****

**MassHire State Workforce Board Meeting**

Tuesday, June 18, 2019

9:30 a.m. to 10:45 a.m.

Verizon Technology Center

60 Sylvan Road

Waltham, MA 02451

**Meeting Minutes**

*(Draft)*

***Members Present:***

*Rosalin Acosta, Zamawa Arenas, Aixa Beauchamp (remote), Jesse Brown, Donna Cupelo, Sherry Dong (remote), Jessyca Feliciano, Ann-Margaret Ferrante, Maria Ferreira-Bedard, Rainer Gawlick, Axel Grippo, Robert LePage, Eric Lesser, John Mann, Juliette Mayers, Jeffrey McCue, Joanne, Pokaski, Elizabeth Skidmore, Juan Vega, Janice Weekes, Maicharia Weir Lytle*

***Members Absent:***

*Joanne Berwald, Anne Broholm, James Cassetta, Pam Eddinger, Pamela Everhart, Jennifer Morales, Warren Pepicelli, Sherri Pitcher, Dan Rivera, Beth Williams, Ray Wrobel*

***Non-members Present:***

*Greg Bunn, Marisa de la Paz, David Gadaire, Jennifer James, Rick Jeffers, Frank Martinez, Bill McKinney, Tonja Mettlach, Maegan Pedemonti, Liz Sotomayer, Cheryl Scott, Sacha Stadhard, Alice Sweeney, Jeffrey Turgeon, Marina Zhavoronkova*

**Welcome & Introductions**

Donna Cupelo called the meeting to order, and welcomed board members and guests. Ms. Cupelo mentioned that the Board meeting has been shortened to accommodate the MassHire Awards, which will start at 11 a.m. welcomed new Board members Janice Weekes, Rainer Gawlick, and Representative Anne-Margaret Ferrante, who each introduced themselves. Then, all members and guests present introduced themselves. Donna Cupelo then gave a brief overview of Verizon’s history, company profile, and the facility where the meeting was being held.

Ms. Cupelo mentioned that in addition to the Board Meeting taking place that day, so too is MassHire Day and the first MassHire Awards. Ms. Cupelo recapped the Board’s role in developing, adopting, and deploying the MassHire brand from Fall 2017 to the present. She highlighted the important of MassHire Day and the MassHire Awards as a part of “Living the Brand” and an opportunity to recognize colleagues in the MassHire Workforce Boards and Career Centers who are doing exemplary work around the Commonwealth. Ms. Cupelo extended a special thanks to the Board’s MassHire Performance Committee for reviewing the MassHire Awards nominations and selecting the finalists and winners. She also thanked Board member Juliette Mayers for serving as a special advisor to the Branding process, and being a part of the MassHire Day lunchtime presentation. Ms. Cupelo also encouraged Board members to provide their feedback on their experience with the MassHire Awards and MassHire Day. Ms. Cupelo then reviewed the meeting agenda.

Cheryl Scott reviewed the full MassHire Day itinerary, and encouraged Board members to stay for the MassHire Awards and lunch. Ms. Scott provided an update on the Board committees: the MassHire Performance Committee and the Youth Pathways Committee will continue to meet through the summer; the Workforce Intelligence Committee will be meeting this fall to support the labor market analysis section of the WIOA State Plan; the Adult Pathways Committee will meet begin meeting this fall. Ms. Scott also provided an update on the WIOA State Planning process noting that all of the workgroups the Board approved in March have been meeting regularly to develop content for the state plan. The Board will receive a briefing on the first draft of the WIOA State Plan at the next Board meeting in September[[1]](#footnote-1).

**Review and Approval of Meeting Minutes**

Donna Cupelo asked for a motion to approve the minutes for the MassHire State Workforce Board meeting on March 19, 2019. The motion was made, and seconded. Ms. Cupelo called for a roll call vote, conducted by Ms. Scott; Joanne Pokaski abstained, the rest of the members voted to pass the meeting minutes.

**Workforce Development Update**

Secretary Acosta thanked Verizon for hosting the meeting, and encouraged all Board members to stay after the meeting for the MassHire Awards and MassHire Day. Secretary Acosta also acknowledged the work of the MassHire State Workforce Board and the MassHire Performance Committee. She also thanked staff of the MassHire Workforce Boards and Career Centers for submitting nominations recognizing the exemplary work of their colleagues around the MassHire system.

*Governor’s Budget*

Secretary Acosta provided an update of the Governor’s Fiscal Year 2020 budget, which include investments to address the talent shortages in areas as healthcare, tech, and advanced manufacturing. She reviewed the document (slide) “EOLWD Budget – Workforce Skills Cabinet Budget” which details the status of the Governor’s Budget as it is being considered by the House and Senate.

