

DRAFT MINUTES
CAREERSOURCE PALM BEACH COUNTY
YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULT OUTREACH COMMITTEE MEETING
Wednesday, September 18, 2024

I. CALL MEETING TO ORDER, WELCOME: Alyssa Freeman welcomed attendees and called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. A quorum was present with committee members Alyssa Freeman, Ike Powell, Dr. Genifer Johnson, Dr. Barbara Gerlock, Chief Greg Starling, Dave Talley attending, and Dr. Mel Coleman, Jennifer Pollack Percival and Jay Boggess absent. Guests: Michele Vermiglio, Academy for Nursing and Health Occupations and Shirlon D. St Amour, Palm Beach County Public Safety Department.

II. AGENDA APPROVAL

a. **Proposed Amendments & Approval of Agenda:** Alyssa Freeman asked if there were any proposed amendments to the agenda. Hearing none, she called for a motion to approve the agenda.

Motion: Dr. Barbara Gerlock

Second: Ike Powell

The motion passed unanimously.

III. PUBLIC COMMENTS: There were none.

IV. ITEMS FOR APPROVAL

a. **Approval of Minutes from April 4, 2024:** Alyssa Freeman asked the committee to review the minutes and, after their review, to suggest any corrections. Ike Powell proposed a few edits to the Palm Beach County's Birth to 22 section, which will be incorporated into the final version. With the committee approving these edits, Alyssa Freeman called for a motion to approve the minutes as amended.

Motion: Dr. Barbara Gerlock

Second: Ike Powell

The motion passed unanimously.

V. INFORMATIONAL

a. **Young Adult Program Update (Sandra Wright):** The meeting began with a presentation by Sandra Wright, who provided updates on WIOA Youth Indicators of Performance. These include the percentage of participants employed or in education/training activities during the second and fourth quarters after exiting the program, as well as median wages during the second quarter. Other measures are the credential attainment rate, which tracks the percentage of participants who obtain a post-secondary credential or diploma during or within a year after participation, and measurable skills gain, which refers to documented progress toward a credential or employment, such as earning a diploma or increasing an educational function level through testing.

Sandra Wright then outlined the performance goals for the previous year, compared to the current year's performance through the third quarter. Although fourth-quarter results are pending, they reported that all goals are being met or exceeded. Specifically, the team is required to meet 90% of each goal, which they are currently achieving, including measurable skills gain at 73-74%. Last year, they fell short on this metric due to serving more in-school youth, but improvements were made by implementing pre- and post-assessments.

The conversation shifted to the median wage rate, with a slight dip compared to previous performance. Sandra Wright clarified that this decline is typically due to participants working part-time rather than full-time, which reduces the average earnings per quarter rather than reflecting a drop in actual wages.

Sandra Wright addressed the different barriers, (low income, did not graduate high school, disabled, language barriers, basic skills deficient, pregnant or parenting, homeless or foster youth). Dr. Barbara Gerlock asked about breaking down language and basic skills deficiencies by specific categories such as in-school, out-of-school, foster care, and homelessness which Steven Gustafson agreed to provide.

The conversation moved to current initiatives and challenges related to workforce development and youth reentry programs, particularly for those involved in the Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ). A key focus was on improving transitional services for youth, especially those coming from DJJ, by establishing more comprehensive collaborations with local organizations like CareerSource. Chief Greg Starling highlighted the need for a liaison to assist with this transition, a role previously held by a staff member who had left. There was a commitment from the team to find a replacement for this role, emphasizing the importance of continued support for young people who are preparing to re-enter society, specifically those aged 17 and older.

b. **Success Stories (Sandra Wright):** Sandra Wright highlighted specific success stories from the Summer Youth Employment Program, which had helped young individuals like Aliana Bien Aime and Joshua Cole find internships and employment opportunities. Aliana, a first-generation graduate, balanced family responsibilities and part-time employment while attending Florida Atlantic University, she is pursuing a career in the medical field. Joshua, a student at Palm Beach State College, gained valuable experience in graphic design during his internship. Additionally, Frandley Fertil, an immigrant from Haiti, was another success story. Despite facing many challenges, including being separated from his family at the U.S.-Mexico border, he completed an internship and secured full-time employment at Glades Initiatives and delivers meals to the elderly from Meals on Wheels, while also becoming trilingual in Creole, Spanish, and English.

The success stories showcased the transformative power of these programs, with participants noting the importance of meeting youth "where they are" to overcome language and cultural barriers. The success of these initiatives underscored the need for sustained collaboration between community organizations, educational institutions, and government agencies to ensure long-term support for youth, particularly those with more significant barriers to employment or education.

c. **Palm Beach County's Birth to 22: Opportunity Youth Action Team Updates (Ike Powell):** On July 29th, 2024, the Birth to 22 Opportunity Youth Action Team convened 10 organizations to discuss potential gaps in services for Opportunity Youth for those youth and young adults ages 13 to 22. Opportunity Youth, sometimes referred to as disconnected youth, are between the ages of 16 and 24 and are neither in school nor working. Many of these youth have disabilities, are unsheltered, or involved with the juvenile justice or dependency systems. Additionally, would like to include a CareerSource Palm Beach County representative in this initiative, Sandra Wright agreed to assign a staff member to the committee. We are currently looking to engage a consultant to assist with developing an action plan. The Birth to 22 Annual Task Force meeting is tentatively scheduled for December 5, 2024. More information to come.

VI. OPEN DISCUSSION: Alyssa Freeman shared opportunities for youth engagement, such as upcoming high school career fairs organized by Junior Achievement and the Palm Beach International Boat Show's grant program, which provides funding for marine-related programs. There was also a discussion about hosting another meeting before April 17th, with January being proposed as a good time to reconvene and evaluate progress.

In summary, the meeting emphasized the importance of collaboration between DJJ, CareerSource, and other local organizations to ensure that youth, particularly those in challenging situations, have the support they need for successful transitions back into their communities. Additional meetings will be scheduled to continue ongoing discussions focused on enhancing partnerships and establishing clear, measurable goals for the future.

VII. ADJOURNMENT: Alyssa Freeman asked if there was any further discussion or questions. Hearing none, the meeting was adjourned at 9:50 a.m. The next meeting was scheduled for April 17, 2025. Dr. Barbara Gerlock suggested scheduling a meeting in January, and the committee agreed. The next meeting is now scheduled for Thursday, January 16, 2025, at 9:00 am.