

# YOUTH ADVISORY COMMITTEE MINUTES

March 18, 2009

## I. Call to Order

### Present:

Frank Blowers  
Peter Keating  
Chuck Shields

### Absent:

Paul Reiz  
Kathy Sasinowski  
Mike Kramer  
Debbie Bouts

### Others Present:

John Bierbusse  
Linda McLatcher

Mr. Keating called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m.

## II. Approval of June 18, 2009 Minutes

**FRANK BLOWERS MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF JUNE 18, 2008 AS PRESENTED; SUPPORT BY CHUCK SHIELDS. MOTION CARRIED.**

## III. Recommendation to Approve Youth Contract

### a. Youth Aging out of Foster Care

A need to assist youth aging out of foster care was discussed during past meetings and to this end, staff released a request for proposal to contract with organizations to provide services to this population. The first RFP was released six months ago with no response. Another RFP was released this winter resulting in four responses. Two of the responders, the *Blue Water Center for Independent Living* and *Leaps & Bounds*, have current year-round contracts and since both are willing to serve this population, staff recommended that eligible students be served through those contracts.

*L'Anse Creuse Public Schools* submitted a proposal but staff did not recommend as the service provider has not proven their ability to identify and enroll enough students in their current contract to justify a new contract.

Therefore, staff advised negotiating with *Communities in Schools of Detroit*, a new service provider for this board. They currently operate programs in Detroit for at-risk students and appear to be successful. The organization has a site in Mt. Clemens.

Ms. McLatcher noted that the Department of Human Services (DHS) continues to work with this population on a reduced level as long as they remain in school. She reported further on a law suit against the department to provide more services to these young people. As a result of the law suit, youth 14 years of age or older in the foster care system in Michigan must be referred for WIA services. While many are served through WIA in-school youth programs, there remains a need to address those who are aging out of the system.

After review and discussions, **FRANK BLOWERS MOVED TO NEGOTIATE WITH COMMUNITIES IN SCHOOLS OF DETROIT AND TO FORWARD TO THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS FOR FINAL APPROVAL; SUPPORT BY CHUCK SHIELDS. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

## IV. Summer Youth Employment Program

### a. Release of Request for Proposal

### b. Summer Youth Planning

Through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (referred to as the economic stimulus package) the board will be receiving a massive increase of funds to operate a summer youth program for economically disadvantaged young people ages 14 through 24. There is \$1.25 billion available nationwide; the State of Michigan expects \$76 million; the local allocation is expected to be approximately \$5.4 million. These funds are available over the next two summers (2009 - 2010); however, the US Department of Labor strongly encourages spending as many of the dollars as possible this year. Mr. Bierbusse noted that other MWAs will have a higher challenge since new staff has entered the arena over the past decade. It is our advantage that a number of staff are familiar with a program of this magnitude from past experience as similar programs were operated through the previous CETA and JTPA programs.

However, there is concern about a late start-up. In the past, temporary summer staff were hired by February in order to begin the process of identifying work sites, recruiting eligible youth and completing documentation. A posting for youth facilitators has been placed on the Talent Bank and 150 resumes have been received for 20 positions. Facilitators will be assigned a specific geographic area to perform their job functions.

A Request for Proposal was sent to school superintendents in both counties along with both community colleges to solicit summer programs. A bidders' conference was held March 16<sup>th</sup> with only five schools represented. Former L'Anse Creuse superintendent, John Armstrong, contacted staff and agreed to visit various school personnel to provide information and assistance in developing programs with meaningful work experience including educational components to benefit the community at large. A second bidders' conference will be held next week.

Participants will earn the current minimum wage of \$7.40 per hour. Approximately 120 older youth will be offered job coach positions (supervisory) and be paid at a higher wage. There is concern that some public institutions may have laid off staff and youth cannot be used as replacements. If there is a collective bargaining agreement, union concurrence must be obtained.

Identification of eligible economically disadvantaged participants is assisted through the free lunch programs in local schools, through the community colleges, and through our local Michigan Works centers where traffic has tripled in the centers.

Members will be updated as the program commences.

#### **VI. Other Business**

Ms. McLatcher advised that requests for proposals are due in early April requiring another committee meeting April 15.

#### **VII. Adjournment**

**CHUCK SHIELDS MOVED TO ADJOURN; SUPPORT BY FRANK BLOWERS. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.** The meeting adjourned at 9:00 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Laura Carne  
Recording Secretary