

Massachusetts Workforce Development Board Meeting

Wednesday, June 15, 2016

New England Carpenters Training Center

13 Holman Road

Millbury, MA 01527

9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

Members Present:

Aixa Beauchamp, Anne Broholm, Jesse Brown, Gerard Burke, James Cassetta, Donna Cupelo, Pam Eddinger, Carol Ozelius (Grady), Eric Hagopian, Robert LePage, Susan Mailman, John Mann, Juliette Mayers, Beth Mitchell, Nicky Osborne, Joanne Pokaski, Elizabeth Skidmore, Ronald Walker, Raymond Wrobel,

Members Absent:

Joanne Berwald, Kristin Broadley, Kathleen Cullen- Cote, Driscoll DoCanto, Sherry Dong, Eileen Donoghue, Kimberley Driscoll, Danroy Henry, Cassius Johnson, Warren Pepicelli, Dan Rivera, Juan Vega, Joseph Wagner, Beth Williams

Staff and Guests:

Kate Banimenia (U.S. Department of Labor), Megan Brennan (Cunningham & Associates), Gail Brown (Greater Lowell Workforce Development Board), Greg Bunn (Exec. Office of Labor and Workforce Development), Jolanta Conway (Adult and Community Learning Services), Thomas Cunningham (Cunningham & Associates), Pahola DeLeon (Exec. Office of Labor and Workforce Development), Don Gillis (Massachusetts Workforce Board Association), Carolyn Gordon (MA Commission for the Blind), Jason Hunter (Brockton WIB), Jennifer James (Exec. Office of Labor and Workforce Development), Louise Lynch (Massachusetts Department of Transitional Assistance), Ken Messina (Department of Career Services), Bill Noone (Massachusetts Rehab Commission), Jim Oliveira (Greater New Bedford Workforce Investment Board), Susan Quinones (Massachusetts Workforce Professionals Association), Kimberley Rowe- Cummings (Massachusetts Department of Transitional Assistance), Sarah Schoff (Exec. Office of Labor and Workforce Development), Cheryl Scott (Massachusetts Workforce Development Board), Nancy Snyder (Commonwealth Corporation), Sacha Stadhard (Department of Career Services), Alice Sweeney (Department of Career Services), Earl Tate (Exec. Office of Labor and Workforce Development), Jeffrey Turgeon (Central Massachusetts Workforce Investment Board), Raija Vaisanen (Commonwealth Corporation), Olga Yulikova (Executive Office of Elder Affairs)

Meeting Minutes

Welcome

Donna Cupelo called the meeting to order, and welcomed board members and guests. All members and guests introduced themselves. Donna extended a special thanks to Board member Elizabeth Skidmore for hosting the meeting at the New England Carpenters Training Center. Elizabeth provided a brief introduction of the New England Regional Council of Carpenters and presented a video highlighting female carpenters. Donna Cupelo summarized the Board's accomplishments over the last three months since the Board started meeting, including completing Board surveys, Board member orientations and each of the four board committees meeting once. She noted that today's Board meeting is an effort to help the Board gain an understanding of labor market trends in Massachusetts, and then discuss how this data informs the Board's work moving forward, as well as learn about the preliminary work coming out of the Board committees. Cheryl Scott, Executive Director, reviewed the meeting agenda, the documents in the meeting packets and noted the board member contact information sheet; members should direct corrections to Pahola DeLeon. Cheryl also informed members of the Massachusetts Workforce Development Board [website](#) which contains information on all of the upcoming Board and committee meetings, materials for past meetings, event announcements, press releases, and much more.

Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development Update

Secretary Walker provided an update on the workforce initiatives that have been underway under the Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development (EOLWD) and the Baker Administration. Secretary Walker shared that the WIOA Combined State Plan was successfully submitted and that although we are awaiting final approval we have received the word from the federal Department of Labor that the Massachusetts state plan is one of the strongest in the country. Massachusetts was also awarded a \$1 million grant from the federal Department of Labor to provide technical assistance to other states on effective workforce development programs/initiatives. Secretary Walker thanked the members of the WIOA Steering Committee for their efforts in developing the state plan; he recognized WIOA steering committee members present at the meeting: Jolanta Conway, Don Gillis, Bill Noone, Nicky Osborne, Joanne Pokaski, Susan Quinones, Kimberly Rowe-Cummings, and Olga Yulikova, as well as the members of the Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development who staffed the committee: Greg Bunn, Jennifer James, Cheryl Scott, Sacha Stadhard, Alice Sweeney.

