

# MINUTES

## **Advocacy & Abilities Committee Meeting**

**April 10, 2018**

Attendees: Beth Marmolejos Chair, Duwan Bogert Executive Director, Cynthia Miller, Priscilla Wade, Marcia McNeel, Sandy LaCorte, Kathleen Mauer, Samia Haridi

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### **Welcome and Introductions**

Beth Marmolejos, Chair called the meeting to order at 9:37 a.m.

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### **Minutes**

Minutes were reviewed and accepted.

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Beth introduced the new Workforce Development Board Executive Director Duwan Bogert.

Beth explained the purpose of the meeting today is to make sure the committee is prepared for the Dare to Dream Conference/Awards Recognition to tie up any loose ends and make sure we are all on the same page.

### **Dare to Dream Updates**

Beth asked for all hands on deck for the Dare to Dream Conference because it is one of the biggest and most important events which host over 300 high school students that are transitioning to adulthood and going to be the target audience to get students employment.

Beth noted the conference is hosted by the state in different counties and the committee felt the need to bring the conference to Passaic County and we worked with Dr. Chris Irving and William Paterson University to host and include the Passaic County schools. Beth noted we are at the capacity of 300 schools who registered which is empowering to be a part of.

Beth noted last year the committee used the Dare to Dream forum to present our recognition awards which was hosted separately in the past. The committee will use the Dare to Dream forum again this year for the award recognition. The awards will be presented to an employer who hire individuals with a disability, an employee who is able to keep the job and doing a good job, a provider which last year two of the committee members received that award. This year Rosemary Petrizzo who retired and put in many years will receive the provider award.

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Beth apprised the committee the Dare to Dream will be hosted on Tuesday, May 22, 2018 and asked Kathy to please contact Rosemary to make sure she will be available to accept the award and because the committee wants to honor her and let her know she is appreciated for all of her work and dedication.

### **Sponsorship/Donations**

Beth asked Bob Haugh from the Education Department at the state level if the committee could invite employers to come and setup tables to distribute information or help sponsor the Dare to Dream. Bob was in agreement and on board. Beth noted this is where we need the help of Samia. The committee can send a flyer to Samia to distribute to help in finding employers who may want to offer internships, scholarships of \$100, \$250, \$500 dollars or any other assistance. Duwan asked the committee to forward a Dare to Dream flyer to the Chamber of Commerce so the flyer can be distributed to their contacts as well.

Beth noted she has connected with Lourdes Cortez from North Jersey Federal Credit Union for back packs and there is an application the committee can send out to the employers who may want to nominate an employee to receive a certificate. Kathleen noted the Department of Labor will also have internships through a grant available soon and will inform the committee. Samia noted she will be willing to distribute the flyer and make some telephone calls.

Beth noted she will donate a \$100 dollars towards a scholarship and there is a need for cookies because this year there is no funding for the program and ask if we can identify businesses such as supermarkets. Samia noted she will be willing to distribute the flyer and make some telephone calls.

Priscilla Wade noted the Shoprite in Passaic hire many young people and noticed one of the employees is blind and bags the groceries. Duwan noted he is acquainted with the manager and will first find out if WDB can ask for donations if yes then he will contact Shoprite. Committee suggested to contact bakeries, Duncan Donuts, Panera Bread and the main headquarter Way to Dough.

Beth noted as per the last meeting she contacted UPS so the committee could have a presentation or training on Disability Etiquette and possibly join the committee in giving scholarships. UPS is interested in meeting

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with the committee. Beth asked if Duwan Executive Director of WDB, Sandy LaCorte Vice Chair and Samia will accompany her when meeting with UPS located in Mahwah on Friday after 2:00 around 4:00pm.

Beth also asked the committee to forward all resource materials to Cynthia for copies and Cynthia and Ruth will compile resource information for the Dare to Dream for the WDB/Advocacy & Abilities Committee table and the containers to hold information and table cloth will be borrowed from One-Stop/DVRS.

Duwan apprise the committee the WDB will be bringing on a policy coordinator and can help Samia compile a list of employers in Passaic County and also partner with Deborah Hoffman. Duwan noted he will set up a meeting.

Kathy Mauer noted the committee could talk to Passaic County Community College who have a culinary department to see if they would donate the cookies. Duwan noted he will contact Mike Powell and inform him what we are doing and report back to the committee.

Committee suggested William Paterson University and Passaic County Community College have a table to distribute information on their services for the disabled individual. The committee will also have a presence at the Job Fair coming up on April 19, 2018 to distribute the applications and the flyers for the Dare to Dream. Beth noted the committee can give a certificate to all employers that participates.

#### **New Business**

##### **Participation of Conferences**

Beth asked Duwan Executive Director if there is a budget the committee could utilize to attend conferences such as the New Jersey For Autism Conference which is hosted every year in Atlantic City because it would be good to have a representation from our Advocacy & Abilities Committee. Duwan requested any information in reference to any conferences to please forward to him and he can bring the request to the Human Services meeting.

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#### **Wrap-Up**

**The meeting was adjourned at 10:40 a.m.**

The Schedule for the next meeting: June 5, 2018

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