

Workforce Investment Board of Merced County

Youth Council

Merced County Office of Education – Newbold Room

632 W. 13th Street, Merced, CA

Wednesday, December 8, 2004, 4:00 p.m.

Meeting Minutes



MERCED COUNTY YOUTH COUNCIL

Members Present: Bob Bittner, Mary Cavazos, Claudia Corchado, Natalie Culver, Ben Duran, Evelyn Eagleton, Rennise Ferrario, Alexander Hall, Kathy Hassett, Taide Hernandez (Vice Chair), Rebecca Lincoln, Nellie McGarry (Chair), Mayra Ramirez, Vann (Mike) Smith, Rev. Craig E. White, Sr

Members Absent: Ana Andrade, Stephanie Busbea, Robert Harmon, Mary Jane Hawkes, Charlie Lambert, Richard Mahacek, Jim Newberry, Edgar Perez

Others Present: Bob Burk, Dave Davis, Joanna Grimes, Peter Jamero, Dee Knight, Celeste Ramos

1. Call to Order/Roll Call: The Vice Chair called the meeting to order at 4:06 p.m., and roll call was taken.

2. Approve Agenda: The Chair asked that Agenda Item 8.b. be presented before the Action Agenda because Ms. Kathy Hassett has to leave by 4:30 p.m. It was *M/S/C Hall/Duran* to approve the agenda with the above-mentioned change.

3. Approve Minutes: It was *M/S/C Smith/Hassett* to approve the October 13, 2004 minutes.

4. Public Opportunity to Speak: None.

5. Announcements:

- a. Ms. Hassett introduced Mr. Bob Burk, Program Administrator for Children's Services, who works with the Foster Care Program. Mr. Burk has been in Child Welfare Services for 27 years, and comes to Merced County from San Luis Obispo.
- b. The CWA Youth Conference 2005 will be held January 25-27, 2005, in Garden Grove, CA. Those attending from the Youth Council will be Ms. Claudia Corchado and Mr. Dave Davis. Ms. Holly Newlon, Ms. Eve Snelling, Ms. Mayra Ramirez and Ms. Rebecca Lincoln will be making a presentation on Collaboration with the Community. An Empower youth will also be attending.
- c. Ms. Corchado introduced Mr. Peter Jamero, who will be the Interim Executive Director of the Boys & Girls Club—Ms. Corchado has resigned.

8. Presentations:

b. Independent Living Program: Ms. Natalie Culver gave a PowerPoint presentation on the Merced College Independent Living Program (ILP)—ILP history, information, current foster youth statistics and specific barriers. She provided two pamphlets: 1) What Merced College ILP provides—activities, services, scholarships and incentives, and 2) The Merced College ILP Americorps Foster Youth Mentoring Project. They have over 500 youth participants in Merced County, and 150 in Madera County. Most alarming is that 46% of foster youth don't complete high school, and 51% within 2-4 years after emancipation are unemployed. Anyone having questions or wanting more information on the ILP can call Ms. Culver at 384-6369.

Since foster care is a target area, the Chair asked Ms. Culver to provide the Youth Council with periodic updates on the ILP.

6. Action Agenda:

a. Youth Council Goals #3 and #4: It was *M/S/C Eagleton/Corchado* to accept Goals #3 and #4 as written.

b. Youth Contracts Oversight Working Group: It was *M/S/C Eagleton/Hall (abstain Ramirez)* to reestablish a Contract Oversight Working Group for all youth contracts, and the group will meet as required.

The following volunteered for the Working Group: Mr. Vann (Mike) Smith, Rev. Craig White, Ms. Nellie McGarry, Ms. Rennise Ferrario, Ms. Claudia Corchado, and Ms. Kathy Hassett.

7. Information Agenda:

a. Children's Action Plan – Youth Development Action Plan: It was noted that the Summit and program were developed by the Human Services Agency. All Action Plan subcommittees are working on developing a Children's Summit for April 2005. Staff will find out if the emphasis is going to be on older youth.

8. Presentations:

b. EMPOWER Zone: Ms. Joanna Grimes, Job Developer, EMPOWER Program, gave a presentation on the EMPOWER Zone (they had two events this year—June/October). EMPOWER Zone is a component of the EMPOWER Program. EMPOWER Zone gives all participants an opportunity to assess the skills they have learned in the workshops by: 1) Creating a portfolio that is modeled after the ROP portfolio; and 2) Presenting the portfolio to judges who are volunteers from the business community. She explained the criteria that are covered and how participants are judged. Those scoring the highest points receive a Gold (\$100), Silver (\$75), or Bronze (\$50) award. This gives participants an opportunity to experience what is expected in the workforce. She noted they are always looking for judges for the EMPOWER Zone events.

c. Center for Public Policy Report: Ms. Culver passed out two copies of a report entitled, "Aging Out", which was done by the Centers for Public Policy, Stanislaus University. This is a study of the transition process for foster youth in Stanislaus County—the struggles, the challenges, the opportunities and the strengths. She provided this report so the Youth Council could see what other counties are looking at, and the issues facing foster youth.

This report is on the Centers for Public Policy website. The report looks at the infrastructure of the system, and how foster youth are treated before being released. There are some recommendations as to how the system might change. Dr. Ben Duran, Ms. Ramirez and Ms. Culver are part of a Stanislaus County working group that is working to implement some of the recommendations in Stanislaus, and eventually other areas. The Centers for Public Policy Board is hoping to have a symposium/conference for the entire Central Valley in the near future for those interested in foster youth who are aging out.

d. One-Stop Connections: Ms. Culver noted in October 2004 she attended a One-Stop Connections Workshop in Fresno. The purpose of the workshop was to find a way to connect foster youth with the One-stops, and how to make the One-Stops more youth friendly. There will be, in the near future, some performance measures for foster youth under the Workforce Investment Act. She noted the facilitator is willing to come to Merced County and give a presentation to the applicable agencies.

e. State Youth Council Report: The state has put together two working groups—1) The State Local Initiatives, and 2) The State Level Initiatives that have difference objectives/action plans listed under each group. The Chair noted she would send the lists to staff to e-mail to Youth Council members, and she would like comments/feedback to take to the State Youth Council/CWA Conference in January 2005.

9. Chair Comments: The Chair recommended that at the January meeting, members be ready to formulate what type of agenda items/presentations they would like to have for 2005. She wished “Happy Holidays”

10. Date, Time and Location of Next Youth Council Meeting: Next meeting is January 12, 2005, 4:00 p.m, at Merced County Office of Education – Newbold Room, 632 W. 13th Street, Merced.

11. Adjourn: The meeting adjourned at 5:20 p.m.

Minutes prepared by Devilla D. Knight