Secretary Walker then provided an overview of the efforts of the Workforce Skills Cabinet which is composed of Secretary Walker as Chairman, Secretary of Education Jim Peyser and Secretary of Housing and Economic Development Jay Ash. The Workforce Skills Cabinet is working to align education, workforce and economic development to ensure the

Commonwealth is meeting businesses' needs for skilled, educated workers right now and in the future. The Skills Cabinet has rolled out Governor's BizWorks Team, a team of executive-level staff from Education, Economic Development, and Labor and Workforce who all work together to provide a coordinated point of contact and communication for companies large and small to meet their needs. Secretary Walker introduced EOLWD's David Muldrew (not present) and Earl Tate who are spearheading the Governor's BizWorks team, and EOLWD's Demand 2.0 efforts. The Workforce Skills Cabinet is also aligning workforce-related state grants, planning and performance across the three secretariats, and launching a regional planning process to share data across state programming and ensure state dollars are supporting programs that are working to address the skills gap. In April the Workforce Skills Cabinet and Governor Baker announced \$9.3M in Workforce Skills Capital Grants which were awarded to career technical, vocational high schools, and community colleges. The programs help students and adults get the training and skills they need to get jobs with a company in their area that needs workers. A copy of the Workforce Skills Capital Grants press release announcing these grants was included in the Board meeting packets.

Secretary Walker then announced that in April the Baker Administration and EOLWD awarded \$2 million for the Workforce Competitiveness Trust Fund (WCTF), to be administered by Commonwealth Corporation. These funds will be used to support 14 regional partnerships between businesses, educational institutions, community-based organizations and workforce development groups to prepare 370 un-employed or under-employed residents for in-demand occupations. The awards will fund training in industries with good paying jobs that support families and help grow the state's economy, such as automotive repair, culinary arts, retail, banking and insurance, life sciences, construction, biotech manufacturing, commercial driving, and health care. Secretary Walker also shared that EOLWD was recently awarded \$200k from the federal Department of Labor for a *State Accelerator* grant to expand apprenticeship across the Commonwealth to new industries and occupations and to additional employers. The funding will support an "Apprenticeship Champion" who will develop technical assistance strategies, convene employers, workforce intermediaries and other stakeholders to identify strategic opportunities for the expansion of apprenticeship in Massachusetts.

Secretary Walker then highlighted a number of workforce development initiatives in the state budget the Governor filed for the upcoming fiscal year. The final budget has not yet passed, and is still very much under consideration. In the Governor's budget, the Workforce Competitiveness Trust Fund (WCTF) was funded at \$4,000,000. If funded, this would be the first time this model would be funded in consecutive years. The Governor's budget also called for the creation of an Economic Opportunity Fund for \$2,000,000. This funding was created based on recommendations from the Governor's *Task Force on Populations Facing Chronically High Rates of Unemployment*, and designed to provide job training, educational, and workforce development strategies to the Task Force's target populations. The Economic Opportunity Fund was not included in either the House or Senate's original budget. However, Secretary Walker recognized Board member Representative Joseph Wagner who sponsored a House

amendment that includes \$4,000,000 for the Workforce Competitiveness Trust Fund, \$2,000,000 of which will be for the Economic Opportunity Fund, just as the Governor's budget proposed. Another of the Governor's Budget proposals calls for a Demonstration Workforce Development Program to be funded at \$1,000,000. The purpose of this program is to provide education, job readiness, job training, and other services to facilitate those that have been incarcerated re-enter into society. The House did not include funding for this program, but the Senate included \$500,000 for this program. Last, The Governor's budget funded "YouthWorks", a summer Jobs program for At-Risk Youth, administered by Commonwealth Corporation. YouthWorks increases the employment of teens through partnerships that prepare, coach, and support young people in job search and job success. The Governor called for \$11.5 million for YouthWorks, the most funding a Governor has ever proposed. The House funded YouthWorks at \$9.5 million and the Senate funded the program with \$11.5 million. Secretary Walker then took questions from the members and guests.

