

Massachusetts Workforce Development Board Meeting

Tuesday, September 20, 2016

AHEAD, LLC

270 Samuel Barnet Blvd

New Bedford, MA 02745

9:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

Members Present:

Aixa Beauchamp, Joanne Berwald, Anne Broholm, Jesse Brown, Kathleen Cullen-Cote, Donna Cupelo, Sherry Dong, Pam Eddinger, Eric Hagopian, Cassius Johnson, Susan Mailman, Beth Mitchell, Carol Ozelius, Warren Pepicelli, Joanne Pokaski, Dan Rivera, Elizabeth Skidmore, Juan Vega, Ronald Walker, Beth Williams.

Members Absent:

Kristin Broadley, Gerard Burke, Tricia Canavan, James Cassetta, Driscoll DoCanto, Eileen Donoghue, Kimberley Driscoll, Robert LePage, John Mann, Juliette Mayers, Nicky Osborne, Joseph Wagner, Ray Wrobel.

Staff and Guests:

Garrett Casey (Office of Senator Eileen Donoghue), Christina Connelly (City of New Bedford), Pahlola DeLeon (Exec. Office of Labor and Workforce Development), Brenda Francis (Greater New Bedford Career Center), Jennifer James-Price (Exec. Office of Labor and Workforce Development), Rebekah Lashman (Commonwealth Corporation), David Muldrew (Exec. Office of Labor and Workforce Development) Nathan Pham (Verizon New England), Anthony Sapienza (Joseph Aboud/ Greater New Bedford Workforce Investment Board), Sunny Schwartz (Metro North Regional Employment Board), Cheryl Scott (Exec. Office of Labor and Workforce Development), Sheila Sullivan-Jardim (Brockton Area Workforce Investment Board), Alice Sweeney (Department of Career Services), Marina Zhavoronkova (Exec. Office of Labor and Workforce Development), Jessica Muradian (Exec. Office of Labor and Workforce Development), Shawn Martin (Greater New Bedford Career Center), Ethan Snow (Unite Here), David Cedrone (Department of Higher Education)

Meeting Minutes

Welcome & Introductions

Donna Cupelo opens the meeting and welcomes the Board members and guests. All present introduce themselves. Ms. Cupelo thanked board member Anne Broholm, AHEAD, LLC and the Greater New Bedford Workforce Investment Board for hosting the meeting. Ms. Cupelo shared her thoughts on the success of the workforce board thus far, noting that she hopes that in 2017 the Board and its committees will develop strategies and recommendations to provide to the Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development (EOLWD) and to Governor Baker. Ms. Cupelo also pointed out that the dates for the 2017 Workforce Development Board Meetings have been established, and were sent to the Board members; if Board members are interested in hosting a Board meeting they should reach out to Cheryl Scott. Donna Cupelo then introduces Cheryl Scott who reviewed the agenda and the meeting packets. Ms. Scott mentioned that the state workforce board [website](#) will include meeting materials, Board updates, meeting information, new articles and other information of interest.

Workforce Development Update

Secretary Ronald Walker also thanked Board member Anne Broholm for hosting the meeting. Secretary Walker shared data about the Massachusetts workforce: we are currently experiencing a 3.9% unemployment rate, and the number of Massachusetts residents who are actively participating in the Commonwealth's workforce (labor force participation rate) is up to 66.5%. However, there are still 140,000 people that are unemployed and many of them are from the target populations of the *Task Force on Populations Facing Chronically High Rates of Unemployment*: African Americans, Latinos, Veterans, youth, long term unemployed and people with disabilities. EOLWD will continue to focus on ensuring these populations get their fair share in economic prosperity. Secretary Walker mentioned that the state budget has passed: \$1 million has been awarded to Workforce Competitiveness Trust Fund, a quarter of a million was awarded to fund initiatives to support returning citizens. The Workforce Skills Cabinet recently awarded \$45 million in capital grants to community colleges, vocational schools, business and workforce boards to purchase equipment to improve training capacity and effectiveness. In WIOA, federal funds to Massachusetts were reduced by 5%, while Massachusetts' WIOA State plan was officially approved by the federal Department of Labor, so we are now starting to look toward WIOA implementation. Secretary Walker also introduced Talent Connect, an initiative targeted toward individuals that are long-term unemployed. The program assists those who have been out of work for six months or more on an individual basis to help them obtain em-

