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**MassHire State Workforce Board Meeting**

Tuesday, March 19, 2019

9:30 A.M to 12:00 Noon

Fidelity Investments

245 Summer Street

Boston, MA 02210

**Meeting Minutes**

*(Draft)*

***Members Present:***

*Rosalin Acosta, Zamawa Arenas, Aixa Beauchamp, Anne Broholm, Jesse Brown, James Cassetta, Donna Cupelo, Pam Eddinger, Pamela Everhart, Jessyca Feliciano, Maria Ferreira-Bedard, Robert LePage, Eric Lesser (remote, left early), Susan Mailman, Juliette Mayers, Jeffrey McCue, Jennifer Morales, Warren Pepicelli, Sherri Pitcher (remote), Joanne, Pokaski (remote, left early), Elizabeth Skidmore, Beth Williams*

***Members Absent:***

*Joanne Berwald, Tricia Canavan, Sherry Dong, , John Mann, Dan Rivera, Linda Tyer, Juan Vega, Joseph Wagner, Maicharia Weir Lytle, Ray Wrobel,*

**Welcome & Introductions**

Donna Cupelo called the meeting to order, and welcomed board members and guests. Ms. Cupelo extended thanked Board member Pam Everhart of Fidelity Investments for hosting today’s meeting. Ms. Cupelo welcomed new Board members Senator Eric Lesser, Mayor Linda Tyer and Sherri Pitcher. Sherri Pitcher introduced herself and provided a brief summary of her career, background, and interest in workforce development. Then, all members and guests present introduced themselves. Ms. Cupelo announced that Board member Sue Mailman is no longer on the Board and thanked her for her service. Pam Everhart then gave a brief overview of Fidelity Investments’ history, company profile, and the company’s various community involvement focusing on diversity. Cheryl Scott then reviewed the meeting agenda and updated the Board on Board committees, which will be meeting in the spring.

**Review and Approval of Meeting Minutes**

Donna Cupelo asked for a motion to approve the minutes for the MassHire State Workforce Board meeting on December 6, 2018. The motion was made, seconded, and passed unanimously through a roll call vote.

**Workforce Development Update**

Secretary Acosta thanked Pam Everhart for hosting the meeting. She announced that she will be providing updates on five items:

**Governor’s Budget**

Secretary Acosta provided an overview of the Governor’s Fiscal Year 2020 budget, which include investments to address the talent shortages in areas as healthcare, tech, and advanced manufacturing. The budget calls for expansion of employment opportunities for members of the Black and Latino communities based on the recommendation of the Black Advisory Commission, and the Latino Advisory Commission. In addition to career pathway-building opportunities, the budget seeks to scale up existing programs like Learn to Earn, Youth Works, Apprenticeship, and ESOL training. The Secretary then walked the Board through the various line items in the Governor’s Workforce Skills Cabinet Budget.

Warren Pepicilli asked Secretary Acosta to define advanced manufacturing, and asked why the “Vocational Institute Post Secondary Programs in Manufacturing” line item was not included in the Governor’s Budget. Secretary Acosta explained that the line item was not included because it will be converted to trust fund, and will therefore not subject to state appropriation. Advanced manufacturing is innovative and advanced technology in use, and the jobs aren’t “dirty”.

**UI Customer Journey**

In November, the Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development in collaboration with the Executive Office of Technology Services and Security (EOTSS) embarked on a user journey project to learn more about the experience of individual UI claimants, businesses, and DUA employees. Through this process, EOLWD was able to identify short-term, mid-term and long-term solutions to delivering services effectively and efficiently. If Massachusetts reduces UI benefits collection by two weeks, this will save the Commonwealth $300M in the UI Trust Fund. This will help EOLWD continue on a path to focus on re-employment, and not just unemployment. The next phase is to continue this work with the MassHire system, focusing on business customers and MassHire employees. Secretary Acosta also announced that [Massachusetts’ low unemployment rate triggered a change in the maximum allowable period](https://www.mass.gov/news/reduction-in-maximum-number-of-weeks-possible-to-collect-benefits) for unemployment insurance from 30 weeks, to 26 weeks.

