



NEMO WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

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**NEMO Workforce Development Board (WDB)
Access Committee Meeting
June 25, 2018**

Members Present

Amy Bowen
Cynthia Johns
Pat Poepping
Janice Robinson
Lisa Randolph
Shannon Moore

Guests

Bryan Trappe
Janet Hickey
Mark Forster
Sherry Nelson
Belinda Ames
Allysia Long
Erica Davis

WDB Staff

Diane Simbro
Sharon Hillard

Members Absent

Amanda Rose
Janis Miller
Ann McCauley
Lydia McClellan
Sheryl Ferguson
Lyndon Bode

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER

Chairperson Amy Bowen called the June 25, 2018 Access Committee Meeting to order at approximately 1:00 p.m. at the Hannibal Job Center in Hannibal, MO.

ROLL CALL

Everyone was welcomed to the meeting. Roll call was taken and a signature sheet was signed by those attending. Six committee members were present, and a quorum was established. A total of 15 individuals attended.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Pat Poepping moved to approve the agenda. Janice Robinson seconded the motion, and the motion was approved.

CHAIRPERSON REPORT

Amy said the goal of the meeting was for the partners to share any new information they may have. She said since the March meeting, Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) had met with the Job Centers to discuss NEMO Workforce Development Board is an equal opportunity employer/program. Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities. All voice telephone numbers on this document may be reached by persons using TTY/TDD equipment via the Missouri Relay Service at 711.



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that VR was currently under an *Order of Selection*. VR was still taking referrals and working with people but they were only serving the most significantly disabled individuals immediately. Others individuals would be placed on a waiting list and may also be referred to the Job Centers for resources. When a name rolled off the waiting list, the next individual would move up. She asked everyone to continue to send individuals they felt would be a good referrals to VR, and said the referral process with the Job Centers was working well. A request had been made to add some additional information to the referral. That had been approved and they would be updating the letter. She defined the most significantly disabled as individuals who had at least three life areas impacted by the limitations of their disability. Documentation regarding their diagnosis and how their condition causes them to have significant difficulty in getting or keeping employment was also required.

Janet said the Warrenton Job Center had been taking referrals and working with VR clients. Amy said VR Counselor Rebeca Hill covered Lincoln County and she would be forwarding a couple of letters to the Warrenton Job Center. The Kirksville Job Center had received a couple referrals and the referral process was going well there too. If anyone had any questions, Amy asked that they give her a call.

WDB DIRECTOR REPORT

Diane spoke about the possibility of partnering with an agency to host a disability event sometime this year and asked if anyone had any events planned. Cyndi said the WDB may be able to partner with the Disability Awareness Day planned for Kirksville in October. She would also mention the possibility of partnering with the WDB at the Adair County Senate Bill 40 (SB40) meeting June 26. The Lincoln County SB40 Board was gearing up for their Youth Leadership Academy. It will complement the work experience program that Learning Opportunity does with VR and will focus on Career Planning. They will work on professional profiles and 10 second commercials. They want individuals to leave with some practice. She said she would see if there was something the WDB could connect with during that process.

Diane said the WDB's Youth Council (YC) spoke with Melissa Layman about the possibility of youth applying for the Summer Jobs League (SJL) Program after completing the Youth Leadership Program. Amy said an email regarding the possibility had been distributed in their agency and she would forward the email to Cyndi. Cyndi said Learning Opportunity had already begun their 6-week work experience program. The youth would complete their work experience about mid-July so they had scheduled the Youth Leadership Academy for July 12th and 13th at two locations. Diane said the WDB would send Cyndi the SJL flyers and contact information. She noted that this year's SJL program will include youth ages 14-24 (younger youth must have a work permit). Cyndi said she would start spreading the word about the Disability Awareness event to get people thinking. Cyndi said March was Disabled Mental Awareness month and could be another opportunity for partnering. Diane said it was great to have all of our partners involved and she thought we could plan some events that would be beneficial to everyone.

Diane said USDOL would be auditing the Northeast Region WDB the week of August 13. The WDB received a 15-page document of things they would be reviewing. She hoped the WDB would receive a more detailed itinerary of their plans for location(s) visits. She didn't know if they would interview any of the partners but she wanted them to be aware.

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STATEWIDE RESOURCE GUIDE UPDATE

Diane presented a report from Shelia Jurgesmeyer a member of the State Resource Guide Team. She said the Team had met its deadline and all partners had contributed data to the system. They performed a soft launch and the system was working. All of the contributions still needed to be merged. There were some areas that could be improved and some areas had more records to add, but they ran out of time. Therefore, the official launch date had been moved back so each administrator had the opportunity to do one last check of their data. They had until July 11 to make any updates. Then they would back up the data and get it out to everyone. When completed, Diane thought a notice would be sent to all the partners that the resource guide was available for use. The agencies had to be categorized and because a lot of the agencies do multiple things and it was difficult. She said this was the State Resource Guide and was for the partners to use as a referral source. The Johego app was for everyone including clients to use. She would send the Johego flyer out to the committee. Diane said the WDB would be happy to distribute information to the Committee for anyone who had an event they would like to share. The information should be sent to Diane or Sharon. Cyndi said she would forward the Youth Leadership flyers to be distributed.

