

Summary of Roundtable Meeting 1/9/20 5:00-6:30pm

Attendees

Tom Bergeron

Noel Bishop

Darlene Briggs

Ken Butterworth

Andy Calderoni

Leslie Carson

Tony Cozza

Tina Dattilo

Bob Furno

Lenny Goldberg

John Hall

Denise Henry

Linda Hunnicutt

Jim Jackson

Karen James

Sue McManus

Chris Pallato

Laura Pedersen

Andy Schatz

Marcia Simon

Liz Steffen

Libby Waldron

22 attended the meeting on January 9 at Town Hall, a great turnout, especially as we had to move up the time of the meeting due to a late-scheduled town budget meeting, for which we apologize for any inconvenience.

WEAI Webpages

Ken Butterworth launched and introduced the WEAI webpage, which is part of the Town of Westbrook website and can be accessed by clicking on “Services” and finding Westbrook Economic Action Initiative in the drop down menu (or simply entering <https://www.westbrookct.us/422/Westbrook-Economic-Action-Initiative> in your browser. The WEAI webpage contains information about ALICE and about WEAI, including announcements, meeting agendas and summaries.

Even more importantly, the WEAI webpage will have information about jobs and training programs. It already links to relevant pages of the Westbrook High School website, including the specific section on Community Resources, jobs and training and the participation by Westbrook businesses and others (https://whs.westbrookctschoools.org/groups/77615/career_connections/career_connections). In addition, we discussed including links to local job postings, a link to Indeed (a job postings site) and a link to any Westbrook company website (particularly any career or employment pages on the website). Ken Butterworth and Noel Bishop, First Selectman, will determine if we may place a jobs-related icon on the front page of the Westbrook website.

Companies wishing to participate in linking their company website (especially to share job and/or training information) should send information to kbutterworth@westbrookct.org.

Update on Westbrook High School

Leslie Carson, our WHS Career/College Readiness Coordinator, reported that much is happening in the schools. Not only have some high school seniors started internships, but many businesses have been participating with broader career education and training, including engineering (Alta Vision Systems/Tom Bergeron and The Lee Company, which is helping with cad-cam training for teachers as well), hospitality businesses Westbrook Inn (Mary Wick) and Water's Edge, communications businesses through Valley Shore Community Television (TV production) and Marcia Simon (public relations), health care (through a medical health panel, that has included Middlesex Health and others) and the non-profit sector (Chris Pallatto of the YMCA). In addition, engineer Bill Neale is working with a math teacher as the first step to engage businesses to help refocus school curriculum and specific lessons on using authentic "real-world" math and science.

Middle school kids have also been included through attendance at an aerospace conference.

The schools are trying to build a pathway approach, to help determine students' interest early so that they can include relevant experiences on their pathway through the high school. Carson reported that she and others from WHS will be attending a state conference about this approach and that WHS hopes to continue as one of 12-15 high schools to get two years of training in the pathways approach.

Leslie Carson explained that her program is also communicating directly and indirectly with ALICE residents. Not only is information and invitations going to school parents, some of whom are ALICE, but the Community Resources section of the website, available to anyone online, contains information about all job training programs of which WHS becomes aware. Carson explained that although non-parent adult residents would not be allowed in the school during student activities, WHS is also open to allowing the school to be used for community events that are similar or parallel to those WHS organizes for its students.

Upcoming WHS related events include:

2/11 – juniors will be doing job shadowing

2/12 - program with junior achievement

3/23 - shoreline clinic work opportunity day

4/30 - Middlesex Chamber will be holding a work show (Carson is serving on the steering committee)

Town Center

The Roundtable was updated on the study now underway to determine the capacity of various areas around the Town Center to support waste-water activities. In addition, we plan to tour the facilities used by Water's Edge (and at Tina

Dattilo's suggestion, we will also tour the Big Y center) to determine feasible alternatives to supplement anything that might be done in Town Center through traditional wastewater approaches.

Job Fair

We decided to explore hosting a job fair for the community (focused on ALICE). The employers present indicated a willingness to participate and thought the response would be good. The first step will be to contact many local businesses to determine if they would support and use such an event.

Goals for 2020

In addition to continuing to build on what we've started, several specific tasks for 2020 were identified

- Review the mission of each area; how relevant are we being, and do we have to tweak it?
- Continuing the difficult task to identify and communicate with ALICE, including speaking with other towns and United Way about whether anyone has better established connections with ALICE; sending letters home with students about jobs, training and identifying sources (such as Craig's List) that might be used more by ALICE
- Create a brochure that would explain ALICE and our initiatives
- Putting information about WEAI and links to jobs on

the computers in the Westbrook Public Library

- Host a discussion session with Rebecca Lemanski, the director of Middletown Works (one of five municipal areas receiving large grants from Bank of Boston to establish community based programs)

- Establish a mentoring program with business leaders (who've indicated interest in mentoring ALICE members as well as students)

- Plans to investigate two potential internship positions for WEAI itself were discussed. We hope to engage a WHS student intern to help with communications and the websites. In addition, we plan to investigate the need and possibility to hire a more experienced intern (perhaps from a college or graduate business program) to help ensure that we reach ALICE with our programs.