

Youth Council/Forum

Roanoke Higher Education Center, Roanoke, VA
Thursday, February 14, 2008

Minutes

I. Call to Order

Board Chair **Paul Paradzinski** called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

II. Roll Call

Sherry Dean called the roll. Members present:

Paul Paradzinski, Craig County
Jennifer Unroe, 4-H Youth Development
Michele Wells, VA Department of Rehabilitative Services
Wanda Anthony, Goodwill Industries of the Valleys Youth Program
Kim Moore, Disability Program Navigator
Harriet Woodward, Alleghany/Covington Department of Social Services
Laura Elliott, Junior Achievement
Cindy Goldstein, Roanoke City Schools
Barbara Humphreys, Franklin County Schools

Members absent:

Bill Zimmerman, Diversion Program
Ron Jones, TAP This Valley Works
Jodylee Edsall, Roanoke County Schools
Marion Vaughn-Howard, Roanoke City Department of Parks and Recreation Youth Services Division
Earl Dodrill, Dabney S. Lancaster Community College

Staff present:

Doloris Vest, president
Sherry Dean, accountant/office administrator

Visitors present:

Tom Deane, Department of Juvenile Justice
Christine Huggins, Job Corp

A quorum was present.

III. Approval of Consent Agenda

Ms. Woodward moved to accept the consent agenda (Minutes from the January 8, 2008 meeting). **Ms. Goldstein** seconded. The motion was passed on a voice vote.

IV. Reports

A. **Youth Programs:** **Ms. Anthony** reported the following:

1. **Program Performance:** As of the end of January, there are 56 younger youth (Alleghany County 5, Franklin County 29, Roanoke County 2, Covington City 7, Roanoke City 13, Botetourt County 0, Salem City 0, Craig County 0) and 18 older youth (Alleghany County 0,

Franklin County 0, Roanoke County 4, Covington City 2, Roanoke City 11, Botetourt County 1, Salem City 0, Craig County 0) enrolled with a plan of 47 and 19, respectively. Ninety-one skill goals have been obtained and twelve diplomas earned by older youth. Additional new older youth participants continue to be difficult to locate. Meetings have been set with Botetourt County and Roanoke City schools, Northside High School and the Salem Baptist Children's Home to promote youth programs. Craig County has been approached about youth programs but a contact with interest has not been established. **Ms. Vest** will speak to TAP representative Danna Dudding on possible Craig County contact.

2. **Youth Coordinator:** Ms. Anthony's new job title is Youth Coordinator and she will be responsible for reaching out into the communities of Martinsville, Roanoke City, Craig County, Franklin County, Botetourt County and Harrisonburg to attract youth into Goodwill's youth programs. Ms. Anthony will perform eligibility determination on potential clients before sending clients to a case manager and she will be searching for employers to provide work site experience for youth. Additionally, Case Manager Megan Hess in Salem will no longer be handling adult program participants but only younger youth and some older youth. Ms. Hess will be covering eight high schools.
3. **Franklin County Career Council:** On Friday, February 8, 2008, Franklin County formed a Career Council which agreed to meet the second Friday of each month. Organizations joining were Franklin County High School, Burnt Chimney Elementary School, Chamber of Commerce, EHS Mental, Patrick Henry Community College, Virginia Western Community College, Adult Education, Department of Social Services, Department of Rehabilitative Services, and Foster Care. Before summer of 2008, the career council set three goals to achieve:
 - a. creating a reality store in Franklin County
 - b. career fair at Burnt Chimney Elementary
 - c. job/career fair at Franklin County High School

Additionally, the career council has an interest in curtailing truancy by working with businesses to create a "truancy watch" during school hours whereby school age youth would be warned of truancy via a notice posted at places of business. Ms. Vest encouraged the career council to obtain business members also.

B. WDB Board Update: Ms. Vest reported on the following:

1. **Funding Cuts:** As part of a federal omnibus funding bill, the federal government has rescinded, from all states, \$250 million of unspent PY06 Workforce Investment Act (WIA) grant funds. Virginia's share of the rescission is \$4.7 million. If PY06 funding has been spent, the bill requires the funds to be taken from the PY08 allocation. It is estimated Area III could lose between \$65,000 and \$100,000 of funding from the PY08 allocation. A ten percent reduction was expected but this rescission could push the reduction amount up to twenty percent. If funding is taken from the current years funding, programs will have to be shut down.
2. **Transition Forum:** Only two students have signed up to attend the state transition forum to be held in March at the Hotel Roanoke. **Ms. Goldstein** noted that since other educational organizations have sponsored forty students from Roanoke City Schools they do not have a need for further participation. Additionally, many parents and schools do not want students out of the classroom for the amount of time the forum takes. Ms. Vest noted that Alleghany County schools did not see the forum as being beneficial. Ms. Vest informed Ms. Anthony that incentive grant funding can be used to cover the cost, that would have come from regular WIA funding, for the four Franklin County youth that were selected to attend the forum. Ms. Anthony will send information to Ms. Vest so Goodwill can be reimbursed for these students' forum expense.
3. **Youth Build Program:** TAP has received a three-year grant to operate a program where youth participate in building houses, thus learning skills and providing employment. Program eligibility requirements are quite broad as follows:
 - child of incarcerated parent

- previously incarcerated child
- age 16 to 24 and currently or previously in foster care
- working on GED or enrolled in community college

The five-day-a-week program pays participants \$6.15 per hour tax free for 25 hours of work. There are some income and residency guidelines. A certain number of participants must be from Roanoke City. If starting the program at age 24, a participant may be in program for one year. Individuals may be dual enrolled in WIA and the youth build program. Contact Mr. Joe Nelson with TAP, at Roanoke Higher Education Center, if interested.

