

Finger Lakes Workforce Investment Board, Inc.
VETERANS OUTREACH MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, June 9, 2022
Via Zoom

ATTENDANCE:

Members: Jeremy Marshall, Chris Caughey, Phil Rouin, Heman Sweet, Julia Murphy
Staff: Mike Woloson, Dréa Badger

I. Introductions/Approval of the April 14, 2022, Minutes

Meeting called to order at 3:03pm

Motion to approve the minutes: Phil Rouin; Seconded by Heman Sweet

II. Career Center COVID-19 Update

Ms. Murphy states that Geneva DOL opened the doors on 5/4/22 for walk-ins; slow start but hopefully foot traffic will increase. People now have options, which is great.

Mr. Caughey had an employer walk in recently as well.

Ms. Badger asked if it has stayed steady, increased in flow, or changed since the doors have been open to walk-ins.

Ms. Murphy stated that there are busier days but also slower days. Consistent with other state leased sites based on traffic.

All are open now, and traffic in general is down.

Mr. Woloson stated he has been around different career centers around the region and there is very little in-person traffic, so this has been typical consistent around region.

III. Fort Drum Outreach

Mr. Marshall did not go – he sent others from the office so that the new employee at Ontario County could see what it is all about. Not well attended due to restrictions from COVID still in affect; sign up for time slots for Vets. Career Fair is heavy in law enforcement, has education, healthcare, construction, and sales positions. Good feedback from those that attended.

Ms. Badger mentioned that Zack Brooks from GW Lisk was not able to attend the meeting today but did mention at the last meeting that he planned on attending.

ACTION ITEM: Ms. Badger reach out for feedback from Mr. Brooks if GW Lisk attended the Outreach.

Mr. Sweet asked if he was able to attend a For Fr4um Outreach session. Mr. Marshall provided information about the contact at Fort Drum to discuss getting a table, or Mr. Marshall offered to have people ride up with him on the next date of Outreach.

IV. Other Business/Roundtable

Ms. Badger mentioned that the Veteran Outreach Center in Rochester was awarded a \$1.5million grant from the DOL and asked if there were ways of partnering with the VOC through county Veteran Service Agencies and wanted to know more clarification on the differences between the VSA, VOC and how each entity provides services to veterans.

Mr. Marshall stated that each entity is multi-faceted, however Veteran Service Agencies are centered around benefits and are employed through each county specifically and are much more regulated by the state. The VOC is a non-profit (one of the oldest veteran non-profits in the country) and does a lot more of the ancillary stuff: Shelter, food and clothes pantry, education center, benefit guys from the state that show up. They do more to remove barriers to success – working with OASYS and training centers (security guards).

Mr. Woloson stated that the VOC used to do a huge job fair in the past, but likely have no done one since COVID.

Mr. Caughey provided information that the VOC can serve those that have been dishonorably discharged; Mr. Marshall said that the VSA's can also serve that population. VA benefits are not available for those that are dishonorably discharged.

Mr. Caughey said that veteran's they serve must have active duty. Those that have not served active duty would likely go to the VOC.

Mr. Marshall provided that the VOC has a pot of money that could help with safety net items: behind on heating, electricity, etc.

Mr. Woloson stated that Todd Baxter used to be the Executive Director previously. Now it is Laura Stradley is the Executive Director now – she used to be the Director at the Monroe County Veteran Service Agency and now oversees the VOC.

Mr. Rouin said that the VOC had a large computer lab and would provide certifications/training for veterans that upskill for job placement – direct link for job skills to step into employment.

Mr. Marshall mentioned that they do also help with resume and cover letter writing.

Ms. Badger inquired whether the VOC and VSA's can work together or what can happen since the FL counties are listed as service area. Mr. Marshall has had conversations with the VOC to improve crossover within the Finger Lakes region.

Ms. Badger offered to help, if needed, to see how we can work through and crossover to help veterans in the VOC full area listed on their website.

Mr. Rouin stated that the SCION/Wired program with Mr. Marshall. In his office, they have vacancies and did have an admin clerk as part of the A4TD program and that funding was cut so he does not have an Admin in his office. County won't bring in a clerk, so anyone that has ideas or grants that could help. He knows there was an option for a work study program.

Mr. Marshall followed that up with information on the PFC Dwyer program based on a veteran who did not make a successful transition from military to civilian life; this program is to get more services out for transitioning veterans, specifically with peer-to-peer mentoring. Take those who have gone through and successfully transitioned and match them up with veterans who are just starting to transition. Ontario County is meeting with the Office of Mental Health to come up with a plan to utilize the funds. Mr. Marshall also provided work-study program. He has done this through FLCC, but the Department of Veterans Affairs allows hours for work-study specific to veterans for 20 hours per week at minimum wage.

Mr. Woloson provided information that the summer youth employment program may be a resource through Yates County workforce.

Mr. Caughey stated that veteran's unemployment is at 2.9%. Found resources saying that veterans tend to be underemployed and wants to be able to provide additional services for those veterans. A success story: veteran in distress and homeless in Seneca County and was referred to Michelle who helped with his needs and is now working. Also mentioned that Unions are all looking for people and very interested in veterans.

Ms. Badger mentioned that the youth program can help in the summer as well as year-round and if anyone wants more information, she is happy to provide that.

August 11th is the date for the next Veteran Outreach Committee however both Ms. Badger and Mr. Woloson will be out of the office. Mr. Marshall suggested we reschedule for the week after the original meeting date.

Mr. Marshall stated that the next meeting will be closer to Veterans Day. Committee members should start thinking about what direction the committee wants to take moving forward; what projects or initiatives we want to focus on, specific to helping veterans in our region.

Mr. Rouin asked for a link with Keuka College.

ACTION ITEM: Ms. Badger will provide Mr. Rouin with a connection to Keuka College.

V. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 3:31pm.

The next meeting will be held on Thursday, August 18m, 2022 at 3pm.

This is the week after the original meeting date. If there are not enough attendees a Doodle Poll will be sent out

Respectfully Submitted,
Lynn Freid
Executive Director