



Board of Directors Meeting – Thursday, September 10, 2020
Via: Zoom (remote platform)

Attendees

	R. Adams	√	C. Hollaway	√	B. Morrison		Staff:
√	J. Brosnan	√	B. House		B. Petropulos		H. Boulger
√	J. Burke	*	A. Ingegna		R. Recker		K. Toomey
*	J. Butler	√	R. Keegan	√	E. Sheridan		H. Williams
√	B. Chaput	√	E. Kennedy	√	M. Taylor		S. Zayac
*	E. Dellea		S. Kinstle	√	C. Tyer		
*	B. DiTomasso	*	B. Lepicier		B. Waterman		Guests:
√	D. Evans	√	J. Lipa				Rep. Farley-Bouvier
√	P. Gage	√	J. Lowenstein				M. Gelaznik, MHBCC
√	T. Gage	√	D. McNally				M. Herzig, MHBCC
√	L. Harrison	√	K. Messina		*excused absence		P. Wojtkowski, MHBCC

Order suspending certain provisions of the Open Meeting Law and Governor’s Order of limiting meetings of more than 10 people:

Pursuant to Governor Baker’s March 12, 2020 Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A, §18, and the Governor’s March 23 and 31, 2020 Order imposing strict limitation on the number of people that may gather in one place, this meeting of the Berkshire Workforce Board will be conducted via remote participation to the greatest extent possible. Specific information and the general guidelines for remote participation by members of the public and/or parties with a right and/or requirement to attend this meeting can be found on the Berkshire Workforce Board’s website, at <http://www.masshireberkshire.com>. For this meeting, members of the public who wish to listen to the meeting may do so in the following manner: Zoom video conference call. No in-person attendance of members of the public will be permitted, but every effort will be made to ensure that the public can adequately access the proceedings in real time, via technological means. In the event that we are unable to do so, despite best efforts, we will post on the Berkshire Workforce Board website an audio or video recording, transcript, or other comprehensive record of proceedings as soon as possible after the meeting. This meeting will be recorded and a roll call was conducted via Zoom Chat.

Call to Order:

President Eva Sheridan opened the meeting at 8:02AM by welcoming everyone to the remote meeting, assuring a quorum, and acknowledging Representative Tricia Farley-Bouvier.

I. Consent Agenda

President Sheridan asked if there were any agenda items that needed to be removed from the consent agenda. It was noted that the FY2020 Audit was not yet available and the Individual Training Accounts were removed from the consent agenda.

1. *Recommendation to approve the Minutes of the June 11, 2020 Board of Director meeting.*
2. *Recommendation to approve the FY2021 Financial Statement reflecting \$84,200 income; \$130,753 expenses; showing net loss of -\$446,533.*
3. *Recommendation to approve the Executive Director Report.*
4. *Recommendation to approve the Youth Director Report.*
5. *Recommendation to approve the MassHire Berkshire Career Center Report.*

A motion was made by Doug McNally to approve the consent agenda items, seconded by James Brosnan, and the motion carried.

Individual Training Accounts: The Director noted that there were 2 McCann programs that were reviewed by the Evaluation Committee to add to the list. ***A motion was made by John Lipa to approve the ITA recommendations and seconded by Bob Keegan. Ellen Kennedy and James Brosnan abstained. The motion carried.***

The Executive Director provided a COVID update to include staggered in-office staff since July;

- BWB assisting 312 companies; Career Center assisting 1207 job seekers & 123 employers (not UI);
- McCann and Berkshire Community College continued the manufacturing training online and then finished in person with 53 completing training and 54% placement rate;
- BWB commissioned a Berkshire Workforce impact report which is on our website
- Follow-up with Rapid Response for Crane Stationery (66 UI; 39 assisted by rapid response; and career center working with 15 for training options)
- Upcoming training includes nursing assistant training; Healthcare Hub; and BWB anticipates issuing a manufacturing training request for qualifications
- Highlighted a new labor market tool Tableau on our website www.MassHireBerkshire.com to show how many qualified claimants are available per job opening.

Discussion ensued about the changes since January and opportunities for the un/underemployed.