ROUNDTABLE-INFORMATION ABOUT AGENCIES

Janice said NECAC had energy assistance funds available for their cooling season. Individuals could be assisted with a maximum of \$300 (electric bills only) if they had a disconnect notice. The program started June 1st and would run through September 30. They were 52% spent. The money was going fast and would probably be expended by the middle of July. Due to the high temperatures, she felt there may be another pot of funds offered. The winter program would begin in November, and would have an \$800 maximum.

Diane said it was mentioned at the Employer Engagement meeting last week that NECAC has partnered with the Department of Corrections to build "tiny houses". Janice said this was a long-time dream of the agency. Several years ago one of their workers visited a correctional facility in Montana where they built what they called governor's houses and she felt this was something they should do. The correctional facility in Greenville, IL was interested but they were going to have a difficult time transporting individuals across the rivers. Iowa was also very interested. They met with the correctional facility in Bowling Green who was interested and the project is going to happen. This will be done through NECAC's housing development. They already have union carpenters lined up to train the workers and they will be certified when they get out. She said there was a tiny house located in Canton by the City Hall if anyone would like to go see it. Diane said a group was partnering with the re-entry program in Louisiana to do this as well. She said Jim Kolve, Dana Keller, Chad Egan and her were meeting with the Department of Corrections (DOC) next Friday to discuss partnering to provide truck driving training in Bowling Green and Moberly.

Shannon, with the MACC AEL Program, said they were at the end of their fiscal year and this was the last week of classes at all of their sites. They would start back up the week of August 13. New student orientations will be August 13th and 14th from 5-9:00 at the Douglas Community Services Building. MACC wasn't going to be able to continue their classes at the Hannibal Job Center. They will still have services in Hannibal at the Douglas Community Services Building in the evenings Monday, Tuesday and

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Wednesday from 5:30 to 8:30. They will start the week of August 20. If a need for day classes was discovered, they would consider it. She said MACC had the Heavy Highway Construction Certification program at Hannibal. Four individuals started the program this time and two successfully completed. One of the individuals is currently employed and the other is actively seeking employment.

Shannon said, although they were no longer in the Job Center, they wanted to continue the relationship. She said that there may be a way to incorporate a presentation from the Job Center regarding services into their AEL class time and welcomed anyone that wanted to speak to the students about their services to contact them. Individuals could contact Kalon Smith at 573-470-6462.

Cyndi said Learning Opportunities' work experience programs were going well. They had youth in Canton, Hannibal, Shelbina, Macon and Kirksville. The kids get four days of hands-on, paid work experience, some partnership with VR, and one day of classroom where they work on their soft skills. The youth are paid five days a week. The age range was somewhere around 16-20. Cyndi said they had hired new service coordinators that will cover Ralls, Monroe, Macon and Knox Counties.

Sherry Nelson from the MO University Extension, said she works with the SkillUP program and is now located in Shelbyville. They are going to have a couple of meetings to explain the SkillUP program. The program provides individuals receiving SNAP career training, soft skills training and some supplies. Sherry said they were currently out of funding for the training portion but they were still offering the soft skills. A SkillUP meeting will be held at the Shelbyville Extension office June 27 from 1:00-3:00. Another meeting will be held July 17 at probation and parole. If the general public was unable to attend at that location, they would be willing to do another event at a different location in the area. Diane said the WDB would be getting some SkillUP funding as well and could partner to serve individuals.

Belinda said the Kirksville Job Center was hoping to have a job fair featuring the retail and hospitality business sectors August 28th at the Days Inn. Approximately 25 surveys were sent to the Kirksville businesses to see if they would be interested in attending. Approximately five had responded so far. She plans to send out a reminder to those that hadn't responded. Belinda said the employers must have active job orders in order to participate and that shouldn't be a problem for most of them. Diane asked that the flyer for the event be sent to the WDB when it was developed. The WDB would then forward the information to the group.

Lisa Randolph said her agency was similar to VR and they are helping those that are visually impaired find employment in the St. Louis area.

PRESENTATION

Allysia Long MERS/Goodwill Region 2 Missouri Work Assistance (MWA) Program Director, provided a program presentation. She said MERS/Goodwill was the subcontractor for the MWA services in Region 2 which consisted of four offices located in Hannibal, Troy, Moberly and Kirksville. MWA provides case management services for individuals receiving Temporary Assistance with a goal of helping them become more self-sustained. Individuals who qualify for Temporary Assistance are mandated by the state to participate in a Welfare to Work Program and are required to report to their counties' MWA service provider. When an individual is referred to the MWA provider, a case manager conducts an initial

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assessment to determine their barriers to employment. The two biggest barriers are childcare and transportation.