ployment. Another issue that came up during the Task Force's work is transportation. Lack of transportation was a significant barrier for people to find, obtain and retain work. EOLWD has partnered with the Massachusetts Department of Transportation to try to figure out how we can create transportation opportunities to help people get to work. EOLWD is also embarking on a regional planning process which involves each region creating a workforce development strategy based on regional sectors of growth in order to leverage our resources more strategically. Board members will hear more about this as this initiative unfolds. This year was also a great year for YouthWorks – the Commonwealth's jobs program for youth. About 4,000 youth were successfully placed in jobs this past summer. Commonwealth Corporation is also conducting a study about promotability skills to ascertain what businesses and youth can do to help a young person move up in a company, and along a career pathway. As part of this effort, a survey was conducted among businesses to identify the particular skills that lead to promotion. The results of the survey will not only help tailor the YouthWorks program but will be shared widely to assist young people in being successful in their jobs while meeting the needs of businesses across the Commonwealth. Secretary Walker also mentioned that a \$2.5 Million was awarded by the federal department of labor focused on providing jobs for people with disabilities, and \$5 Million was also awarded for apprenticeship. Lastly, Secretary Walker mentioned that EOLWD is initiating a branding exercise for the Workforce system to better market our resources and opportunities.

Review and Approval of the June Meeting Minutes

Donna Cupelo asks for the approval of the meeting minutes for the Workforce Development Board September 20th 2016 meeting. She took the motion to accept the meeting minutes, and the motion was passed unanimously.

Board Committee Update: Labor Market and Workforce Information

Pam Eddinger and Joanne Pokaski co-chairs of the Labor Market and Workforce Information Committee provided an update of the committee's work. The committee is pursuing two deliverables: a labor market dashboard, and an industry/occupational "deep dive" in four areas: construction, engineering, hospitality and information technology. For the "deep dives" the committee will look for data that answers: where are the jobs? What is the job demand statewide, by region? What are the skill demands for these jobs? Ms. Eddinger and Ms. Pokaski asked the Board whether they had any suggestions for this work, or any resources to aid them in their analysis. Donna Cupelo suggested that the committee look at previous research and studies about the tech sector. Ms. Cupelo also suggested that the committee reach out to the Mass Technology Leadership Council who have done intensive research on looking at tech trends, job opportunities and growth throughout the state. She noted that in a 2010 study there were 170,000 technology jobs, but over 70,000 of the jobs were in non-IT companies, and

this need will grow due to the high demand from cyber security. Another member requested that the committee try to identify the entry level skills for these occupations, which will be useful information to understand how someone can embark on a career in these high-demand occupations.

Demand- Driven 2.0: Career Center Business Engagement Model & Demand-Driven 2.0 Success Stories from the Region

David Muldrew provided a briefing on Demand -Driven 2.0, a collaborative effort within EOLWD to improve the workforce system's capacity to meet employer needs. Mr. Muldrew shared the EOLWD Career Center Business Engagement Model, an initiative to ensure One-Stop Career Centers align their staff and resources to assist businesses in their recruitment needs. Another part of this initiative is the Governor's BizWorks Team. This executive team is represented by EOLWD, Mass Office of Business Development, MA Department of Higher Education and the Department of Career Services. This team provides immediate response to businesses in need of staffing support. These efforts are being piloted through Citizens Bank, and various hospitals in the state to build relationships, and to identify opportunities to best support the businesses' talent recruitment. The initiative will be measured through quarterly performance metrics to measure effectiveness and compile feedback generated from the customers.

To highlight successful employer-driven initiatives from the local region, Jim Oliveira from the Greater New Bedford Workforce Investment Board provided an overview of a successful manufacturing training program that created a pipeline of entry level precision manufacturing workers to meet regional demand for five employer partners. Brenda Francis from the Greater New Bedford Career Center presented on a successful pilot to work with a local company, Acushnet, to meet an acute hiring need. Through streamlining their job seeker customer screening, vetting, and preparation process, while creating an easy access points for the employer, the Career Center was able to successfully place over 100 individuals with their company. The company also has opted to exclusively use the Career Center for recruitment for this and similar positions. This model is being implemented throughout the Career Center, and replicated with other employers.

Donna Cupelo adjourned the meeting at 11:30 a.m.