Beth Williams asked if the Administration is focusing on upskilling as a way to address workforce challenges. Secretary Acosta responded that a focus on upskilling is in everything EOLWD does – they focus on developing skills that are relevant.

**Healthcare Collaborative**

The Governor has convened a Healthcare Collaborative comprised of health care leaders in the state to address workforce challenges in healthcare, particularly in the “middle skill” jobs where existing worker shortages are projected to grow. The work kicked off in late January where the Collaborative reached agreement focus on Nursing, Direct Care and Behavioral Health talent shortages and formed sub-groups in these areas. The next meeting of the Collaborative is April 16th, where the three sub-groups will share their work on identifying initiatives to invest in solutions to address talent shortages.

Anne Broholm asked if there are about 40,000 jobs in healthcare that are unfilled, and the focus of the Healthcare Collaborative is on the “sweet spot” of 15,000 middle skill jobs, are the rest above or below this target band of jobs? Secretary Acosta replied that the rest could be a mix of jobs above or below this middle skill band. In response to Secretary mentioning that apprenticeship could be a strategy to address skill shortages, Liz Skidmore shared her concerns with the new federal Department of Labor’s [Industry Recognized Apprenticeship Programs (IRAP)](https://www.apprenticeship.gov/industry-recognized-apprenticeship-program), because there is no requirement for training, wage increases as with Registered Apprenticeship, yet employers will have permission to pay lower wages.

**National Association of State Workforce Agencies (NASWA)**

Secretary Acosta shared that she attended the winter policy forum for NASWA in February. There they discussed national policy priorities on ensuring there is sufficient and flexible investment in workforce development to make sure there is a floor of funding to cover administrative costs, and support for re-employment services and apprenticeship. Massachusetts also won an award for their MassHire BizWorks program. NASWA will be holding their conference in Boston in September.

**MassHire Awards Finalists**

There were 38 nominations recognizing the work of MassHire Board and Career Center staff and partners who exemplified MassHire’s core values: collaboration, ingenuity, reliability, and respect. Finalists were selected by the Board’s MassHire Performance Committee, and were chosen for their exceptional work in serving MassHire customers or having a positive impact on systems and/or operations. Secretary Acosta mentioned that she personally read each of the nominations and they give insight into the work of the career center and boards; she recommends that Board members read the nominations as well.

There are five MassHire Awards, one for each of the four MassHire values, and an overall “living the brand” award. Secretary Acosta announced the names and regions of the finalists for the MassHire Award values finalists ([here](https://www.mass.gov/files/documents/2019/03/20/31-102B.png)) and the Living MassHire award finalists [here](https://www.mass.gov/files/documents/2019/03/20/31-102A.png).) Winners will be announced at first MassHire Day on June 18th, following the June Board meeting.

**WIOA State Plan Update and Proposed Organizing Framework**

Jennifer James provided an update on the WIOA State Plan development since the Board last met in December, when the Board voted on the plan’s development timeline and process. As part of the State Plan Visioning Phase, there was a statewide WIOA State Plan Visioning session during which workforce system stakeholders engaged in discussion and dialogue leading toward identifying key issues to be addressed in the state plan, and inform the plan development process. Participants provided feedback on the State Plan’s emerging themes of modernizing the workforce system, scaling up proven models, and accelerating re-employment. The State Plan Advisory Committee (SPAC) and the Board’s MassHire Performance Committee developed a proposed organizing framework for developing the plan that they recommend the Board vote to adopt. The organizing framework includes four workgroups: (1) Challenges to Employment; (2) Business Services & Engagement; (3) Data Integration & Analytics, and (4) Cross-System Alignment, as well as engaging practitioner, job seeker, and business stakeholders on an ongoing basis throughout the development process.

Pam Eddinger asked if the Board members are going to populate these workgroups, or will they be other people involved? Jennifer James responded that Board members are welcome to participate, and the idea is to have various stakeholders from across the system be involved. Aixa Beauchamp asked how workgroup members are chosen? Ms. James responded that most people volunteer or are asked to participate; Board members are welcome to provide input on who should be in these groups.

Donna Cupelo asked for a motion to adopt the WIOA State Plan development framework. The motion was made, seconded, and passed unanimously through a roll call vote.