4. **Request For Proposal:** The Request for Proposal (RFP) has been released. The RFPs are due back on February 29, 2008. This RFP has bundled the workforce center operations with all programs but includes an option to sub-contract out operations if needed. The youth council will review the youth portion of the RFP, at the March meeting, and make recommendations to the RFP committee on their findings.
5. **PY06 Incentive Grant:** Based on performance, for the PY06 program year, Area III has been given the opportunity to apply for incentive grant funds for that year. The maximum grant award will be for \$10,000 and the board has applied for that amount. A portion of the funding, if awarded, will be used to enhance youth participation in the one-stop system. A promotions campaign consisting of open houses at the centers, media promotions and training for center staff on handling youth issues have been included in the incentive funding budget plan. Support letters for the funding will be taken until February 15, 2008.
6. **Workforce Center Relocation:** Crossroads Mall is still being looked at, by the state, as a possible site location for the Roanoke center. The center planning team is focusing on the process of organizing the creation of a new center instead of the facility location at this point in time. The planning team is specifically looking at how different groups need to be handled (i.e. businesses, individuals, and youth) in a center. Advice received, from the new Charlottesville center, was to plan the process first and what is needed.

V. Unfinished Business

- A. New Members:** The youth council needs business members to be represented. Please let Ms. Vest know of any members, from the business community, that would be a good fit to the council. Ms. Vest can speak to these individuals about the council and board and provide nomination forms to start the process. **Mr. Deane** and **Ms. Huggins** were invited to join the council.
- B. Youth and the Workforce Center:** Mr. Paradzinski noted the youth council was interested in working more closely with the Virginia Employment Commission (VEC) and that was the reason for having **Mr. Johannessen** as a guest at the meeting. Mr. Paradzinski stressed the council's desire to see the Roanoke Workforce Center become more youth oriented in order for more youth to take advantage of the resources offered by the VEC and the partners located in the workforce center. Mr. Johannessen noted that getting youth into the centers has been a traditional problem made more difficult by transportation issues and youth not knowing what is available at the centers or understanding what is available at the centers. With all partners not in the center on a full-time basis, it is harder to get youth connected to programs and youth are not likely to make appointments. There is little marketing to youth or the public, in general, and the VEC has moved to offering more services on-line; youth are viewed more as on-line users. The VEC currently offers two websites that contain a lot of information for youth. Virginia Workforce Connect (www.vawc.virginia.gov) and www.vaemploy.com contains information such as what jobs pay, labor market information, who are the largest employers, and metropolitan statistical area information. Additionally, with new software in place, Virginia Workforce Connect, users can file unemployment claims on-line, prepare a web-based application, store up to ten different resumes and send out their resumes to employers or allow employers to view their resume. The VEC is currently going through a downsizing process and has less staff than in the past.

Ms. Elliott noted that youth do not know what qualifications to report when applying for a job and that youth need to have people to work with them to learn how to answer the questions required by the website. Youth need either classes or personal contact to learn how to answer job application questions. Ms. Vest noted the job readiness class currently taught, by human resource professionals, at the workforce center, twice a month teaches resume writing and it could be adjusted to be taught to youth.

Ms. Anthony reported that many youth do not have computers at home; Goodwill participants are taken to the workforce center and taught about the job board and other areas that could be beneficial to their job/career search. Ms. Anthony also expressed her acceptance of the job readiness class idea for youth.

Ms. Goldstein noted that students she has taken to the workforce center do not feel comfortable as she does not feel comfortable in the atmosphere displayed by the facility. Ms. Goldstein feels social skills are being lost without linking youth to actual people, in the center, that they can communicate with directly on job searches. Ms. Goldstein envisions a center that greets visitors with a smile, inquires to the goals of their visit and explains how their needs can be met at the center. As disadvantaged youth try to reach out, they are experiencing another form of rejection by not receiving the friendliness that could break through the barrier they put between themselves and society. Ms. Vest noted that someone such as Mr. Harry White, at the center, who is very personable, may not have an issue dealing with youth but that older individuals may be intimidated by younger people.

Mr. Johannessen noted he does not have the staff to allocate to individualized youth instruction but noted possibly other center-experienced youth could be used to educate youth coming into the center. **Ms. Wells** noted this would be more of a peer-to-peer program to which Ms. Vest noted could be a WIA person. Ms. Wells believes the first order of business should be to address the issue of those coming into the center feeling intimidated. Ms. Vest noted the center staff could receive training on working with youth and Mr. Johannessen agreed the VEC staff would be receptive to this training.

Ms. Huggins advised that, since the center staff seems strained, possibly partners could take turns being present to help young people with their questions. Everyone agreed this would be a start to getting youth more accepting of the workforce center. Ms. Vest will work on a schedule, with partners, to cover center once a month. This also ties into the resource sharing that will be required at the new center.

Mr. Paradzinski sees the need for the youth council and VEC to work as a team and requested of Mr. Johannessen that a VEC person join the youth council.

Ms. Vest also requested of Mr. Johannessen that she attend the VEC Wednesday morning staff meeting where she could speak about the youth council and its efforts.

VI. New Business

- A. **TAP Job Fair:** The TAP job fair will be held April 1, 2008. Youth council members will be needed to staff the booth for the morning hours. Council members need to decide if they would like to present a different theme or stick with the "dress for success" theme. Ms. Anthony and Mr. Paradzinski agreed to staff the job fair during the morning hours.

VII. Announcements

The next meeting will be held March 13, 2008, 9 a.m., at the Roanoke Higher Education Center.

VIII. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 10:30 a.m.

Doloris E Vest

Doloris Vest, president

Date