

MSW Workforce Board Executive Committee Meeting Minutes March 13, 2025

Members on Zoom: Lisa Kubiak, Chair, Mark Fegley, Rev. Lloyd, Ernie Houle

Members Absent: Bob Bower, Andy Vizulis

Others present: Metro South/West Workforce Board staff present: Henry Bryson, Greg Bunn, Louise Meyer; Cindy Cedrone, Consultant

Welcome and Approval of September 19, 2024 Minutes

Greg Bunn turned the meeting over to Lisa Kubiak who welcomed everyone and asked for approval on September 19, 2024 minutes. Mark Fegley made a motion to approve. Rev. Lloyd seconded. All members indicated approval. Motion passed.

EA Shelter Updates: Closures and TPS Status Change

Greg reported that many of the shelters have closed, and all will be closed by the end of the year. He noted that the Temporary Protection Status for Haitian migrants will end in August. Greg said there has been a change from direct placement services. Because employers are reluctant to hire migrants who may possibly relocate, efforts have shifted to working for permanent housing placements and running two cohorts for ESOL training at the Career Centers, led by Kevin O'Connor, Framingham Adult ESOL+, with two more cohorts also planned; and working with youth in the high schools for career readiness. The pre-apprentice program, for home health aide training, which can take up to a year for completion, has been facing a bottleneck because only one employer has committed to hiring. Greg noted that because there are not enough placement opportunities for 24 people, there has been a shift working with Revive in Action, a home health aide training provider, for standard home health training, which takes five weeks, to get as many people through the program. He noted that Rute Vales, Director of Business Partnerships and Faith Bertrand, Business Services Representative, have been instrumental in helping to support migrant families.

Federal Grant Funding and Potential Impacts

Greg reported that there are no changes in Federal grant funding, at this time. WIOA Re-Authorization states that workforce boards could be consolidated or eliminated. Greg asked the committee for input in case this occurs. The members agreed that a contingency plan should be written with action items. The Capital Working Group will meet in the next couple of months to explore fundraising opportunities.

The new chair of Joint Commission for Labor and Workforce, Paul McMurtry, has been sent an introductory letter and an invitation to the Trade and Construction Expo in April.

Greg is connecting with Cole Angley, Director of the MA Workforce Association as a subject matter expert and to connect with State Representatives. To ensure continued funding for career education through YouthWorks and Connecting Activities, Greg will attend a virtual meeting with Senator President Karen Spilka and Lew Finfer, an advocate for non-profits. Beth Goguen is the new director at the Department of Career Services. Instead of organizing a road show event, Greg suggested the Executive Committee meet with the Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development to better represent what the Board does and also concentrate on Career Center activities to promote the MassHire brand.

Update on Career Center Operator Procurement

Greg reported that every four years WIOA requires workforce boards to procure a Career Center Operator. Joint procurement for both Service Provider and Career Center Operator is possible but keeping the Service Provider in place avoids any disruption in services so an RFP has been issued for only the Operator. The scope of work has been expanded, and the contract amount has been increased. Mark Fegley is on the review team. The contract is expected to be in place on July 1, 2025.

Lisa made a motion to adjourn. Rev. Lloyd seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 10:00 a.m.