She explained that prior to August 15, 2015, clients who didn't participate in the program and were sanctioned only lost 25% of their benefits and were able to live off the remaining 75%. However in August 2015, Senate Bill 24 made the sanction more punitive. This was good because it makes individuals more accountable to program participation. Individuals still have a choice of whether or not to participate, but if they don't participate, they won't receive their full benefit. For the first six weeks they would be in conciliation and would receive 100% of benefits but would be required to meet 30 hours a week to avoid jeopardizing 100% of their benefit. If they aren't participating after six weeks, they become sanctioned and will have 16 weeks to participate and are required to do 4 consecutive weeks of 30 hours per week which is 120 hours per month in order for their benefit to be reinstated. Otherwise they will lose 50% of the full family benefit. She said single mothers with a child under age 6 are required to meet with them 20 hours per week. If the youngest child is over the age of 6, they are required to meet 30 hours per week.

Allysia said MWA also provides case management services to two-parent households. If they have a child under the age of 6, they are required to meet 35 hours per week; 55 hours per week if the youngest child is over the age of 6. For their work requirement, they have to participate in job readiness which may include a paid or unpaid work experience. For unpaid work experiences, they collaborate with local employers that are willing to allow clients to work as volunteers. Time spent volunteering is used towards their required program hours. MWA will reimburse individuals for mileage and work related expenses. In paid work experiences, MWA pays the individuals wages and provides the workers comp. Individuals are assigned to work 8-12 weeks for a particular employer depending on the skills they need to develop. They are paid minimum wage and reimbursed an amount for their transportation and work related expenses. After an individual has participated for a period of time in the work experience, they will meet with the employer to discuss the possibility of full-time employment. Life coaches are also available to work with clients to help them overcome barriers. Attending AEL classes can also qualify as a required activity. MWA must report when clients become employed to the state. If an individual's total household income exceeds the federal poverty guidelines, their benefit may be jeopardized or they may receive a two-thirds disregard which would increase their chance to continue receiving Temporary Assistance (TA).

Allysia said Senate Bill 24 also lowered the lifetime limitation individuals could receive TA from 5 years to 45 months. Their goal is to get individuals to participate so they can receive their benefit while they gain skills applicable to employment. If clients have a transportation barrier they arrange to meet with them to do their initial assessment at a convenient location. All clients are provided monthly contacts by either correspondence, a phone call or a home visit. The average monthly maximum benefit is \$234 and it's very difficult for a client to provide all their needs on that income. So they work with their partner agencies to try to help clients find employers as quickly as possible. There are working to inform everyone that MERS is a MWA provider and to inform clients that if they don't participate in the program, their benefit will be jeopardized. They hope to help clients before they reach the point of sanction.

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Clients that are no longer eligible and have a closed case, are referred back to them for TEB (Transitional Employment Benefits) and receive \$50 per month for 6 months while they are working. MWA will work with clients throughout their transition and supportive services may also be provided. They can also assist with utility bills through WRE funding and provide budgeting information. They hope to help clients understand that earning \$7.85 per hour is better than \$234 a month, and that it's better to stay on the job to enhance and develop their additional skills. She said if agency partners were working with clients that were receiving SNAP they were probably also receiving TA and should be participating in the Welfare to Work Program.

Diane said it was vital that we work even harder to get individuals into a career pathway so they could someday earn a self-sustaining wage and stay off program assistance. She said it's hard for people to transition from assistance because they become overwhelmed when they are responsible for all of their needs. It's difficult for them to look into the future, and they sometimes feel they were better able to survive on assistance. Alyssa said she thought it takes a community to help a client to succeed.

It was asked if MERS/Goodwill had a youth program. Allysia said yes but it was provided through another part of the agency. She was unsure of the counties it was offered, and said she would email contact information to Diane to share.

OTHER BUSINESS

Pat thanked everyone for allowing him to serve on the Committee. He said he thought the Committee was very productive and doing a great job. He thanked the members for their service.

SET NEXT MEETING DATE / TIME AND LOCATION

The next meeting was scheduled for 1:00 p.m. Tuesday, September 25, 2018. Diane will speak with Kirksville and Warrenton staff to decide if the web conferencing option will be offered. If web conferencing is an option, the meeting will be held at the Hannibal Job Center in Hannibal, Missouri.

ADJOURN

Pat Poepping moved that the meeting be adjourned. Shannon Moore seconded the motion, and the meeting adjourned at approximately 2:25 p.m.

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