

Youth Council Meeting Minutes (Zoom) 3/23/2023

Attendees:

LM Larry McLean (Chair)
VN Vicki Niederhofer
KK Ken Keeney
TVW Tammy Vaughn-Walker

Staff:

BB Brenda Boggs
SB Sandy Billhartz
LR Lee Reese
SC-S Sandy Calderon-Solis

LM called the meeting to order at 9:00 A.M. With no public comment on the agenda, LM asked for a motion to approve the January 26, 2023, meeting minutes. KK made the motion was seconded by TVW. The minutes were unanimously approved.

Provider updates – LR said that SWIC is not on the call and that updates for IGD could be done later in the meeting. LM asked Lee to discuss the transition from MERS Goodwill to in-house youth program. LR stated that Malina Layne was no longer an employee, and that SC-S was the only youth Career Specialist and was doing an outstanding job. LR said SC-S had 17 youth on her caseload with 14-15 more being processed. LR said that there are interviews underway to bring on more staff. BB said there is still a lot of work to be done and gave an overview of the challenges faced and the amount of work necessary to service youth.

PERFORMANCE – IWDS Performance Management, Year-To-Date Manager’s Report. BB went over the numbers. Q2 AND 4 - Youth Employment Rate (YER2/4) and Youth Measurable Skills Gain (YMSG) are currently in fail status, which is typical for this time of year. BB discussed exits of MERS youth due to no contact and a request by the state to exit them. LR sent the IWDS Performance out after the meeting.

VN asked BB if there are any plans on how to serve youth moving forward. BB replied that there is a management staff meeting weekly in which plans are made. BB discussed the effects of being short on staff. BB talked about how the remaining staff has stepped up and given extra effort to address the needs. LM asked if the feel of being overwhelmed came from the MERS caseload. BB said it is a combination of many things. BB said not having enough staff was the main reason. LR discussed that there are several large projects with the potential to enroll large numbers of youth and the amount of time and effort that those projects will take. LR discussed a recent visit by Director Rahnee Patrick of Vocational Rehab and the places she toured and how impressed she was with our youth program’s success at employment.

VN discussed how well the youth program has done with Paid Work Experience (PWE). BB talked about a PWE at O’Fallon High School’s coffee shop.

The interest regarding PWE, by employer partners, is growing in welcomed ways:

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|------------------------|------------------|
| ☉ Gateway Grizzlies | ☉ Bennie’s Pizza |
| ☉ Equus | ☉ Auffenberg |
| ☉ O’Fallon Library | ☉ SWIC |
| ☉ Saddleback Chocolate | ☉ HSHS |
| ☉ PC’s 4 People | ☉ JJKC |

LR discussed some of the things coming to East St. Louis.

LR discussed the Youth Needing Additional Assistance Policy. After discussion, VN made a motion to approve that was seconded by KK. The motion was approved unanimously.

LM adjourned the meeting at 9:28 am.

Acronym: SCC – Saint Clair County