

# Executive Committee Minutes for October 28, 2004

Attendees:            Steve Adler                    Joe Doney                    Mark Remsa  
                             Dr. Walt Rudder                Bob Santare                 Kelly West  
                             Barbara Weir

**I.     Call to Order 8:13 AM**

**II.    Overview and Tour of the Business Resource Center**

Kelly gave the members a tour of the new Business Resource Center, which recently opened to the public. One office will be utilized by a County employee, who has not yet been hired. The County employee will oversee and monitor the Business Resource Center. There are three fully outfitted offices that can be utilized by employers to conduct interviews or research. One of the three offices contains a conference table in the event that the business customer has a need for larger accommodations. The front desk counter will be utilized by a State representative. There are six bookcases that line the window sills and will contain employer resources. Opposite the bookcases are computers for employers to utilize with potential employees. Although the Business Resource Center is open to employers at the present time it is only being utilized to conduct positive recruitment. Jo Lombardi, the positive recruitment specialist with the One-Stop has been working with employers such as, Perry, Inc., Jiffy Lube and Shop Rite Markets. These employers have been able to utilize the space and interview numerous candidates for job openings. It has been reported that several customers that have been interviewed have been hired on the spot. The feedback from the employers has been extremely positive. The employers like the professional, clean, quiet atmosphere of the Business Resource Center and feel that they have been able to interview qualified candidates more effectively than if they were to come into the office.

Kelly reported that the Business Resource Center is initially open from 8:00 Am to 5 Pm, Monday through Friday. However non-traditional hours in the evening and on the weekend are preferable for optimum use.

### III. **Updating on Consolidation Planning Process**

Kelly reported that the initial planning process for consolidation is basically finished. Since the document will need continual updating the plan will be in a perpetual state of revision. Burlington has already begun the implementation phases. On a scale from 1-10, Burlington is at an 8; the rest of the State is at a 2. So in essence, Burlington is farther along than the other counties. There are a few minor glitches, but nothing that can't be resolved. Kelly reported that a couple of agencies are just having trouble with customer flow now that it is in writing on procedure. Kelly is currently working with Pauline Glenn, Board of Social Services, to co-locate staff, which will make customer flow easier. Burlington is currently looking at increasing participation rate.

### IV. **Committee Updates**

- a) **Welfare to Work:** Steve reported that it has been quiet since the Job Fair that was held in June. He did report that there has been an increase in TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families) cases. Caseloads are up 50% from the low point; about 1,100 cases. Granted this is still lower than three years ago, when the case load dropped as low as 700. The reasoning for the percentage increase is due to the fact we were at such a low number and the increase occurred rapidly. Kelly reported that there was a report that was generated that ranked Burlington 3<sup>rd</sup> for growing TANF cases. The other two counties lie north. TANF cases usually increase during the holiday months of November and December, and taper off in January and February. The Committee will be taking a closer look at the intricacies to see just how many a recidivists and so forth. The Committee continues to follow the implementation of the consolidation plan.
- b) **One-Stop:** Joe reported that the Committee directly oversees the implementation of the consolidation process and meets monthly to discuss consolidation issues. The Committee has broken up into eight "teams": Employer Relations, Operations, Customer Tracking, Customer Flow, Assessment, and Intensive just to name a few. These teams meet regularly so that there is a lot of communication flowing between partners. Joe also reported that there are on-going Unification Meetings that occur twice per month. The Unification Meetings are essentially cross-training meetings for front line staff and supervisors. Joe reported that since the consolidation implementation has gone well, the One-Stop Committee will resume working on the One-Stop

Chartering Process. The State Employment and Training Commission (SETC) will be holding their annual One-Stop Conference in December (14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup>) at the Trump Plaza Casino Hotel. It is expected that Chartering Process updates will be given at this time, among other very important information.

- c) **Literacy:** Mark reported that he spoke with Bill Stewart in the Freeholder's Office regarding looking into a Sole Source Provider Contract in order to "award" funds to the Literacy Volunteers of Burlington County without having to put out a Request for Proposal. The Literacy Committee "awarded" funds to Literacy Volunteers of Burlington County in the sum of \$7,000 last year to help offset costs for mailings. Due to significant budget cuts, the Literacy Volunteers of Burlington County is seeking funds in the amount of about \$20,000. This group is the only agency that provides in-depth life/basic skills to individuals with the lowest level of comprehension (below 5<sup>th</sup> grade). The Workplace Learning Link refers customers who have tested at these low levels to Literacy Volunteers in order to bring the levels up. Under the Public Contracting Law, any agency looking to give funds exceeding \$17,000 must be put out to bid (Request for Proposals). However, because Literacy Volunteers is the only candidate, the Committee is looking at Sole Source Provider Contract. Mark is waiting to hear back from Bill and then the Committee will proceed.
- d) **Youth:** Barbara reported that a Request for Proposal was issued in January due to the current contract expiring. After a long and overdue process, the contract was awarded to the Board of Social Services, who is the lead agency among several partners, such as Goodwill, BCIT, BCC, Capable Adolescent Mothers (CAM), etc....The Board of Social Services has been the lead agency of the Youth Opportunity Program (YOP) since its inception back in 2000. Barbara reported that the YOP currently has over 600 youth enrolled in the program. Over 400 of which, have been "exited" successfully, but are still receiving follow-up services. Barbara also reported that there are approximately 40 youth dropouts, of whom have received job readiness and life skills training. All are employed and have received GED tutoring, which helped because all have received their GED. Putting the dropouts into employment first works because most youth come to the realization that in order to move further they need to have a diploma or GED. Employers are key players in making this a realization. Barbara reported that

the Youth Opportunity Program continues to provide youth with services considered “out-of the box”. For instance, the YOP just held a Youth Summit, which focused on Health and Safety issues. Barbara reported that today, the Committee on Women is sponsoring Reaching for the Stars, an event that showcases powerful women in powerful jobs.

Coming up in December, several of the youth who are also participants in Capable Adolescent Mothers (CAM) program will attend a baby shower event that promotes healthy and happy babies and mothers, as well as issues such as drinking and smoking cessation and caring for baby.

\*\*\***Retraction:** CAM was not scheduled to attend Reaching for the Stars Event; just the Baby Shower event.

**V. Operations/Marketing –WIB Newsletter**

Kelly reported that there is a need to revisit these committees simply to get the word out on events, updates and/or new programs such as the Business Resource Center. The WIB has primarily been maintaining these marketing tools; however there is absolutely no time for the staff to keep devoting their time due to significant and constant changes. It would be beneficial to actually have a group to work on these issues. Bob will be attending training and will pilfer materials that we can use as guides.

**VI. Next Full WIB Meeting**

The next Full WIB meeting will be held in January on the fourth or last Thursday of the month. Reminders will be mailed.

**VII. New Business**

Save the Date: State Employment and Training is having their annual One-Stop Conference on December 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> at the Trump Plaza, Atlantic City.

Topics such as:

Adult Education	Career Counseling
Youth Programs	TANF Participation Rates
Business Partnerships	Grant Writing
Faith-Based Initiatives	Apprenticeships
One-Stop Technology	Disability Initiatives
Online Learning	Equity Issues
Skill Demand	Career Clusters
National Reporting System	Labor Market Information

If you would like more information please contact the WIB Office.

**Meeting adjourned at 9:20 AM**

**NO meeting in November.**