

Employment First Maine Coalition

MEETING MINUTES

DRAFT VERSION

Date of Meeting	January 10, 2014
Time	11am – 1pm
Location	Department of Labor, 45 Commerce Drive, Augusta Frances Perkins room
Facilitator	Betsy Hopkins

Present

Name/Affiliation	Name/Affiliation
Brad Strause, Alpha One	Jan Breton, DOE
Jim Phipps, Iris Network	Christine McKenzie, Maine Med Center
Kelly Osborn, DDBI SRC	Kevin Owen, VR
Anne Nadzo, Goodwill	Rachel Dyer, MDCC
Debbie Gilmer, Syntiro, APSE Maine	Kathy Despres, SILC
Gail Fanjoy, KFI	Lisa Soucie, High Hopes Clubhouse
Jeanie Coltart, Comm. On Disability and Employment	Linda Larue-Keniston, Maine Assoc. for Community Service Providers
Sitara Sheikh, VR	Denise McCarthy, VR
Bethany Goding, Mobius	Chris Robinson, DHHS/SAMHS
Lisa Sturtevant, DHHS/OADS	Leticia Huttman, DHHS/SAMHS
Suzanne Boras, DHHS/SAMHS	DulceyLaberg, OCFS
Janet May, Ctr. For Community Inclus.	Libby Stone-Sterling, DVR
Avery Olmstead	Janine Collins, SRC
Ann Long, MPF	Tyler Ingalls, SUFU, DSOAB
Karen Fraser, DOL	Julie Moulton, SUFU
Kim Moody, DRC	Riley Albair, DRC
Rick Langley, DRC	Dick Brown, Charlotte White Center
Betsy Hopkins, DVR	

Discussion and Issues

Office of Disability Employment Policy

Debbie reported on ODEP community of practice materials, including webinars, which are online and could be shared by EFM. Excellent conference calls and presentations are available.

Maine has applied for the ODEP-sponsored Vision Quest project, where we would receive detailed consultation and expert guidance in a priority area. We could receive intensive technical assistance. Expecting to know soon as to whether we've been selected. Unofficial word is that states got their first priority choice (ours was aligning policy and funding). Don't yet know who the subject matter people are. Likely Abby Cooper and Steve Hall?

Gail will be working as subject matter expert with two other states regarding wrap around services.

Next week is the first Vision Quest call. We can expect to have to provide information for analysis if chosen. They've done policy analysis in protégé states such as Tennessee, Iowa, Oregon.

Disability Employment Initiative grant

Libby presented regarding the DEI grant which Maine has received. This project is focused on better utilization of the Career Center network and accessibility of all programs. Seeking to avoid silos and promote sense that all programs are available and accessible to people. Earlier rounds focused on Presque Isle, Bangor, and Machias and now in this round other regions will be focus (Lewiston, Skowhegan, Augusta). A team has been hired to work on the grant. Peaches Bass serves as DEI program manager. Includes state Ticket to Work lead, 2 disability resource coordinators. VR will fund a rehabilitation counselor. Also include work around asset development and financial literacy.

Work Group Updates

Business/Employer work group

Lisa reported on the team's work so far, including a review of the charter and development of focus areas. Discussions around who are the business entities we want to engage? Not looking to bring businesses into this process necessarily, but rather to reach out to them (via SWIB, Chamber, Business leadership network, etc.) to gather info. Questions re what's working well? Not working? What would improve diversity hiring? Other discussions included possible development of a survey to gather info from the employer community. Planning to meet with the Chamber again, use them as a conduit to get questions out to businesses. From this, develop recommendations for the Coalition moving forward, re new initiatives, promoting diversity in hiring, etc.

Barry McMillan has joined group, along with Avery, Drew, Anne, Joyce. Their goal is to gather basic business input to present out by summer.

Capacity Building work group

Debbie reported that her group has 6 or 7 members (Gail, Kevin Owen, Leticia, Bethany, Riley, Janine, Simonne). They've met twice, and again today. Working on developing action plan using project management template. Group minutes have been kept and shared to post on website.

Areas of focus include figuring out what we need...what are other states doing on systems change/capacity building? Discussed a possible survey to send to constituent groups. How do we learn about shifting systems?

The Massachusetts Blueprint has just been posted. Includes no new admits to sheltered shops, with a complete phase out by July 2015. This is a transformation initiative, with millions going into technical assistance to shift that system.

Capacity building group will likely connect with the Data group initially, with a list of data we need for planning.

Janine emphasized Abby's role as subject matter person promoting asset development, and the need to work that into change efforts that were making.

Transition work group

Jan reported that the group met for the first time today. Talking about work plan focus and the substance of plan development using the templates.

Communication work group

Karen: group includes Brad, Karen, Denise McCarthy, Rick. Karen is preparing document to be an action plan. One role of group might be to coordinate various surveys, to avoid duplication, ensure uniform design, etc. Website to be revised to give work groups a page.