An audience member asked what apprenticeship grants are currently active in Massachusetts and who are the partners involved. Undersecretary Jennifer James answered that the Department of Career Services won a competitive grant from the federal Department of Labor about a year ago for apprenticeships in health care and manufacturing. The grant is being administered by local workforce boards serving as grant operators and the services are delivered through the career centers. Undersecretary James mentioned that at the state government-level much of our apprenticeship activity is focused on compliance work through the Department of Labor Standards who currently administers the apprenticeship program. Board member Aixa Beauchamp also asked about state government's private/public partnerships and the opportunities available to increase them. Secretary Walker highlighted the Demand-Driven initiatives where the public sectors engages with businesses to see what their job needs are and in turn be able to assist these businesses in hiring qualifying candidates. Also efforts are focused on working with private nonprofit companies who target certain populations.

Approval of February 25, 2016 Meeting Minutes

Donna Cupelo asks for the approval of the meeting minutes for the Workforce Development Board February 25th 2016 meeting. She took the motion to accept the meeting minutes, and the motion was passed unanimously.

Massachusetts Labor Market Overview

Nancy Snyder and Raija Vaisanen of Commonwealth Corporation gave a presentation to the Board on the labor market: what is happening around the state when it comes to our industries, what jobs are in demand and what are the "skills gaps". The data presented is an update to an analysis that was conducted with the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston in 2012 and that was an update to work that began in 2008 by Northeastern University. Every four years

Commonwealth Corporation collects data on what are the demand trends in the state in terms of labor market, labor supply trends, and what are the outcomes of secondary education. This is to see if there are any persistent labor market challenges or if there are any emerging labor market challenges that we, as a state, must address.

Raija Vaisanen provided the Board with a presentation on labor market data (powerpoint presentation.) Key points of the presentation include:

- Employment-wise, Massachusetts has recovered since the Great recession. However, some regions of the state (i.e. Hampden, Bristol, Dukes and Barnstable County) have higher unemployment rates than the state average.
- In the annual average employment by industry the highest percentage of jobs are in the health care and social assistance. Health care is the largest employer across the state; accommodation and food services are top industries statewide-especially in the tourism-rich areas (e.g. Berkshire and Cape Island regions.)
- Data on educational attainment of employees by industry reflects that a large portion of the employees in professional and technical services, education and financial services have a bachelor's degree or higher, whereas food service and construction have a larger share of employees with a high school degree or less; however, many of these industries, such as construction require some form of specialized training or a credential which can be gained through specific training programs like apprenticeship.
- Employment opportunities have grown, almost exclusively, for workers with a college degree, while workers with a high school diploma or less and young workers ages 16-24 years old are disproportionately unemployed.
- Population growth in Massachusetts is largely driven by immigration and growth in diversity.
- Educational attainment also varies by race/ethnicity in Massachusetts. Whites and Asians hold the highest educational attainment of a bachelor's degree or higher, while Blacks and Hispanics hold a large number of a high school degree or less.
- Massachusetts is also the 10th oldest state in the nation with around 45% of the labor force aged 45 or older. The labor force participation rate of workers 65 years and older is growing while teen employment has declined.
- Mens' labor force participation rate has declined while women's participation rate has flattened. This might point to the need for expanded childcare access, and paid leave policies.
- In 2015 there were nearly 176K workers who were marginally attached to the workforce or involuntarily part-time, in addition to the 176K individuals that are unemployed.
- Massachusetts is the most well-educated state in the nation with 43% of population with bachelor's degrees or higher. Massachusetts mirrors the US trends in Associate's and Bachelor's degree completions but not in certificate completions.
- The Massachusetts economy rewards educational attainment. Employment opportunities are growing for jobs and in sectors that require post-secondary education. But educational attainment by race and ethnicity varies, and some race/ethnicities (Blacks, Hispanics, others) have a lower share of workers with post-secondary degrees

or credentials. Meanwhile, population growth in the state is largely from these populations and immigration. As a state, we need to look at these achievement gaps.

- Massachusetts also needs to address the tightening labor market, and data suggests there will be labor shortage in the future. As a state we need to look at those populations with a declining labor force participation rate, and those that are unemployed, the workers that are underemployed or discouraged.

