue to decline given financial limitations. We need to have a long term strategy of being systematic and increase the percentages. If not, 2011-2012 will have no funding available. We need to look at a different approach to get this funding. Paulette Fox added that we need to educate the legislators from the smaller towns on this investment.

Alex agreed on the need to figure out a better way of strategizing and we need to be comfortable with the committee on this matter to present to the Board. Currently, SYELP is "on hold" until this matter is sorted. Jim stated that we are reaching out to the top 20-30 legislators and need to do the following moving forward:

- Have a rapid communication of the SYELP present status to key legislators and policy makers
- Develop a strong SYELP proposal for state and federal policy makers
- Engage the CWP Board on key issues

#### IV. Action Item:

##### a. Possible SYELP Program Continuation Process

###### i. See ATTACHMENT A

Jim Boucher presented the committee feedback and recommendations summary of considerations for program improvement (gathered from the last committee meeting) that will be presented to the Board on February 25, 2010. We are looking at a continuation of existing contracts as opposed to releasing an RFQ process. Chair James Stanley asked about the restrictions and Alex Johnson stated that we are on hold due to the uncertainty of the federal dollars, but we are optimistic that something will change. The requirements are very rigorous but we can insure compliance.

The committee agreed to present the recommendations on Attachment A to the Board.

#### V. Update Items:

##### a. ATTACHMENT B: Year-Round Funding Update

Jim gave a summary on the Year-Round Youth Employment Program Recommendations to the committee. CQWP is recommending funding an additional three organizations to the six existing ones. Within the RFPs there's recognition of prior performance and funding decisions of timely data on these agencies. 25% of the total score for the RFPs was based on past performance. We will have a renewal process that will drive the decisions in the future. We want to have the ability to have this discussion and are acknowledging the issues that are being uncovered.

James entertained a motion to approve the recommendation of funding the three additional organizations. Gerry moved the motion and D. Anwar second it. Motion was carried.

##### b. ATTACHMENT C: WIA Program Update (not attached – handout at meeting)

Further discussion on the North Central WIA Outcomes overview would occur in the future to assure appropriate coordination of oversights on WIA contracts. **D. Anwar Al-Ghani requested for Attachment "C" to be added on the next agenda.**

##### c. ATTACHMENT D: Update on Follow Up from SYELP 2009 Report Feedback

Jim Boucher went over the committee feedback and recommendations for the Final Summer Youth Employment Report. Included in this report are the suggestions of this committee. Alex Johnson will be getting more relevant data on this input for the next meeting.

#### VI. Other:

##### a. Schedule of Meetings (2010)

Vivian will get in touch with the committee chairs to schedule the next three meetings. We will look into late March for the next meeting.

#### VII. Next Meeting/Adjournment

*Next meeting to be announced.*