**Massachusetts Apprenticeship Expansion**

Bill McKinney, Director of the [Department of Labor Standards (DLS)](https://www.mass.gov/orgs/department-of-labor-standards), opened the presentation on apprenticeship expansion by sharing that apprenticeship in Massachusetts has grown. The growth has been fueled by federal grants, partnerships with MassHire Department of Career Services, and the Hampden and North Shore regions, and through Massachusetts convening stakeholders to focus on expanding apprenticeship. Massachusetts’ State Apprenticeship Agency, the [Division of Apprenticeship Standards](https://www.mass.gov/orgs/division-of-apprentice-standards) is being proactive about expanding apprenticeship by focusing on improvement efforts like moving the systems online for a better customer experience.

Marina Zhavoronkova of the Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development provided an overview of the Massachusetts apprenticeship expansion effort. Ms. Zhavoronkova reviewed the definition and various components of Registered Apprenticeship, discussed how this is a timely issue for Massachusetts as it seeks to maintain global competitiveness and offer different avenues for education and career opportunities while building new, diverse talent pipelines for employers. Massachusetts’ chief apprenticeship expansion goals are to expand Registered Apprenticeship to new industries and occupations, as well as diversify the pool of apprentices within all industries. With these goals in mind, Massachusetts developed an [Apprenticeship Expansion Plan](https://www.mass.gov/files/documents/2019/05/24/Apprenticeship%20Expansion%20Plan%202018%20Final.pdf) with seven action items and guiding principles to inform current and future expansion. Ms. Zhavoronkova provided an update on initiatives underway to pursue the goals and action items in the plan.

Brian Norris of the [Northeast Advanced Manufacturing Consortium](https://www.namcnetwork.com/) (NAMC) and Mary Sarris of the [MassHire North Shore Workforce Board](https://masshire-northshorewb.com/) gave a brief presentation on the efforts to expand apprenticeship in manufacturing. They provided an overview of the history and progress of NAMC in engaging advanced manufacturing employers to embrace apprenticeship by focusing on and being responsive to their workforce challenges.

Warren Pepicelli suggested that they expand their definition of what businesses can be involved. For example, 40% of mens’ suits are made in Massachusetts and use sophisticated technology, but these manufacturers might not meet their definition of advanced manufacturing. Mary Sarris responded that they would work with companies like that because they define advanced manufacturing as manufacturing in an advanced way. Beth Williams added that according to AIM, many manufacturers are advanced, and many are concerned about workforce shortages.

Lauren Jones, Director of Apprenti Massachusetts, presented on [Apprenti Massachusetts](https://apprenticareers.org/), a new project to develop diverse tech talent to meet Massachsuetts’ growing tech needs. Ms. Jones provided an overview of the Apprenti model, which was developed in Seattle, Washington in response to their tech sector’s worker shortage, and has since been expanded nationally, including Massachusetts. The Apprenti model has been proven successful in engaging people of color, women and veterans into careers in tech with a high apprentice hire and retention rate, and large earnings gains for the apprentices. Apprenti Massachusetts will launch their first apprenticeship in software development in April with engagement of Massachusetts companies Wayfair, PTC, Cengage, and Carbon Black. Apprenti is currently recruiting businesses and apprentices for future cohorts. Interested Board members are invited to reach out to Lauren to learn more.

Liz Skidmore of the New England Regional Council of Carpenters, shared a very brief overview of the [Policy Group on Tradeswomen’s Issues (PGTI)](https://policygroupontradeswomen.org/) who aim to eliminate barriers to women entering into construction trades, spread best practices for gender diversity in the construction industry, and to ensure that by 2020 20% of tradespeople in construction are women. While Massachusetts is making strides towards increasing women in the trades, there is still more room for progress; in 2018 8.49% of tradespeople were women, but this is up considerably from the 4.87% in 2012. PGTI achieves their goals by influencing supply (women in apprenticeships) and demand (policy requirements for hiring tradeswomen.) They also conduct various outreach to inspire girls to pursue a career in trades, as well as recruit interested candidates and allies.

Donna Cupelo thanked the presenters and suggested that the Board spend time at the next Board meeting engaged in the discussion and dialogue to digest many of the important issues and topics that were introduced in today’s meeting. Ms. Cupelo adjourned the meeting at 12:06pm.