

ECOS Board Meeting Wednesday, May 23 2005
Gresham Employment Department – 19421 SE Stark
9 AM to 11 AM

Present: Ruthanne Cox Carothers – Oregon Easter Seals, Teddy Forrester, OVRs, Debbie Foote – DHS-Self Sufficiency, JoAnn Espinosa – Springdale Job Corps, Karen Cusick – Gresham Employment Office, Joan Pasco – ECOS project manager.

Introductions and welcome: Partner reports – news, events, and announcements
DHS – Agency has a new, but interim, Director – Brian Johnston replacing Gary Weeks.
Human Solutions is now conducting Job Finding workshops at the Gresham Employment Office.

Old Business:

Approve Minutes from April 27th board meeting – tabled until next meeting due to lack of a quorum,

Budget/finance report – refer to finance report – attached, separate excel doc.

Annual ECOS partner contributions are due

We have received contributions from Gresham Employment Office, Easter Seals Oregon, Portland Habilitation Center, Vocational Rehabilitation, Springdale Job Corps and Mercy Corps.

Continued discussion from previous meetings:

Triage for hardest to place persons – advocacy/joint resources – suggestions included dedicating a portion of each ECOS meeting to discussion regarding persons seeking assistance from many different agencies. The co-location of more agencies should help with these issues

Summer Youth programs/activities: Ideas and suggestions for the current summer included: Oregon Humane Society – they use many youth volunteers during the summer and the contact there is Carol Shivley; Audubon Nature Center, senior centers, summer youth day camps, and Career exploration and job shadowing – get employers engaged.

The board is recommending a long-range approach to the lack of youth opportunity and suggested ECOS begin discussion with partners to submit a grant to the Meyer Memorial Trust for funds to cover: career exploration and job shadowing; workshop/training on work ethics, connecting youth to business mentors; and using existing volunteer networks in a more strategic fashion. Potential partners include: all east county school districts, the area business organizations and chambers of commerce.

Medical/health insurance options

FHIAP is accepting applications now – for both employed and unemployed persons.
Information is available at their web site at: www.omip.state.or.us/IPGB/FHIAP

New Business:

The board approved sending a Letter of support to state ways and means committee requesting consideration of continued funding for the EI programs statewide. Letter is attached.

New grant opportunity – Youth Build – HUD. The board discussed the potential of application to HUD for a Youth Build grant. After extensive discussion, it was deemed too much of a long shot, and too difficult for the ECOS organization. A strong champion agency would be needed and the grant requirement that a minimum of 75% of youth served must be school drop-outs was considered difficult to meet. This grant would be difficult for ECOS to administer and there is only a 10% indirect allowed.

Project reports

Rockwood International Marketplace – this project is on hold until or if an organization will come forward to sponsor the event. ECOS submitted initial grant applications for this project with the understanding that ECOS would not own or operate a marketplace. At the time of grant submission, the Gresham Sister City Association was eager to serve in this capacity. However, their enthusiasm waned once it became apparent that they might actually have to do this. ECOS itself, does not have the infrastructure to manage a project of that magnitude without full time paid staff.

CEO/Joli project with Easter Seals – Creating Earning Opportunities – Jobs for Low Income People. 43 new businesses are being served in this 17-month demonstration project. A fourth Small Business Boot Camp will be held June 28-29 to bring in 10 to 15 more.

Regional reports:

WSI and state workforce – no report at this time

Workforce Connections – no report at this time

Gresham Employment Office – Karen reported on state legislation that lowers UI taxes by 12% for employers and shifts funding for state employment services from federal to state funds. The 2005 Innovation Award for State and Federal Agencies was awarded to the IMATCH program. There are currently 200,000 active accounts in the UI system. Gresham office is now part of the state Business and Employment Services Department and is meeting with more economic development groups and prospective new businesses.

Next Board Meeting: June 22 – Gresham Employment office – 9 AM

Finance and Management Team: Monday, June 20, 11:30 at Applebee's 102nd and Halsey

May 25, 2005

Senator Margaret Carter
Co-Chair – Oregon Ways and Means Committee
900 Court St. NE S-311
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Senator Carter:

The East County One Stop is a workforce alliance comprised of the organizations listed on this letterhead. We collaborate on issues important to moving people out of poverty and into meaningful employment. The Employment Initiative (EI) function of Multnomah County Aging and Disability Services is extremely important to this goal. Closure of EI services statewide is under consideration in current budget discussion. Most EI offices fall under the Department of Human Services, however, Multnomah County administers this function in the Portland area. The county will not pick up the cost of this service if the state makes the choice to eliminate this function statewide.

We feel this is the classic case of saving a penny at a cost of a dollar. EI services help hundreds of people find employment each year. Many, if not most, are persons considered borderline unemployable. Locally, this service has worked miracles in the lives of many individuals – removing them from a welfare state and turning them into productive tax paying consumers.

The EI specialists are the only valid benefit planners in the state. The only EI program costs are the salaries for these individuals. A large federal grant was recently received by the state based on the effectiveness and existence of the EI program. The return on investment from this particular function is huge.

Please investigate the overall costs and long term detrimental impacts that will accrue should this intervention program no longer exist.

If you have any questions, please contact me and I will try to explain why we feel this service is so valuable to our goal of getting people employed.

Sincerely,

Joan Pasco – Project Manager
East County One Stop