Susan Mailman asked how Massachusetts is tracking apprenticeship programs, and if the figures include certification completion due to apprenticeships. Elizabeth Skidmore explained that apprenticeship programs are regulated by the Division of Apprenticeship Standard who has data on all the apprentices in the state including enrollment by race and gender. Nicky Osborne asked for data on the group is unemployed, specifically groups like persons with disabilities. Raija Vaisanen stated there is no estimate of that number but that it would be a good data point to look into. Secretary Walker shared that EOLWD just launched TalentConnect, a new initiative focused on the long term unemployed that emphasizes how we are working to get the data on all target populations. Another Board member asked about data on veterans. Raija Vaisanen answered that we do not have that data yet but agencies, like the Department on Veterans Services, do collect some of that information. Alice Sweeney added that with increased focus and resources on veterans, the veteran unemployment rate is decreasing. Elizabeth Skidmore asked if we can provide information on wages by industries that demonstrate the higher paid industries. Pam Eddinger pointed out that education levels by race/ethnicity often mask disparities within a race/ethnicity. For example, there are segments of the Asian population that experience similar skills gap as the black and Hispanic community. Dr. Eddinger also suggested that we count persons with Associates degrees. Dr. Eddinger also noted that for community colleges enrollment is increasing for the non-traditional student, however, these students generally take longer to complete their degrees, which increases their debt burden. This puts them at a further disadvantage in the marketplace. Beth Mitchell emphasized the need to continue STEM initiatives, citing increasing need for software developers not only in the greater Boston area but across the Commonwealth. Aixa Beauchamp asked about the Hispanic population and what percentage of that population experiences a skills gap due to language. Greg Bunn encouraged everyone to go back and look at the WIOA state plan to get more information and get a better understanding of this labor market data in Massachusetts. Donna Cupelo concludes this session by encouraging the Board members to think of gaps, trends and data that they are interested in looking into.

Board Committees Overview & Updates

Cheryl Scott shared results of the Board member survey. Popular interest areas among the Board were in education and training, youth, business and industry, and specific populations, such as youth and the long-term unemployed. The survey also revealed the board members' industry affiliations, noting there appears to be a wide range on the Board. Donna Cupelo then invited committee chair members to provide an update about their committees to give other members the opportunity to share feedback on the committee's work. Pam Eddinger and Joanne Pokaski, co-chairs of the Labor Market and Workforce Information Committee shared

that the LMWI committee was been engaged in orientation to labor market data and sources, and labor market data analysis. Some labor market data questions the committee seeks to answer are where are the jobs, statewide and regionally? What are the top industries and occupations? What is the current education and training output? Next, the WIOA Oversight Committee, chaired by Secretary, shared that some of the focus of this committee will be to gain a general understanding of WIOA, pinpoint service and resource gaps constraining the ability to achieve the State Plan, and deliver a WIOA based implementation process. On behalf of Youth Committee chair Cassius Johnson, Sacha Stadhard shared that the committee is looking at data and information regarding the youth target population and seeking to craft a statewide goal with regard to employment and credential attainment. Aixa Beauchamp and Anne Broholm, co-chairs of the Economic Opportunity Committee shared that they successfully completed their first task which was to find a new name for the committee. It was formerly known as the "Committee on Populations Facing Employment Challenges". Some of the committee focus is on identifying best practices and recommending strategies to bring to these practices to scale, craft policy recommendations to direct resources toward employment outcomes, explore partnerships to cultivate resources and explore ideas on how we can market career center services to target populations.

Wrap Up and Adjourn

Donna Cupelo thanked all of the members for their volunteer efforts. She asks if any of the members or guests have any questions. Joanne Pokaski asked for more information of the Task Force on Populations Facing Chronically High Rates of Unemployment. Elizabeth Skidmore asked for more information on the wage gap across industries. A Board member made a suggestion for all Board committees to develop a written update of the committee's activities to circulate to the Board for each meeting, including what they have discussed, what has been accomplished and what the next steps are for their committee. Donna Cupelo concludes the meeting by thanking all the board members and guests and invited everyone to take a tour of the New England Carpenters Training Center with Elizabeth Skidmore. Motion to adjourn the meeting was made, and passed. The meeting adjourned at approximately 11:35am.