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**MassHire State Workforce Board Meeting**

Tuesday, October 1, 2019

9:30 a.m. to 12:00 noon

Quincy College

President’s Place Conference Room

1250 Hancock Street

Quincy, MA 02169

**Meeting Minutes**

*(Draft)*

***Members Present:***

*Rosalin Acosta, James Cassetta (left early), Donna Cupelo, Sherry Dong (remote, left early), Pamela Everhart, Ann-Margaret Ferrante, Rainer Gawlick, Axel Grippo, Juliette Mayers, Jeffrey McCue (left early), Joanne, Pokaski, Janice Weekes,*

***Members Absent:***

*Zamawa Arenas, Aixa Beauchamp, Joanne Berwald, Anne Broholm, Jesse Brown, Pam Eddinger, Jessyca Feliciano, Maria Ferreira-Bedard, , Robert LePage, Eric Lesser, John Mann, Jennifer Morales, Warren Pepicelli, Sherri Pitcher, Dan Rivera, Elizabeth Skidmore, Juan Vega, Maicharia Weir Lytle, Beth Williams, Ray Wrobel*

***Non-members Present:***

*Jenna Borkoski (remote), Tina Cahill, Jennifer Hansen, Jennifer James, Rick Jeffers, Susan Lange, Kate Lopci, Allison McIntyre, Kristen McKenna, Mary Otiato, Maegan Pedemonti, Nathan Pham, Joan Phillips, Laura Reiman, Dean Rizzo, Jeff Roberge, Cheryl Scott, Sacha Stadhard, Alice Sweeney, Dru Tarr, Raija Vaisanen, Olga Yulikova*

**Welcome & Introductions**

Donna Cupelo called the meeting to order, and welcomed board members and guests. Board members and guests introduced themselves. Michael Belotti, President of Quincy College provided an overview of the college, including the student population, programs of study, and engagement in workforce development initiatives. Dean Rizzo, Executive Director of the MassHire South Shore Workforce Board shared information about the programs and initiatives the Board is spearheading in the South Shore such as career pathway development in the South Shore. Cheryl Scott announced that the Board committees will be meeting in the fall, and the Board meeting dates for 2020 will be announced soon.

**Workforce Development Update**

Secretary Acosta thanked Quincy College and the MassHire South Shore Workforce Board for hosting the meeting.

Secretary Acosta updated the Board on the FY20 budget highlighting the final amounts in Workforce Skills Cabinet’s budget.

She then updated the Board on the Healthcare Collaborative. 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 and 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. The Collaborative is working on fundraising with industry to provide resources for capacity building on these efforts.

The Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development has hired Patrick Mitchell as the Director for Apprenticeship Expansion and Work-Based Learning. Mr. Mitchell joins EOLWD from previous work in apprenticeship building in San Francisco. Patrick Mitchell will share more about his work on apprenticeship expansion in Massachusetts at a future Board meeting. Secretary Acosta announced that the Registered Apprenticeship Tax Credit to incentivize employers to start apprenticeship programs is now live and accepting applications; employers may be eligible for up to $4800 per apprentice.

Boston was host of the National Association of State Workforce Agencies (NASWA) conference with over 600 attendees from 49 states representing various state workforce and unemployment insurance agencies. This was a great opportunity to showcase how Massachusetts is leading the nation in workforce development.

EOLWD is also home to a new department responsible for Paid Family Medical Leave. The effort to implement PFML is moving forward. The employer contributions are effective starting on October 1st, and the agency will be increasingly focused on the benefits side.

Secretary also congratulated Commissioner Jeff McCue who was recently promoted to Assistant Secretary for Human Resources and Chief Human Resources Officer for the state.

Juliette Mayers asked how much money is needed for the Healthcare Collaborative. Secretary Acosta responded that they are trying to raise $3.5 million, broadly. Half of these funds will be to support grants like the Workforce Competitiveness Trust Fund, and the other half is for hiring consultants to conduct data analysis. The Collaborative is casting a wide net in attracting resources, and recommendations are welcome. This is a very timely effort that intersects with many interests and needs across the Commonwealth.

**Massachusetts Legislative Update**

Representative Ann-Margaret Ferrante provided an overview of her district in the north shore and the Massachusetts House of Representative legislative priorities. She shared that she grew up in Gloucester where she has witnessed social, community, and economic hardships like domestic violence and the decline of middle skill jobs. From this vantage point, one of her goals is to create opportunity. Fishing is one of the declining industries in her district, and to address this issue, they looked at careers that are close to fishing, such as marine technology as an opportunity for displaced and future workers. They created a workforce training program in marine technology that provides a year of training and placement in a job. After three years, the program has an 82.5% placement rate, and has graduated 90 students. Rep. Ferrante also mentioned working with the unions to start a pre-apprenticeship program in partnership with voc schools. Through this program, students can earn certificates, graduate with a job and embark on a career pathway. Another area of focus for Rep. Ferrante and the House are transportation, particularly fixing the MBTA, creating pipelines for technology, creating pathways out of poverty, big data, the Urban Agenda, and worker protections.

