



## Board of Directors Quarterly Meeting Minutes of Wednesday, September 29, 2021

Full Audio Recording available upon request

**Attendance:** Jose Bahena, Jean Breault, Sara Cunha, James Daniels, Lauren DeSimon Hughes, Margarita Graham, Diane Hurley, Deborah Jenkins, Rick Kidder, Pam Kuechler, Lisa Lemieux, Ron Melbourne, Stephen Merrill, Jennifer Patnaude, Charles Quinn, Christopher Rezendes, Tracy Silvia, David Slutz,

**Staff:** Donna Ramos, Joe Lopes, Rick Marshall, Jacquie Sylvia, Brian Silva Boutwell, Deborah Meggison, Taylor Nichols-Xavier, Jim Oliveira, Deven Robitaille

**Guests:** Anne Broholm, Jen Ferland, Bernice Jensen, Elizete Perry, Mary Rapoza, Robert Watt, Jane McArdle, Richard Pyper, Christopher Mittell

**Greetings and Call to Order** by David Slutz- Chair – 8:03 AM

**Announcements-** Chair David Slutz

David Slutz provided personnel updates such as Donna Ramos' return to the board, Abbey Despres' appointment as CFO, as well as a 20-year anniversary recognition for Lisa Jochim.

**Consent Agenda** (Votes)

- Approval of Minutes JUNE 2021 Quarterly Meeting
- Approval of Treasurer's Report
  - David Slutz called for a motion to approve both June minutes and Treasurer's report. Rick Kidder made a motion to accept items, seconded by Lisa Lemieux. All voted in favor and the motion carried.
- Approval to Ratify Items 1-4
  - Motion to approve the ratification of agenda items 1-4 made by Rick Kidder, seconded by Lisa Lemieux, followed by roll call and all were in favor to carry the motion.
- Approval of the \$12,787.90 in Unplanned State Taxes
  - Motion made to approve payment of unplanned state taxes exclusive of penalty and fees made by Lisa Lemieux, seconded by Tracy Silvia.

**Executive Director Report - Jim Oliveira**

Jim Oliveira reported out on the current budget and provided updates on grant statuses. Briefing was provided on previously awarded grants such as a \$2.3M opioid grant, manufacturing grant, and a healthcare grant. Jim Oliveira emphasized the significance of each, highlighting specifics of the manufacturing grant, such as the availability and abundance of training throughout our region. He discussed the future of grant applications at the Workforce Board, stating that the board has been asked to apply for a behavioral health grant, which in turn has the potential to significantly increase the budget in the coming year. Partnerships with local schools, such as comprehensive high schools and vocational-technical high schools in the area were also discussed in relation to current labor market needs. Jim Oliveira concluded his report with a summarization of the team that has been developed at the board, the passion for the work, and the dedication to serve both people and employers.

**Deputy Executive Director Report-** Joe Lopes

Joe Lopes provided updates in regards to the Human Resources operations of the board. Joe Lopes discussed that he and Deborah Meggison have been researching easier processes to HR-related business such as payroll, health insurance, requests for time off, etc. No official professional employer organization (PEO) had been chosen at this point. Joe Lopes additionally noted that the implementation of a PEO system will streamline a lot of time-consuming HR work. Joe Lopes also announced the accounting error made on behalf of The Workplace (TWP). The invoice exceeded the contracted funds available, leaving \$76,000 that was not accounted for by TWP. He further elaborated on the background regarding the need to ratify agenda items 1-4 as well as the vote to approve the release of payment in the amount of \$12,787.90 in unplanned state taxes. The board of directors voted accordingly and the motion carried with all in favor.

**Welcoming of New Board Members-** Rick Kidder

Rick Kidder welcomed Bonnie Mello of *Lifestream, Inc.*, Aaron Polansky of *Old Colony Regional Voc. Tech High School*, and Michael Watson of *Greater New Bedford Regional Voc. Tech High School* as new board members.

**MassHire Career Center Report-** James Daniels and Jim Oliveira

Jim Oliveira acknowledged and raised the issues that the Career Center (CC) has been dealing with recently, highlighting the tedious process of installing a new boiler, as well as ongoing technological issues. He discussed the potential for



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procurement for a new CC operator. James Daniels provided updates for the virtual and in-person trainings that have been facilitated by the CC, stating that 80% of the students enrolled were consistent. The CC has been successful in placing youth in both the in-person and virtual training facilitated through the CC. James Daniels discussed the first quarter spend down in relation to said trainings. James Daniels spoke about overall outreach efforts in the region, and how these efforts could be an effective way to get more employers to connect with job seekers.

### **Other Business & Community Input-**

All relevant committee chairs emphasized a need for more committee members. Jim Oliveira noted the work that has been done by the Apprenticeship Integration Manager, Rick Marshall. Rick Marshall has been bringing apprenticeships to fruition and has been an important asset to the team at MHGNB.

- Next meeting date- December 15, 2021 *Location: TBD*

**Adjourned at 8:59 AM** – verbal roll call all in favor - Motion to adjourn made by David Slutz, seconded by Rick Kidder.