



Board of Directors Quarterly Meeting Minutes of Wednesday, March 20th, 2024

Full Audio Recording available upon request

Attendance: John Fernandes, Shannon Finning, Bernice Jensen, Haskell Kennedy III, Pam Kuechler, Jane McArdle, Bonnie Mello, Stephen Merrill, Mike O’Sullivan, Duarte Silva, Tracy Silvia, David Slutz, Carl Taber, Steven White, Margarita Graham, Jeffrey Pelletier

Staff: Joe Lopes, Abbey Despres, Taylor Nichols-Xavier, Kyra Greco, Deborah Meggison, Jacqueline Sylvia, Debbie Hartman, Justin Grota, Deven Robitaille, Jamilyn Soares

Guests: Elizete Perry, Fran Grey

Greetings and Call to Order: Joe Lopes – Opened meeting at 4:45PM

Announcements: Joe Lopes

Joe Lopes welcomed all and began the meeting with introductions from all present board members, staff, and guests.

Consent Agenda (Votes)

- Approval of Minutes, December 20th, 2023
- Approval of Treasurer’s Report
 - David Slutz called for a motion to approve both the December meeting minutes and the Treasurer’s report. John Fernandes made a motion to accept items, seconded by Margarita Graham. All voted in favor and the motion carried.

Old Business: Benefit Corporation Discussion with Legal Counsel

Joe Lopes introduced Elizabeth Manchester from Patridge, Snow & Hahn Legal Office to review the presentation given on March 3rd, 2024, at the Executive Committee Meeting. Elizabeth discussed tax benefits and the structure of a benefit corporation. Additionally, Elizabeth reviewed with attendees how this kind of corporation would affect the Workforce Board and its revenue, as well as the level of control that will be had by Workforce Board should it be approved. Joe Lopes mentioned that the state of Rhode Island currently has two similar for-profit entities, and noted Hampden County’s Workforce Board is currently run as a for-profit with public employees. Joe noted that other Workforce Boards are monitoring this structure to see how this works out and if it may be something to incorporate in other service delivery areas.

Votes to Approve -- Joe Lopes

- 1. To approve the election of Duarte Silva as Vice Chair of the MassHire Greater New Bedford Workforce Board.** *Motion to approve made by Jeffrey Pelletier, seconded by Margarita Graham. The majority voted in favor and the motion carried with one abstention by Duarte Silva.*
- 2. To approve the election of Jeffrey Pelletier as Assistant Treasurer of the MassHire Greater New Bedford Workforce Board:** *Motion to approve made by John Fernandes, seconded by Dave Slutz. The majority voted in favor and the motion carried with one abstention by Jeffrey Pelletier.*
- 3. To authorize the MassHire Greater New Bedford Workforce Board to acquire all youth operations that are currently being provided by the framework service provider to align more closely with the other workforce boards in the region.** *Motion to approve made by Duarte Silva, seconded by John Fernandes All voted in favor and the motion carried.*
- 4. To authorize the MassHire Greater New Bedford Workforce Board to increase the amount of funds available to employees to utilize for educational training from \$5,000.00 to \$7,500.00 per calendar year.** *Motion to approve made by John Fernandes, seconded by Duarte Silva. All voted in favor and the motion was carried.*
- 5. To approve the updated MassHire Branding Policy, Stevens Amendment, and WIOA Title I Follow-up Services as provided in the Live Binder.** *Motion to approve made by Margarita Graham, seconded by Jeffrey Pelletier. All voted in favor and the motion carried.*
- 6. To approve the edits made to the MassHire Greater New Bedford Workforce Board Employee Handbook as discussed:** *Motion to approve by Pam Kuechler, seconded Jane McArdle. All voted in favor and motion carried.*

7. **To approve the FY25 Board of Directors recommendations, which includes the Slate of Officers.**
 - a. **To approve the By-Law exception to retain the following Officers:**
 - i. **Motion 1:** Dave Slutz as Chair of the Board
 1. *Motion to approve made by John Fernandes, seconded by Duarte Silva. Majority voted in favor with one abstention by Dave Slutz. Motion Carried.*
 - ii. **Motion 2:** Carl Taber as Treasurer
 1. *Motion to approve made by Duarte Silva, seconded by John Fernandes. Majority voted in favor with one abstention by Carl Taber. Motion carried.*
 - iii. **Motion 3:** Lisa Lemieux as Secretary/Clerk
 1. *Motion to approve made by John Fernandes, seconded by Margarita Graham. All voted in favor and the motion carried.*
 - b. **To approve the FY25 Board of Directors recommendations, including the Slate of Officers, as presented.** *Motion to approve made by John Fernandes, seconded by Duarte Silva. Motion carried.*
8. **To approve the recommendations as presented for the approval and establishment of a benefit corporation.** *Motion to approve by John Fernandes, seconded by Duarte Silva. Majority voted in favor with one abstention by Stephen Merrill. Motion carried.*

Executive Director/CEO Report – Joe Lopes

Joe Lopes reviewed his Executive Director/CEO report with attendees. He discussed current grant applications related to early childhood training and long shoreman training. Joe noted he believes these should be approved by the end of the fiscal year. Joe mentioned that the WB was awarded a STEM grant of \$250,000 for the next five years and is working with Bristol Community College to finalize working with the veteran's program. It was also mentioned that the WB is working with Duarte Silva along with Fairhaven High School and St. Annes Credit Union to provide 16 internships to those interested in the banking field. This is a model for the region. Additionally, Joe noted that the WB is collaborating with Greater New Bedford Regional Vocational Technical High School with training in Marine Tech, Welding and Cooking.

MassHire Career Center Report – Elizete Perry, Fran Grey

The MassHire Career Center Report was presented by Elizete Perry and Fran Grey. Career Center credentials are reporting low as these reports do not reflect participants who are currently in the pipeline for obtainment. It was noted that the Career Center staff are conducting community outreach to attempt to reach customers and provide the training they are requesting. CC staff also noted they are trying to be creative and working with partners to see how they can improve. The Career Center recently lost a few staff members on the Business Services Team and have onboarded new staff members since.

Adjourned at 5:21PM– Motion to adjourn made by Joe Lopes

Next Meeting: Tuesday, June 18th 2024

Location: The Waypoint Event Center