

**St. Charles County
Workforce Development Board**

Special Populations Task Force Meeting

Mission Statement:

Through collaboration, partnership and education, we will work to overcome barriers by advising the Workforce Development Board on the state of essential services and resources for the special needs population in St. Charles County, empowering them to pursue workforce success.

Committee: Special Populations Task Force Meeting (June 24, 2020)

Attending Special Tasks Force

WDB Members: Jeff Cartnal, Daryl Muhammad, Michael Hurlbert

Attending

Special Population Task Force Members:

Janis Miller, VR
Jim Ruedin, Delta Center
Jeremy Sutton, BCI Skills Center
Scott Drachnik, EDC
Niwar Davis, Juvenile Justice Center
Rachel Gonzalez, Compass Health Network

Staff: Sherri Henderson, Lori Myers, Jenny Warren and Sharon Sontag

1. Welcome/Comments
Jeff Cartnal kicked off the meeting, welcoming everyone.
2. Minutes from the last meeting: The minutes from the December 18, 2019 meeting were reviewed. Daryl Muhammad made a motion to accept the minutes as presented. Janis Miller seconded the motion to approve the minutes and all were in favor.
3. Recap of the Veterans Resource Fair: Sherri Henderson reported on the Veterans Resource Fair held on February 18, 2020 at the Job Center in St. Peters. The focus of the Veterans Resource Fair in February was to provide financial assistance. Some of the vendors present at the Fair were: Regions Bank, St. Louis Veterans Officers, Various Law Offices, Edward Jones, Gill Mortgage, Homes for Heroes, Upward Bound, and the St. Charles County Government. The Fair lasted a few hours and four Veterans attended.

Question: Jeff Cartnal asked for thoughts on what could be improved for marketing the event.
Answer: Sherri Henderson commented that Heroes Care work with 100 vet groups on Face Book that will continue to help with publicity along with other resources to help push marketing the event.

4. Missouri Job Center Reopening – Lori Myers reported the Missouri Job Center in St. Peters opened to the public last Wednesday, June 17, 2020. People are still assisting customers primarily over the phone. Most of the visitors in the Job Center are seeking Unemployment Assistance. People continue to be interested in Training programs. The Job Center layout was revamped to accommodate for COVID19 Social Distancing requirements. The video on the St. Charles County Workforce Development website explains all the changes that have been completed. Although visitors inside the building are currently low in number, we expect an increase later in July when the unemployment stimulus programs expire. The Job Center will not have any on-site events through the end of the year. The scheduled virtual training events did not have anyone sign up for them so we will be looking at advertising them more.

Question: Michael Hurlbert asked if the large conference room desks are being used or are they just storage space? He recognized there were cubicles in the meeting room seen on the WebEx.
Answer: Lori Myers said the white tables that were normally in the Large Meeting Room were moved out on the Floor for visitor computers. Staff cubicles were moved as well. We are currently using the Large Meeting Room for staff meetings and virtual meetings like this one.

Question: Janis Miller asked how the search for a new Workforce Development Director is coming?

Answer: Lori Myers said that Jennifer George is extending the interim Director role through September. Then the permanent Director role will be re-evaluated at that time.

5. Updates from Task Force Attendees

Jeff Cartnal asked each attending member to report on how COVID19 is impacting services.

Janis Miller reported staff was sent home to work in March and they came back in June on a limited basis. They are open to the public, with social distancing of 6 ft. There are only 6 staff back in the office at a time. Most work is done virtually. Intakes are slowed down drastically, but they are still serving people as best as they can.

Question: Jeff Cartnal asked if they accept walk-ins?

Answer: Janis Miller said they take appointments, but walk-ins do happen randomly. Work is done virtually but visitors do come in as scheduled but they do not meet face to face with staff. They are mostly coming in for signing paperwork.

Jeremy Sutton reported that the Skills Center has four staff members at the office working all through the pandemic. They all have individual offices. They stopped having students from coming in face to face. They are now meeting with the students virtually online and doing check-ins remotely with students. A new training program will start next month for Permian Plastics.

At BCI they are back to work. About 180 people are now back to work. They are limiting visitors and only accepting approved visitors. They do temperature checks every day. They have social distancing in the break room with plexiglass and hand washing stations added.

Jim Ruedin commented they are working under a new modified normal. Their outreach programs and spinal cord injury groups stopped meeting. They are looking at using video methods for meeting but the work they do took a hit and just now are getting things back into place. The Center for Independent living is looking for ideas and strategies for making employment services open for them.

Question: Sherri Henderson suggested Delta coming into partnering Veteran Resources with Lon Little since they are advocating Independent Living.

Answer: Jim Ruedin commented that since Veterans can hire their own worker for in-home care and they are working with Veterans Resources now. They are looking into affordable housing with Habitat for Humanity or tiny houses or other housing options in St. Charles County.

Rachel Gonzalez commented that appointments are needed for Public Health for enrollment of services. They are open M-F from 7am – 7pm. Mental Health Crisis calls are taking during this time. Dental offices can do emergency procedures and they are doing tele visits for medical.

Jeff Cartnal commented that Goodwill is opening gradually. They are discouraging donations and are running out of storage. They did not totally shut down. The offices all had one or two people in them all. Schools went virtual and in rural areas transportation is limited. Alternative Schools shut down except for phone coverage. The Senior program is now going back to work at their volunteer positions.

Lori Myers mentioned we are taking appointments at the Job Center. We prefer appointments but walk-ins are welcome. We have overcome barriers with assisting visitors over the phone by using DocuSign for signing documents and adding a lockbox outside.

Daryl Muhammad commented that at Spire they are an essential business so although the office is shut down the technicians work as scheduled and go directly to the jobs assigned. They are expected to return August 31 in the office using social distancing and masks and meeting virtually. They are currently holding interviews virtually as well.

Niwar Davis commented that juvenile office is closed, security detention is open during COVID. The staff ensures the residents needs are met. Things are coming together for Phase III.

Scott Drachnik commented that during April half of the staff was remote and half were in the office. They are open fully now. They use a locked door policy where they use cards to get into the building. It is closed to the public. They are currently using Zoom for meetings and that has impacted how they are able to do business. All events have been cancelled and the first event will be on July 1, 2020 which will be a Blood Drive by appointment only.

Michael Hurlbert commented that St. Charles County building are all open now. They are limiting public access to 1st floor only at the Admin building. They are looking to do permanent modifications to the building for long term usage. The St. Charles County website has been modified for COVID information and it is more user friendly with a 14-day trend

report available. Economic development projects are in the works for large land development projects. We are still seeing an interest in property projects in St. Charles County. Permits for single and attached/detached homes are the same as last year. Affordable housing is still needed in St. Charles County. Elected Officials will need to work on those efforts to help with growth in St. Charles County. We will rebound well since growth is still here in St. Charles county.

6. Adjournment

Jeff Carnal suggested an agenda item for the September meeting: Community Needs Assessment

Next meeting: Wednesday, September 23, 2020 at 9:00 a.m.