

## YOUTH OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

MARCH 18, 2016

8:15 A.M. WFDB OFFICE CONFERENCE ROOM

**PRESENT:** A. Hendrix, R. Pollack, S. Peake, I. Burbank, V. Zeppelin, S. Kittel, C. Weems

**STAFF:** J. Mattick, J. Luu

### CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Hendrix called the meeting to order at 8:15 a.m.

### 2016 SUMMER YOUTH EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM PROPOSALS – REVIEW AND APPROVAL

The three entities submitting proposals to operate the 2016 Summer Youth Employment Program were the Tompkins County Office of Employment and Training, Challenge Workforce Solutions, and the City of Ithaca Youth Bureau. A budget analysis prepared by Ms. Mattick was distributed that compared the 2015 and 2016 budgets for each organization. The three proposals total approximately \$373,000 versus \$350,000 in 2015.

#### Challenge Workforce Solutions Proposal

Aside from 2015, prior program monitoring was adequate. In 2015 there were a number of challenges, some of which were due to a significant turnover in agency personnel and some which seemed to be the result of a disconnect between program and fiscal staff. There was consensus that Challenge serves a niche population within the community, but increased monitoring is needed. There was discussion about the organization under spending their budget in each of the previous two years and an issue with getting their vouchers submitted in a timely manner. The voucher issue is a significant one because in 2015 it was not known that they would be under budget until it was too late and there was not sufficient time left in the program year to reallocate those funds to the other two providers. This situation resulted in funds being returned to the State. Additionally, Challenge is seeking an increase of in funding of nearly \$8,000 this year and this is concerning since they have not been able to spend their funds previously.

Ms. Mattick stated funding allocations are not yet known, but she is expecting to see an increase this year because the Governor has increased the amount in his budget by 1 million to offset the increase in minimum wage, but suggested the Committee move forward using the 2015 allocated amount of \$350,000.

Ms. Kittel stated that she would like to see a hard stop put into any contract written with Challenge. If their funding is not expended at a certain level but a given date, the remainder of their budget will be reallocated.

Ms. Mattick stated that they leverage a lot of additional money and services i.e., ACCESS-VR, so reducing their staffing costs does not automatically effect youth. Ms. Kittel asked If they are working with CSE chairs who with 12 month IEP students. Ms. Mattick stated she isn't sure, but there has been discussion about youth who have 12-month IEP's having those rewritten so they can participate in SYEP rather than sit in the classroom over the summer. This can go toward the CDOS work based learning requirement.

There was consensus to move forward with a contract with Challenge Workforce Solutions after review of a revised budget reducing the funding requested to \$46,000 and with Ms. Mattick preparing firm benchmarks and a schedule for reviews to occur throughout the program.

## **Tompkins County Office of Employment and Training Proposal**

Overall the group felt the OET proposal was in good shape. They utilize their funding well. They have a strong foundation within the community with a variety of work sites and a strong list of private sector employers. Making youth development training mandatory, making their attendance policy and schedule for training consistent with their proposal and providing a way for youth to evaluate their worksites and the program were areas identified as needing improvement.

Ms. Mattick stated that financial literacy training is mandated by the state government and all of the providers can do a better job at providing it. There are also inconsistencies in the evaluation process used by each of the providers and this needs improvement.

There was consensus to move forward with a contract with the Tompkins County Office of Employment and Training at the requested level.

### **City of Ithaca Youth Bureau Proposal**

The City of Ithaca Youth Bureau's proposal was also in good shape. There were some questions about why they charge staff over a 20 week period and Ms. Mattick explained that they start charging staff costs to the program earlier than the other providers. It was also noted that their training seems "cookie cutter" and more private sector employers are needed. The proposal was not explicit with regard to the level of involvement from their for profit private sector employers; it also wasn't clear how they incorporate demand occupations into the program components. A more thoughtful response around the agency's history of success regarding recruitment and outreach in serving the target population would also have been appreciated.

There was consensus to move forward with a contract with the City of Ithaca Youth Bureau at the requested level.

### **NEXT STEPS**

Ms. Mattick will send each provider a letter outlining their tentative award amount and include any concerns that were observed from their proposals. Once the funding allocation is received, the Committee will be consulted to make the final awards.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 9:43 a.m. The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, April 13, 2016 at 8:15 a.m. to meet with Office of Employment and Training to discuss the progress of their current contract and consider a one-year extension.