Joanne Pokaski asked about the Green Works program. Rep. Ferrante explained that in her district every storm brings different flooding, and it is not known what further issues climate change will bring. They hired a Sustainability Coordinator to work with experts (engineers, environmental consultants, etc.) on how to mitigate these impacts (seawalls, planting sea grass, protecting marsh areas, etc.) The effort will be part construction, part environmental protection, part educational, and all will help to create new jobs over time. President Belloti shared that today Quincy Mayor Thomas Koch announced the creation of a [new alternative school](https://www.patriotledger.com/news/20191001/quincy-looks-to-create-85-million-special-education-center) to serve underserved student populations.

Rainer Gawlick shared that apprenticeship can be used for more than blue collar jobs, and can be another opportunity in addition to voc tech schools to access “first rung” opportunities. The challenge is battling the mindset that white collar jobs need college degrees.

Pam Everhart added that millennials look to transportation and housing as critical elements to quality of life. She asked Rep. Ferrante what else is being done on transportation, and how can we improve transportation? Rep. Ferrante responded that we need to ask the business community to support these efforts. When the legislature supports a tax to address transportation issues, the general population votes to repeal the tax. They are trying to build support so the next proposal is not repealed. There are many unexplored opportunities. For example, water taxis: from the north shore it takes 45 minutes to get to Boston, by car it’s two hours. There are ways to use busses, priority lanes, freight rail transportation, regional transportation, busses to pick up from trains so people don’t have to take Uber to get to work, thereby reducing congestion. Joanne Pokaski mentioned that she has been in workforce development for many years, but in the last two years it has really crystalized that transportation is a workforce issue.

Janice Weekes mentioned that voc tech schools are so popular that they have a wait list. In her region (Worcester) some are open in the evening to create access for those who can’t get in the day time program. Also, many students are choosing to go to college, not the trades, which is contributing to the worker shortage in these fields. Rep. Ferrante added that in her district high school students have the option to sign up for the voc school in their sophomore year and can go to the voc after school. This expands the number of spots available and the number of students with access to the voc school equipment.

**Youth Pathways Committee Update**

Cheryl Scott provided an update on the Board’s Youth Pathways Committee, which has been meeting since February. The committee spent their first couple of meetings on orientation to the youth workforce development field. The committee has recently started to converge on the idea of holding a convening for youth workforce development practitioners as specific deliverable for the committee. This convening would be a way to facilitate connectivity among the various youth serving organizations, and a way to help implement the youth goal of the WIOA State Plan.

**2020 WIOA State Plan Briefing and Discussion**

Jennifer James presented an update on the 2020 WIOA State Plan development. She shared background on the purpose of the WIOA State Plan, and the organizing structure for State Plan development, which the Board has already been briefed and voted on. The systemic and customer impact that the 2016 WIOA State Plan we reviewed, highlighting progress made on closer integration and resource sharing across workforce partners, as well as service and employment outcomes for the shared customer for target populations.

To demonstrate the success of partnership, representatives from WIOA Core Partners gave a brief presentation on the impact of the 2016 WIOA State Plan from their perspective. Joan Philips, Assistant Commissioner for the Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission (MRC) shared how the number of MRC consumers that are also served by MassHire has increased over four years. Most recently MRC has partnered with MassHire to develop innovative training programs where over 60 consumers with disabilities have completed the programs.

Mary Otiato, Chief of Staff and Director of Policy for the Massachusetts Commission for the Blind (MCB) shared that MCB and MassHire have collaborated to provide workforce services to blind or visually impaired consumers in the MassHire Career Centers. MCB has also provided consultation on accessibility for the blind and visually impaired in all MassHire Centers; feedback from consumers suggest a marked improvement in services for this customer base, and the number served has steadily increased over the past four years.

Olga Yulikova of the Executive Office of Elder Affairs spoke of the Senior Service Employment Program (SCSEP). Ms. Yulikova, State Director for SCSEP, shared that SCSEP now has 9 staff co-located across MassHire Career Centers to better serve the older worker population. Through these efforts, there are more targeted services for older workers in the MassHire Career Centers, such as a job fair for people ages 55 plus, workshops for Older Workers, and mapping out a flow of services for older workers receiving services in the career center.

Commissioner of the Department of Transitional Assistance (DTA), Jeffrey McCue shared DTA’s commitment to being an engaged WIOA partner. A crowning achievement of this partnership is the Work Participant Program (WPP) which provides DTA funds to MassHire Career Centers to serve DTA customers on their work search and career development needs. To date, the over 3700 DTA customers have been served by WPP.

Jennifer James also mentioned that Adult Education is a dedicated partners as well. She then provided a brief update on the emerging goals and strategies for the State Plan for Board consideration and feedback. Proposed are three goals relating to serving three customer bases: Adult Job Seekers, Youth, and Businesses. Due to time constraints and lack of time for discussion, it was decided that Cheryl Scott would connect with Board members to get their feedback on the draft goals, strategies, and tactics.

Ms. Cupelo adjourned the meeting at 12:03 p.m.