We discussed technology options that could encourage participation. Google Docs accessible? Debbie sits on an accessible instructional materials group. Janine suggested asking Maine CITE re contacts, info. Requested that screenreader users try out the Epolicyworks site re accessibility.

Discussion re video conferencing options. Adobe Connect? Not so good for larger discussions? Polycom is the internal DOL system. Have 10 sites, requires going to Career Center office, arranging use in advance. Agreed Communications group would explore options and report back. Survey of membership on this?

Janine reported that video conferencing that allows sharing of documents and editing would be preferable. Google Docs doesn't allow this? Does Go to Meeting?

Legislative/Policy work group

Kim reported that she is hopeful that Maine will be chosen for the ODEP Vision Quest project and that our policy group can merge its efforts with the Maine Vision Quest team. Current policy group: Kim, Eric McVay, Carolyn Lockwood, Dick brown, Jim Phipps. Amy Dix to join re MaineCare? Hoping to be able to focus on aligning policy and funding per the ODEP project.

Discussion and agreement re merging committee meetings: Use the February meeting and other alternating months to do steering committee work/planning, and have full coalition meetings on the intervening months?

Data work group

Rachel reported that the group has met several times. Looked at legislation and charter re next steps in planning. Trying to develop a plan to show what progress would look like in terms of numbers after three years of this project? Data needed to support funding? Policy changes? Intend to ask work groups re their data needs. Planning to meet in a few weeks re questions to ask, data list, report back re what agencies are saying.

Jim asked that we think of data and other work we're doing in terms of the long term (beyond just the three year life span of this coalition).

Questions to consider: what are knowledge levels of general public re employment and disability? How are we spending money now and setting priorities? Are we emphasizing inclusiveness in this work? Is policy and spending aligned with goals we profess to support?

Karen reported that crucial data should be useable and reasonable. Ie, the unemployment rate is skewed and doesn't reflect PWD not even counted as looking. Better to measure employment rate? What is best, understandable measure?

Dick reported that the current need for change surveys have been collected for years – what are the results of that process? Weave that data into our work?

Review and Acceptance of December Minutes

Minutes accepted.

Departmental Reports

DOL Update

Betsy reported on vacancies within VR around the state. There is a quick turnaround to post these positions.

Jim Martin has pulled together a group from DHHS, Labor and Education to focus

on transition; they'll be meeting for 3 months. Effort to get a handle on transition work that is happening. This effort is happening in addition to the transition group convened by Cullen Ryan and CHOM. Obviously, EFM's transition group is the third statewide transition focused group. CHOM focused in part on transition to waivers, but more than that. Important to connect these groups.

DHHS Update

Lisa reported on attending interdepartmental Commissioners' meeting, with TANF group. Sabra Burdick facilitated the group on employment, TANF, and disability.

Yesterday at DHHS senior management team they heard a presentation on economic forecast for Maine from Glenn Mills. Comm. Mayhew asked people to join EFM work groups, DHHS representation on all groups was good. CDC offered to be involved. 6 people identified yesterday to join groups. People seem interested and committed.

DOE Update

Jan reported on DOE work on school districts and IEP planning. Committee to revise IEPs, emphasize quality IEP development and transition planning. Preparing OSEP performance plan in response to indicator finding lacking postsecondary transition planning. Reporting a 30 percent compliance rate which no one was happy about. They have many measures to meet on this. Meeting 75-80 percent of other indicators. Training starting soon in regions to develop good plans, have conversations reflected in plans for good outcomes. They are in the field looking at the quality of plans.

New Business

Debbie noted the importance of the January 6 DOJ letter addressing Olmstead issues in Rhode Island and the Providence school district, day programs, lack of transition, etc. Should circulate this document to group and post on site. If DOJ looking at Rhode Island and Oregon, every state needs to be aware. Letter available at: http://www.ada.gov/olmstead/documents/ri_lof.pdf

Re ODEP webinar: Transformational Leadership presentation worth sharing here. Debbie suggests we sit together and watch this Lisa Mills presentation, and make time for Lisa to join us by phone for Q&A session. Agreed to circulate link to everyone.

June 11 APSE and DVR conference at Colby College. Save the dates are going out. Theme is Celebrating Partnerships.

Betsy: Deb Roy is contact for work groups on scheduling rooms at DOL. Please email her and cc Betsy.

EFM Steering Committee meets next month.

Gail: Announcement today from CMS – new regulations appeared today in Federal Register. New regulations are a landmark for every state, implementation will be complex.

Document at: <https://www.federalregister.gov/articles/2014/01/16/2014-00487/medicaid-program-state-plan-home-and-community-based-services-5-year-period-for-waivers-provider>

Next Meeting

Date of Meeting	Friday February 14, 2014
Time	11am – 1pm
Location	DOL, 45 Commerce Drive, Augusta – Frances Perkins room