

Meeting Minutes for the First Meeting of the Employee Ownership Advisory Board
Friday, March 1, 2024
11:45 AM

Board Members in Attendance via Remote Access:

- Peter Milano
- Darnell Adams
- John Biagioni
- Eric Braitmayer
- Edward Carberry
- Jeff Jones
- Daniel Kenary
- Mary McCooe
- Aaron Moberger
- Veronica Ortiz
- Maria Prado
- Shavon Prophet
- Wren Ribeiro
- Stephanie Swanson
- Ethan Tupelo

Board Members not in Attendance

- Darien Johnson

Meeting Minutes

Welcome and Introductions

Peter Milano, Director of Strategy & Business Development for the Massachusetts Office of Business Development (MOBD) called the inaugural meeting of the Advisory Board on Employee Ownership (Advisory Board) to order at 11:45 a.m. Massachusetts Secretary of Economic Development Yvonne Hao gave opening remarks and background information on the state's economic development bill that was filed by Governor Healey on February 29, 2024.

Mr. Milano then spoke about the Massachusetts Office of Business Development and asked all board members in attendance to introduce themselves.

Swearing In Ceremony

Kate Kelly, Director of Boards and Commissions for the Office of Governor Healey, Jonathan Torcia, Deputy Director of Boards and Commissions, and Julia Fone, Project Coordinator, served as the Commissioners to Qualify Public Office and carried out the swearing in ceremony for all gubernatorial appointees to the Employee Ownership Advisory Board that were in attendance. Gubernatorial appointees repeated the oath of office and were officially sworn in.

Legal and Compliance Matters

Rob McGovern, Senior Deputy General Counsel for the Executive Office of Economic Development, gave a presentation on the legal and compliance matters pertaining to the Employee Ownership Advisory Board. This included an overview of the scope and duties of the advisory board as well as a briefing of conflict-of-interest law, public records law, and open meeting law.

Massachusetts Center for Employee Ownership

Mr. Milano introduced Undersecretary of Economic Foundations Ashley Stolba who offered remarks on the objectives, leadership, and cadence of both the Advisory Board on Employee Ownership and the Mass Center for Employee Ownership (MassCEO). Ms. Stolba stated the objective of the advisory board as to advise the administration through the MassCEO and Massachusetts Office of Business Development on employee ownership issues and policy. Ms. Stolba explained that the MassCEO will operate as a state office within MOBD to support and promote employee ownership in the commonwealth.

Ms. Stolba then announced the appointment of Kevin Kuros as the Executive Director of the Mass Center for Employee Ownership. Mr. Kuros provided remarks to underscore the mission of MassCEO and gave context on employee ownership in Massachusetts. Mr. Kuros also stated and clarified the short- and long-term duties and responsibilities of the center and presented a slide on the MassCEO budget.

Bylaws of Advisory Board on Employee Ownership

Mr. McGovern provided an overview of the proposed draft bylaws that were circulated to the board prior to the meeting for the purpose of holding a vote to adopt the final draft of the bylaws. Advisory Board member Darnell Adams stated her appreciation for the work that has been done and requested clarity on specifications of the bylaws and more time to review them before moving forward with a vote. Ms. Adams asked if it was necessary that we vote at today's meeting, or if more time could be granted. Advisory Board member Wren Riberio commented that it would be nice to establish an ad-hoc working group in order to look more closely at the bylaws and propose changes before the next meeting. The adoption of the bylaws was postponed.

Election of Chair and Vice Chair of Advisory Board

Mr. Milano explained that the role of the chair is to functionally run these meetings and expressed his willingness to serve as chair. Mary McCooe nominated Peter Milano. Ed Carberry seconded that nomination. A motion was then called for a vote. Victoria Grimes took roll call to carry out the vote.

The count was ELEVEN votes in the affirmative for Mr. Milano as chair, ZERO votes in the negative, and FIVE abstentions. The motion carried.

Chair Milano called for a motion to nominate a vice chair. Aaron Moberger was nominated for vice chair. A motion was called and a second was granted for the nomination of Mr. Moberger as vice chair.

Ms. Grimes took roll call to carry out the vote. The count was FOURTEEN votes in the affirmative for Mr. Moberger as vice chair, ZERO votes in the negative, and two abstentions. The motion carried.

Open Discussion

Emrah Fejzic introduced Representative Carmine Gentile and Senator Julian Cyr. Representative Gentile thanked the advisory board for stepping up to serve, and Senator Cyr conveyed his gratitude to the board for helping worker ownership models reach businesses across the commonwealth.

Chair Milano and Mr. Kuros led the remainder of the open discussion. Interest and expectations around ad hoc working groups and subcommittees was conveyed, and the timeline of future meetings was discussed.

Board members were asked to raise their hand if they were interested in being part of a subcommittee to review and propose a final draft of the bylaws. Darnell Adams, Wren Riberio, Aaron Moberger, and Mary McCooe indicated their interest. The motion to form a bylaw subcommittee was called and seconded. Ms. Grimes led roll call to conduct the vote and the motion carried. All members present voted in the affirmative.

Adjournment

Chair Milano called for a motion to adjourn the meeting at 12:45p.m. which was made and seconded. All members present voted in the affirmative. The meeting was adjourned.