

## Minutes of the June 30, 2020 board meeting

Greeting and Call to Order - meeting called to order at 12:06 pm.

Roll call on Board Members in attendances. James Oliveira noted that the meeting was being conducted remotely on Zoom due to the State mandate regarding public meetings. An audio recording of the meeting is on file.

### Introductions and Announcements

Dave Slutz, Chair

- Mayor Jon Mitchell provided opening remarks and addressed the adjustments made by the city due to the pandemic
- Introductions and welcome to new staff members

### CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS 1 & 2 (Combined Vote)

Dave Slutz, Chair

- Minutes of December Quarterly Meeting (Vote)
  - Motion to approve made by Rick Kidder seconded by Carl Taber – Roll call vote show of hands
- Treasurer's Report Abbey Despres, Finance Director; Abbey provided an assessment and update of the budget. Abbey noted that the budget was balance heading in to FY21 and Treasurer's report will be presented at the next meeting. Initial budget. (Vote)
  - Motion to approve made by John Fernandes seconded by Lisa Lemieux – Roll call vote show of hands

### Executive Director Report

Jim Oliveira, ED/CEO

- Jim noted that the package presented at the meeting outlines MassHire's vision and values in terms of how we work together, collaboratively with a level of professional respect and mutual understanding to be reliable. And now, more than anything else, the pandemic taught the real value of ingenuity.
- The first slide presented was a snapshot through the end of May. Over 4,000 customers were served with 759 entering employment. Three scenarios of mean, median and minimum wages, demonstrated the return on investment with the median wage of \$17.75 likely most accurate. This demonstrates that our investment \$million in grant funds yielded \$28million in aggregate wages with a return on investment of \$23million returned to our community. This is nearly a 10 to one ROI and clearly reinforces that the system does work.
- In FY20 the staff generated \$5,014,000 in grant funds.
- We are very active with the other Regional Workforce Boards, statewide and with the Cape and Islands Workforce Board.
- Recently we were awarded a Department of Defense Manufacturing grant for \$300K. MHGNBWB is serving as the captain for Southeast Region 6, working with Voke Tech in developing curriculum for robotic technicians, a profession in huge demand.
- The EOHED Manufacturing grant is in the third of 5 years with \$635K per year and a cumulative total of \$3million. Training is being done all over the state with 100 people trained despite some things being sidelined by the pandemic.
- Locally, we are managing a Community of Practice grant for the Mass Clean Energy Center on offshore wind.
- The YouthWorks Summer and Year Round 2019 and 2020 planning grants are in progress with training programs being developed for the maritime sector. Partners include Voke Tech and the New Bedford Port Authority.
- Connecting Activities school-to-work program currently has 9 participating schools and 3 more schools will be signing on next year.
- More recently we wrote and received a grant application for Apprenticeship. This resulted the hire of Rick Marshall the Apprenticeship Integration Manager (AIM).
- Additionally we have facilitated grants with our partners including our high school Capital Skills Grant of over \$2million dollars.

- The staff also manages about a half a million dollars in Workforce Training Fund grants for training incumbent workers for our employer partners.
- Overall we have generated nearly three times more grants this year than ever before.
- Since Rick Marshall has come on board as AIM he has been working all over the state making contacts with experts in Apprenticeship creation and there are several interested employers. We were able to repurpose some funds from our manufacturing grant due to training being stalled as a result of the pandemic. These funds were used to secure three Apprenticeship liaisons to support Rick Marshall's effort throughout Southeast Region 6.
- The new staff brought on this year are doing a great job and some hires were due to the aggressive pursuit of grants.
- The career center went fully virtual and our staff conducted themselves admirably over this challenging period and secured over \$2 million in grants just over the last three weeks.
- In the final quarter DCS conducted Fiscal & Administrative Desk Review and we were administratively certified. The Fiscal Review found some deficiencies that will require adjustments over the next 30 days to bring us in compliance. This was not a surprise because of the change in May. Our new fiscal person came on after we provided the documentation to DCS. Abbey is getting things into great shape.
- Jim added that the YouthWorks Summer programs to help the most economically distressed kids are going to be entirely virtual. Everyone is excited about it.
- 20 of the 24 Cyber Security high school juniors and seniors completed the 120 hour program earning 22 college credits.
- We have been working on the forming the Youth Council and have 27 members who have agreed to participate.

