

**MassHire Central Region Workforce Board  
Youth Council  
February 8, 2024 2:30 pm  
TEAMS Meeting ID: 243 189 160 987; Passcode: FVMXD5  
Join by phone: 1-469-998-7682**

**Members Present:** Robin Hooper, Isidore Nosike, Quincy Lester (proxy for Rebecca Brownstein), Kristine Mayotte, Amber Polisher, Kate Pesa, Oscar Oliveira Soens, Kimberly Samia, Jenna Wills.

**Guest:** Melissa Hidalgo

**Staff Present:** Ed Gagne

### Meeting Minutes

**Welcome & Introductions:** The meeting was called to order at 2:34 p.m.

**Approval of the October 12, 2023 Minutes:** The meeting minutes were unanimously approved by a motion from Isidore Nosike.

#### **Presentation**

**Safe Homes** – Oscar Oliveira Soens, Program Director, highlighted the Safe Homes themes and outreach initiatives that provide a safe and supportive space for LGBTQIA+ that is nurturing and empowering. The agency offers a drop-in center for ages 14-23, speakers and trainings, leadership opportunities, peer support, food pantry, transgender clothing closet, confidential one-on-one counseling, support for homeless, and emergency shelter packs.

To learn more go to: <https://safehomesma.org>. Oscar can be reached at: [oscar.oliveirasoens@openskycs.org](mailto:oscar.oliveirasoens@openskycs.org)

#### **Program Updates**

##### **A) Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (E. Gagne)**

- FY25 WIOA Youth RFP is posted on the City of Worcester’s website. Council members interested in reviewing proposals can contact the Board for information about the process, rules and responsibilities, timeline and training.
- The Milford GED program is closed due to low enrollment.

##### **B) YouthWorks (YW) (J. Wills)**

- The agency is currently accepting applications for the summer program.
- Worcester Community Action Council (WCAC) and the Blackstone Valley Hub are placing youth in STEM related occupations as part of a Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) special program.

*The City of Worcester does not discriminate on the basis of disability, The MCRWB will provide auxiliary aids and service, written materials in alternative formats, and reasonable modifications in policies and procedures to persons with disabilities upon advance request. Please contact MCRWB at 508-799-1590 or the ADA Coordinator at [disabilities@worcesterma.gov](mailto:disabilities@worcesterma.gov).*

### **C) Connecting Activities (E. Gagne)**

- May 1<sup>st</sup> – Connecting Activities Summit for Secondary School Career Leaders.
- The MCRWB and Connecting Activity (CA) partners are currently developing a “Connecting Activities Guidebook” that lists CA events and activities at partner schools. We plan to deliver the Guidebook by early May 2024, and subsequently share it with CA program administrators throughout the Commonwealth. The MCRWB continues to onboard partner schools and districts that now includes Bartlett HS (Webster Public Schools) and Spencer School District.

### **Council Announcements**

Youth Opportunities Upheld and The Fieldstone School provided and update on program enrollments and challenges with student contact after program completion.

Grafton Job Corp mentioned the site will be a pilot for online application.

### **Next Meeting**

April 11, 2024, conducted by TEAMS. Information provided on page 1.

### **Adjourn**

Hearing no other business, the meeting adjourned at 3:20 pm upon a motion.

*Respectfully submitted by,  
Ed Gagne*