Joanne Pokaski noted that many in the healthcare and tech are watching this budget because there is strong interest in seeing how the funds will support pipeline development in their field. Rep. Ferrante asked why the pipelines to tech funding is not noted. Bob LePage responded that the tech pipeline funding is in Secretary Kennealy’s Housing and Economic Development budget. Ms. Acosta added that the slide identifies the Workforce Skills Cabinet’s budget, and there are other workforce-related budget items that do not appear. Ms. Cupelo noted that the Board needs an overall scope of the full budget. Mr. LePage volunteered himself and Jennifer James to follow up on this request and have something for the next Board meeting.

Senator Lesser shared that he has a pending bill on the Cliff Effects ([Senate Bill 57](https://malegislature.gov/Bills/191/S57)/[House Bill 174](https://malegislature.gov/Bills/191/H174)). The bill calls for “a pilot program to mitigate the cliff effects for low-income individuals/families that are working and receiving public assistance.” Sen. Lesser encouraged Board members to support the bill. Elizabeth Skidmore asked what the bill number is; Sen. Lesser said he will get that information to the Board via staff. Senator Lesser also asked for detail on the apprentice tax credit, including the number of people applying for the funding, the number of people the funding has helped, and the costs. Sec. Acosta responded that the tax credit is new and there is still more work to be done on marketing the resource to those who don’t know about it, especially those employers that are new to apprenticeship.

*Healthcare Collaborative*

Sec. Acosta updated the Board on the Healthcare Collaborative, which was formed as a direct result of the regional planning work that identified healthcare as a priority industry across all seven regions. The Workforce Skills Cabinet, with the addition of the Executive office Health and Human Services, developed a statewide public-private Healthcare Collaborative that includes the top leaders in healthcare, education and government. The goal is to identify workforce shortages in healthcare and build solutions to meet workforce needs over the next five year. The Collaborative has formed three sub-groups to focus on three occupational areas with talent shortages: Nursing (particularly outside Boston), Direct Care, and Behavioral Health. In April, the collaborative voted on several strategies to address talent shortages, many of which involve building career ladders and aligning public education systems to create statewide consistency in upskilling and talent pipeline development. More updates will be shared at future Board meetings.

*Paid Family Medical Leave*

Sec. Acosta announced that the Paid Family Medical Leave effective date has been delayed for 3 months, and is now October 1, 2019. More information can be found on the [website](https://www.mass.gov/paid-family-and-medical-leave-information-for-massachusetts-employers).

**Department of Unemployment Assistance (DUA)**

Rick Jeffers introduced himself, noting that he has worked in the Department of Unemployment Assistance (DUA) for 20 years; his first job was in the call center, culminating in his current role as director of the agency for the past two years. Mr. Jeffers provided an overview of DUA, including the agency’s mission, workforce, and Unemployment Insurance Trust Fund as well as a brief explanation on how Unemployment Insurance (UI) benefits work.

He also shared that DUA works closely with the MassHire Department of Career Services (MDCS) through a shared vision focused on getting folks back to work. In addition to the [Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment](https://www.mass.gov/service-details/reemployment-services-and-eligibility-assessment-resea) (RESEA) program, DUA also has a special unit of workers to work directly with MDCS.

Mr. Jeffers shared that the federal Department of Labor (DOL) issued a letter to the chair of the MassHire State Workforce Board to highlight the need to focus on improper UI payments. While the issue is important, it is an area that DUA has been focusing on for the past few months. DUA has been working with the National Association for State Workforce Agencies’ (NASWA) Integrity Center to institute best practices in combatting fraud and waste. The Integrity Center recently delivered some recommendations to Massachusetts on reducing fraud and waste, and DUA is looking closely at them.

Donna Cupelo suggested that Mr. Jeffers come to a future Board meeting to share these recommendations with the Board. Mr. Jeffers responded that he would be happy to come, and hopes to attend Board meeting regularly moving forward. Rep. Ferrante commended Mr. Jeffers and Secretary Acosta for DUA’s exemplary work. She shared that Gloucester had a business close and 150 people lost their job. DUA’s team was so responsive that all 150 workers now have new jobs. Secretary Acosta shared that Alice Sweeney and others at MDCS were also involved, especially the MDCS Rapid Response team. Greg Bunn also recognized the work of the DUA Economic Research team who is responsible for compiling and sharing Massachusetts’ labor market information.

Ms. Cupelo adjourned the meeting at 10:46am.

1. The meeting was since rescheduled for October 1, 2019. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)