#### Other Business – Nominating Committee

Rick Kidder

- Rick presented the nominating committee to the Board for action. All current Board Officers and Executive Committee Members and Chair Appointments will retain their positions with the exception of the yet to be filled Youth Committee.
  - Motion to approve made by Helena DaSilva Hughes seconded Lisa Lemieux – show of hands approved
- There were several reappointments to the Board
  - Motion to approve made by Helena DaSilva Hughes seconded John Fernandes – show of hands approved
- Jim Oliveira noted that letters of appointment were going out within the week and that the appointments are in effect as of July 1, 2020. Jim also welcomed Jean Breault and Tracy Silva who are joining the Board.
- New Appointment Nominations.
  - Motion to approve made by John Fernandes seconded Lisa Lemieux – show of hands approved

#### Fy21 Out-Of- School Youth Vendor Funding

Dave Slutz, Chair

- Recommendation to provide funding to current existing and new OOS youth vendors. The purpose of this vote is to get funding started for July.
  - Motion to approve made by Rick Kidder seconded John Fernandes – show of hands approved

#### Operator Contract/Initial Budget

Dave Slutz, Chair

- Effective July 1, 2020 to approve the FY21 Operator Contract/Initial Budget for a period of one year to commence on July 1, 2020 and end June 30, 2021.
  - Motion to approve made by Ron Melbourne seconded John Fernandes – show of hands approved

#### Career Center Operations

Nestor Leon, The WorkPlace Inc.

- The Career Center has a full complement of staff including intake for eligibility, career counselors, a youth division, with additional staff coming in for the summer youth, and the business services unit. They are look at new processes and have developed a variety of virtual services for WIOA forms, intake, resume writing, and interviewing.
- Through March 31<sup>st</sup> they were at 68% for Adult workers and 70% for Adult Dislocated workers since then they have added customers and are now at about 72% and 82% respectively. Planned training enrollments for Adults was at 52 training accounts at 110% of plan and Dislocated was at 66 actual or 91% of plan. All Dislocated Worker funds were expended and Adult Workers funding is in compliance. Plus they have a request in to transfer some money between the two funds This will further alleviate compliance issues.
- Youth enrollment with contracted vendors is at 78% which is a marked increase over previous years. If it hadn't been for COVID they would probably have been at the 90% enrolment for WIOA.
- 2020 Summer Earn & Learn will be a virtual experience. 344 applications were received with 240 slots available. A lottery will be created for final selection. 7 site supervisors will deliver curriculum via ZOOM. Attendees will be separated into various classrooms. The Board approved purchase of chrome books and there will be Wi-Fi hot spots for students who need them. The youths will be paid with debit cards to provide teach financial literacy and introduce them to formalized banking.
- The WorkPlace is very cognizant of the July 25<sup>th</sup> date when the unemployment federal stimulus ends. Many customers will then be turning back to the workforce system seeking employment. The real opportunity over the 10 weeks crisis was the ability to prepare and make sure updated activities were in place to provided quality services, and connect customers with any additional services they may need. The WorkPlace has experienced this type of environment before and understands about what long term unemployment can do to individuals. They do not want our customers falling into this cycle. They are prepared to triage with improved services for when they come.
- To deal with COVID they engaged staff and with a variety programs for professional and workforce development, physical and mental health activities and daily seminars and debriefings. They assessed customers' access to technology, and vendor capabilities. They developed online programming, made contact with every customer, and created new outreach strategies. They updated their resource guide to connect services and provide holistic customer service experience.

#### GUEST SPEAKER INTRODUCTION

Dave Slutz

#### Guest Speakers

Lynn Coish, Coordinator, NB Census Complete Count Committee

- Lynn noted that census was still hiring and calling back for anyone who already applied. The hourly rate is \$22 for enumerators. Working for the census does not affect benefits for anyone receiving them. New Bedford is at about a 54.8% self-response rate and the goal is to meet or exceed the 2010 census response rate of 64% by July 31 and then improve on that by October 31. The census is asking everyone for their help by spreading the word about the important of the census. They are census help cards in 3 languages available as handouts for anyone who would like to distribute them. They are also looking for a location for the Census Bureau to complete their hiring intake procedures. After that training will take place at the Immigration Assistance Center if it is open. The populations in New Bedford all match up with the high COVID, high unemployment, and low response rate with three areas in particular. If they have 4.5 households complete the census everyday they will meet the 64% goal by July 31<sup>st</sup>. They are also doing outreach for July through October with a "curbside census" with drive by hot spots where people use their own device that include incentives like free masks and hand sanitizer. They are working with Domino's to provide census hot spots at their locations with an incentive of free pizza. She would also like to offer this hot spot sponsorship opportunity to any other businesses that may be interested. Please contact Lynn with any questions or for more information on how you can contribute.

#### OTHER BUSINESS

Jim Oliveira

- Congratulation to Paula Shiner for her retirement from Coastline Elderly Services. Thanks to Paula for 10 years of service to the Workforce Board and making us all aware of the needs of seniors.

- Also thanks to Steve Grant who has stepped in to assist our new Finance Director Abbey. He has been doing a wonderful job with bringing her up to speed.
- Jim also wanted to recognize Stephanie Smith and Chelsea Burke of the Career Center who are finalists for the MassHire awards for people who exemplify our values. In particular they are nominated for the category of Collaboration and we will keep you posted on the results.

ADJOURN - meeting adjourned 1:15 pm