

**Executive Committee
March 6th, 2024, 3:00PM
MassHire Greater New Bedford
Meeting Minutes**

Attendance: David Slutz, Margarita Graham, Carl Taber, John Fernandes, Duarte Silva

Workforce Board/Career Center Staff Attendance: Joe Lopes, Taylor Nichols-Xavier, Kyra Greco, Abbey Despres, Jacqueline Sylvia, Rodney Solomon, Deborah Meggison, Fran Grey

Greetings and Call to Order – Joe Lopes

Joe Lopes, called to open the meeting at 3:05PM. Roll call vote was had to officially open the meeting.

Consent Agenda

- Treasurer’s Report
- Minutes of Meeting December 6th, 2023 - Motion to approve consent agenda made by John Fernandes, seconded by Duarte Silva, followed by roll call vote.

Old Business

Joe Lopes discussed the consideration of a Benefit Corporation and what it would look like. Elizabeth Manchester from Patridge, Snow & Hahn legal office was introduced to answer any questions that the board might have regarding this type of corporation. Elizabeth discussed what the workforce board would take on and what exemptions would be allowed. Several options and points for this kind of structure were discussed with the committee. Joe Lopes mentioned that he has spoken with partners and feels confident that implementing an 18–24-month plan would work for this. Other workforce boards in the area are interested in how this structure will play out, as it would be the first in Massachusetts. It was discussed that these kinds of structures exist in Rhode Island.

Votes to Approve

- **Vote 1:** To approve the election of Duarte Silva as Vice Chair of the MassHire Greater New Bedford Workforce Board effective upon full board approval at the March 20th, 2024, Quarterly Meeting. *Motion to approve made by Margarita Graham, seconded by John Fernandes. Duarte Silva abstained from this vote.*
- **Vote 2:** To approve the election of Jeffrey Pelletier as Assistant Treasurer of the MassHire Greater New Bedford Workforce Board effective upon full board approval at the March 20th, 2024, Quarterly Meeting. *Motion to approve made by Margarita Graham, seconded by John Fernandes.*
- **Vote 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 our region. *Motion to approve made by John Fernandes, seconded by Duarte Silva.*
- **Vote 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*. **Vote amended to specify “per calendar year”—amendment voted upon, motion made by John Fernandes, seconded by Margarita Graham. Motion to approve the amended vote made by Duarte Silva, seconded by Margarita Graham.*
- **Vote 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 Duarte Silva.*
- **Vote 6:** To approve the edits made to the MassHire Greater New Bedford Workforce Board Employee Handbook as discussed (complete documentation available upon request). *Motion to approve made by Duarte Silva, seconded by John Fernandes.*
- **Vote 7:** FY25 Board of Directors recommendations – *vote was amended to take motions separately, amendment motion made by John Fernandes, seconded by Margarita Graham.*
 - **Motion 1:** to approve the By-Law exception to retain Dave Slutz as Chair of the Board. *Motion made by John Fernandes, seconded by Duarte Silva. Dave Slutz abstained from this motion.*
 - **Motion 2:** To approve the By-Law exception to retain Carl Taber as Treasurer of the Board. *Motion made by Duarte Silva, seconded by John Fernandes. Carl Taber abstained from this motion.*
 - **Motion 3:** To approve the By-Law exception to retain Lisa Lemieux as Secretary/Clerk of the Board. *Motion made by John Fernandes, seconded by Duarte Silva.*
 - **Motion 4:** To approve the FY25 Board of Directors recommendations, including the Slate of Officers, as presented. *Motion made by John Fernandes, seconded by Duarte Silva.*
- **Vote 8:** To approve the recommendations as presented to the Executive Committee with a referral to the full Board of Directors for the approval and the establishment of a benefit corporation. *Motion to approve made by John Fernandes, seconded by Margarita Graham.*



Executive Director/CEO Report & Updates

Joe Lopes provided a brief overview of his Executive Director/CEO report. He noted that on July 1st there is an expected 8% budget reduction and more to come. Joe Lopes mentioned the availability of training for long shoreman and other related grants. Joe stated that the Workforce Board also has available training for veterans for the next 6 years. The Workforce Board has also been working on both a STEM grant as well as a banking/finance program for high school students. It was noted that the Workforce Board has been working with Greater New Bedford Regional Vocational High School for marine motor training.

MassHire Career Center Updates

Fran Grey gave an update on Career Center numbers and stated that credentials are slow going but working on improvements. Youth services are at 80% and the Career Center is hopeful this will continue to increase, as Q2 shows a slight improvement. Joe Lopes mentioned that MassHire Greater New Bedford is hosting a meeting with Brockton Workforce Board and Youth Team on March 14th. This will be a roundtable discussion to see how both organizations can help each other and make a blueprint to work together in the future.

Adjourn – Joe Lopes

Motion to adjourn made by John Fernandes, seconded by Margarita Graham, followed by roll call vote. The meeting was adjourned at 4:15PM.