

**MassHire Central Region Workforce Board (MCRWB)  
Career Center/Adult Career Pathways Committee  
340 Main Street Suite 400, Worcester, MA 01608  
Jan. 14, 2020  
3:00 p.m.**

**Meeting Minutes**

**Members in Attendance:** Leslie Parady (Co-Chair), Leslie Baker, Steve McClure, Jim Chabot

**MCRWB Staff in Attendance:** Jeff Turgeon, Debra Feraco, Bruce Mendelsohn

L. Parady welcomed attendees and called the meeting to order at 3:11 pm. No conflicts of interest were noted.

S. McClure made motion to approve the meeting minutes from Sept. 10, 2019. The motion was seconded and was unanimously approved.

J. Turgeon informed the committee that the career center request to renew the career center contract for FY 20 was approved by the full board. He further informed the committee that the annual monitoring of the career center operations was successfully completed and the report was sent to the operator. The board and career center leadership is following up on the monitoring report suggestions through the regular meetings of the career center continuous improvement group. He further stated that officials from the MA Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development are submitting a waiver request to the US Department of Labor regarding the requirement under WIOA for regions to competitively procure the career center operator. As outlined in the waiver request, regions that exceed performance goals would have the option to direct award contract extensions if they chose to do so. J. Turgeon was unaware of when they may be notified of the waiver request determination by DOL officials.

D. Baillargeon distributed a draft of the survey form used with employers that attend their job fairs in anticipation of the Uncommon Job Fair that will be happening later in the month. L. Parady noted an instance of the form that still referred to the old name of the career center and D. Baillargeon stated she would revise the form before use at the upcoming fair.

D. Baillargeon also gave an update regarding staffing, noting the new Business Engagement Solution Team supervisor, Jibrael Younis, is now on board, and that the final interviews are occurring for the remaining Business Services Representative position that they are filling.

The Committee reviewed the request by J. Turgeon to recommend a one year extension to the One Stop Operator Intragovernmental Agreement that began July 1, 2017, between the Central MA Workforce Investment Board (now known as the MassHire Central Region Workforce Board), and the Workforce Central Career Centers now known as the MassHire Central Career Centers) which had an initial two year agreement period ending June 30, 2019. A motion to forward the request to the Full Board for approval was made and seconded. The vote passed unanimously. D. Baillargeon recused herself prior to the vote to avoid a conflict of interest.

D. Baillargeon informed the Committee that the search for the BEST Supervisor continues. There was an offer made and accepted by a candidate. That person then rescinded his acceptance. The Career Center leadership has another group of candidates that have applied for the reposted position. Also, D. Baillargeon confirmed the DCU Job Fair was well attended by jobseekers. A total of 780 people were in attendance at the event. Following the event, 56 employers were surveyed and of that 39 responded with positive marks. Committee members have asked that D. Baillargeon provide the questions from the survey and recommended there be some kind of follow up to confirm which employers hired candidates and the total number hired as a result of the job fair. The Committee also recommended in the future outreaching and having more press covering the job fair. Invited guest Liz Tiley, the Worcester Public Schools Nightlife

Coordinator, did confirm four of her students got interviews from employers who attended the event. D. Baillargeon confirmed planning for the UnCommon Job Fair is underway. She also shared with the Committee that both Career Centers also conduct mini job fairs on a monthly basis.

E. Brown informed the Committee that all items on the Issue Tracker have been addressed, passed on to the appropriate person/organization for further development or tabled. The Committee will review the tracker to determine if additional issues should be added.

J. Froimson stated the Committee would need better data to understand the true number of individuals who are not counted in the State labor participation rate. L. Parady did share a link from the MA Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development. This did provide some information with regard to individuals who are able to work, but are not working. However, it still fell short of being able to identify other non-participation jobseekers such as those working under the table or jobseekers that are not working and stopped looking for work due to spousal income. The Committee agreed it would need to decide if this is a subject that can be addressed at the committee level. Members provided additional things to consider:

- a. Jobseekers unable to work because of limitations such as transportation and child care. There are existing programs to address these issues such as the Department of Transitional Assistance (DTA) and Task for Transit, but overall resource for the City are who fully too little. A suggestion was made to look into how partner organizations outreach to employers whether or not those relationships can be used to support transportation and child care.

L. Parady informed the Committee that MassMEP will be having an automation robotics exhibit on May 30<sup>th</sup> and those members who may be interested in attending should follow up with her.

**ACTION:** J. Turgeon will forward the request to approve a one year extension to the One Stop Operator to the Full Board for approval.

**ACTION:** D. Baillargeon will provide the questions from the survey given to employers who took part in the DCU Center Job Fair.

**ACTION:** Committee to consider whether the issue of labor workforce participation rate can be addressed via this Committee and if employer partners can be directed to address other issues with respect to the labor force participation challenges such as transportation.

J. Turgeon discussed some available funding opportunities, including the MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's Bridges to College program for area Adult Basic Education providers, and a MA Department of Transportation grant to foster workforce transportation initiatives. J. Turgeon noted the Montachusett Regional Transit Authority and the Worcester Regional Transit Authorities are both seeking to submit grants to expand fixed route transit lines throughout the region.

J. Turgeon also shared an invitation to the regional blueprint leadership session occurring on Oct. 8<sup>th</sup>. He highlighted the fact that MA Secretary of Labor and Workforce Development Rosalin Acosta will be attending this event and sharing state insight into regional plan implementation efforts.

J. Turgeon announced the next Committee meeting will be on March 10, 2020.

With that, a motion to adjourn was made, seconded, and approved unanimously.

*Respectfully submitted by: j. Turgeon*