

Central Massachusetts Workforce Investment Board
April 19, 2018
8:30 AM
340 Main Street, Suite 400
Worcester, MA 01608
Meeting Minutes

The following members/proxies were present: Rosalie Lawless; Janice Ryan Weekes; Leslie Baker; Joshua Froimson; Jill Dagilis; John McGovern; Rick Laferriere; Leslie Parady, Paul Gilbody; Ellen Spencer; Susan Mailman; Ted Bauer; Kathie Manning (proxy for Luis Predraja); Bill Minkle (proxy for Karen Koller); Alyssa Hansen; Jose Perez; Wendy Savary; Libis Bueno; Karen Pelletier (proxy for Timothy Murray); Paul Morano

Guests/Staff: J. Turgeon; Deb Feraco;

- **Call to Order, Announcement of Quorum & Note of Conflict of Interest:** Chair Rosalie Lawless, called the meeting to order at 8:38 AM, and she then asked the members if anyone wished to note any conflicts of interest on the agenda. J. Dagilis (upon her arrival following the vote on the WIOA Youth selection vote) noted her conflict on this item and her recusal. No other conflicts were noted and meeting attendees then introduced themselves.
- **Approval of January 18, 2018 Meeting Minutes:** The January 18, 2018 meeting minutes were unanimously approved upon a motion by T. Bauer and second by L. Bueno.
- **WIOA Youth Provider Selection:** R. Lawless instructed members to review the recommendation in the meeting packet from the Youth Workforce Investment Council (YWIC) to enter into negotiations with the four selected providers. J. Turgeon noted that should the funding award be decreased from currently levels the lowest-ranked project would need to be cut to ensure overall program viability. Members discussed the geographic range offered through the recommendations as well as the performance measures that get tracked. The CMWIB's role in monitoring compliance and performance of the providers was also discussed. A motion was made by S. Mailman and seconded by P. Gilbody to accept the recommendation from the YWIC. The motion passed unanimously.
- **Board and Subcommittee remote participation:** J. Turgeon discussed with the Board the need to have a vote to allow for member participation in meetings remotely, should that be the Board's desire. He did note that per guidance from State officials, there still needed to be enough members physically present at a meeting to establish a quorum. After brief discussion of this item, a motion was made by L. Bueno and seconded by J. Dagilis to allow remote participation for all Board and subcommittee meetings; the motion passed unanimously.

- **FY2018 Budget Update:** J. Turgeon reviewed with members the State FY 18 and proposed FY 19 budget numbers as compiled by the Workforce Solutions group, calling attention to the School-to-Career Connecting Activities, Workforce Competitiveness Trust Fund, YouthWorks, and One-Stop Career Center line items. In general, the FY 19 proposed budgets appear to offer small (but welcomed) increases. He noted however that the Federal budget, which funds a larger share with the WIB and Career Center work, appears to be on shakier ground and is also tied to funding formulas based upon the unemployment rate – which is at near historic lows (even though at times of low unemployment, there is greater need to help businesses access the workers they need to grow). It was suggested that the WIB return to informing the region’s legislators, both state and Federal, of the services provided in their districts and the challenges with current funding formulas. S. Mailman suggested members contacting elected officials may have greater impact on changes and stated she thought there was a tool that could help with this called *Vote Change*. It was also suggested we devise a way to show the impact of the talent gap on slowing business growth – and the need therefore to provide more support to businesses through readiness projects/services. The members then discussed the fact that unemployment rates themselves are based only upon the percent of potential workers actively looking for work and that this sidelining of potential workers further exacerbates the talent shortage businesses face. It was proposed that a work group under the guidance of the Career Center/Adult Career Services Committee research this issue on the local level and make recommendations on what can be done to bring more people back into the workforce.

ACTION: J. Turgeon to draft a letter to send out to all legislators indicating service levels for their districts.

ACTION: S. Mailman to research *Vote Change* and forward the information to J. Turgeon and R. Lawless.

ACTION: J. Turgeon to inform the members of relevant information, such as the need to better fund business services in a time of low unemployment, that they may then share with our region’s legislators (possibly through *Vote Change*” or other methods).

ACTION: J. Turgeon to request the Worcester Business Journal conduct a poll on the topic of how much the talent gap hinders their growth.

ACTION: J. Froimson will work with the CMWIB staff to establish a work group regarding how to bring those disconnected from the labor force back to work.

- **Program Updates:** J. Turgeon asked members to review the program updates report in their meeting packet and informed the members that the regional workforce blueprint has been approved by the State and he will now be working with his counterpart in the North Central region to implement the plan, utilizing existing committees and structures wherever possible. He stated the plan is on the resources page of the cmwib.org website. R. Lawless thanked him and the others involved in drafting the plan for their hard work and noted it was a tremendous document. J. Turgeon also discussed a small grant the Board received to promote paid STEM-focused high school internships and reviewed for members the rationale behind their efforts to promote paid internships as a way to develop greater long term interest by young people in manufacturing.

J. Dagilis presented the 50-50 YouthWorks model where employer host sites pay half the cost of a summer jobs participant, and asked members to consider being a part of this effort. She outlined the process and supports that employer partners would get for their 50% investment, including support funded directly through WCAC and other funds that they acquire to support the program beyond State YouthWorks funds. J. Turgeon thanked her for their efforts to maximize the funding and echoed that this 50-50 program is an opportunity for businesses to build their talent pipeline.

ACTION: J. Dagilis to send out 50-50 youth employment information electronically to the members.

J. Weekes described the efforts she and her staff have made to serve evacuees from the hurricanes last fall and cited their work on reaching out especially to those whose benefits, such as hotel vouchers, were soon ending. She stated they were working with the City's new evacuee coordinator, Locksann Mateo, as well as the local Family Resource Center housed at the Worcester Communities Connections Coalition, MA DTA, the Chamber, and other partners. J. Turgeon noted that L. Bueno is the chair of the City's evacuee employment working group which is also working to ensure evacuees have access to the services they need for stability, and stated there is a Request For Proposals available through the Hampden Regional Employment Board to serve evacuees with English skills. L. Bueno thanked Janice and her team for all their hard work on behalf of the Latino community and stated it was great to see strong support. J. Turgeon noted her increased work load on this and other projects comes at a time they have limited resources.

- **Other Business:** J. Weekes informed the board that with new State monitoring requirements, they would be working later this spring with the Board on having their programs reviewed, noting that this is separate from the career center procurement process and the career center certification process. J. Turgeon acknowledged the challenges faced by these lengthy and disruptive reviews and indicated the Board was likewise challenged to conduct these processes with little new funding.
- **Member Announcements:** J. Froimson informed the members that AbbVie will be hosting an event to discuss their efforts to help grow a sustainable pool of talent.
- **Adjournment:** The meeting was then adjourned upon a motion, second and unanimous vote. The next CMWIB full board meeting is Thursday, July 19, 2018.

Respectfully drafted by, J. Turgeon; CMWIB