The Youth Director provided an overview of the Summer Youth Works 2020 program in North County with 11 students in a gardening and Goodwill Customer Service Training; and Pittsfield Youth Works program through the Career Center for 26 youth in health/wellness, social media strategy, and customer service training. Board members are encouraged to visit BWB website and Facebook pages for a video and student profiles that were done by Kat Toomey. BWB continues to look for support from the Board in the following ways:

- Sponsor a youth for a work experience \$2000/youth
- Provide virtual Career Readiness experiences throughout the year
- Provide virtual and/or on-site externships for teachers
- Looking for STEM employers to provide paid, high school internships throughout the year and summer

Discussion ensued about the importance of these youth programs and John Lipa challenged the board to match his \$500 donation for career readiness experiences.

II. Announcements/Communications

- ▶ **Proposal Review Committee** – September 29th at 10AM
- ▶ **Youth Council** – October 8th at 8AM
- ▶ **Executive Committee** – October 14th at 8AM
- ▶ **Evaluation Committee** – October 15th at 8AM
- ▶ **Marketing Committee** – October 22nd at 11AM
- ▶ **Berkshire Skills Cabinet** – September 15th at 11AM
- ▶ **Healthcare Advisory Committee** – October 27th at 10AM
- ▶ **Manufacturing Advisory Committee** – November 10th at 10AM
- ▶ **Board/Community Orientation** – November 17th from 9-10AM
 - ▶ MassHire Career Center Virtual Job Fair – November 19, 2020
 - ▶ Older Worker Week – September 21-26
 - ▶ October – Disability awareness month “increasing access and opportunity”
 - ▶ STEM Week – “See yourself in STEM” October 19-23
 - ▶ October Women in Business Month recognizing the efforts of women in the workforce
 - ▶ Berkshire Central Labor Council – to be determined

III. New Business

WIOA FY21 Plan – The Executive Director noted that based on Board direction from the June 2020 meeting, the BWB submitted the regional plan on August 10, 2020 for a 30-day public comment period. The overall budget is \$1.8M with \$48K provided by WIOA partners. The plan will serve 34 WIOA adults; 50 WIOA dislocated workers; 42 WIOA youth; 3,700 individuals; 400 employers; 175 persons with disabilities; 3,600 unemployment insurance claimants; and 185 veterans. The BWB will receive \$65K towards its operating budget. ***Doug McNally made a motion to approve the FY21 WIOA plan as presented, seconded by Bryan House, the motion carried.***

FY21 WIOA Plan Negotiations – The Executive Director noted that the Berkshires typically request to enter into negotiations for performance criteria. This year there are challenges with a slowed economy, limited training providers, more intense services, and people wanting to work 1st and train 2nd. Discussion ensued and ***a motion was made by Robert Keegan to approve entering into negotiations for the Berkshire WIOA FY21 plan. Seconded by Brian Morrison, the motion carried.***

Connecting Activities – The Youth Director noted that BWB anticipates level funding through DESE for career readiness programming and has received \$20K through Berkshire Taconic for the south county schools. BWB is meeting with school-based career readiness coordinators and will be provided career awareness, exploration and immersion activities virtually and/or in-person. Teacher Externships are also available. There is an emphasis on STEM programming which will be highlighted during STEM Week (October 19-23) with Shannon Zayac working with MCLA and others. Heather Williams presented the recommendation which is dependent on funding:

SCHOOL	FY20 Award	FY20 Placements	FY21 Recommendations
Drury	\$3,500	46	\$3,500
Hoosac	\$2,500	21	\$2,500
Lee	\$2,500	30	\$2,500
Lenox	\$2,500	38	\$2,500
McCann	\$1,000	40	\$1,000
Monument	\$3,000	45*	\$3,500*
Mt. Everett	\$3,500	51	\$3,500
Mt. Greylock	\$1,000	4	\$1,000
Pittsfield / Taconic	\$5,500	13 (co-op)	\$5,500
Wahconah	\$2,500	10	\$2,500
BART	\$2,500	22	\$2,500
	\$30,000 TOTAL	320 placements	\$30,500 TOTAL
			\$5,000 – Engage elementary & middle schools / Creative CR projects
			\$10,000 – Teacher Externships

Discussion ensued about the low numbers at Pittsfield/Taconic in which Heather Williams and Tammy Gage noted that it was a transition year in with the coop program and although a number of career readiness activities occurred, they were not captured in the BWB database. Transportation was and continues to be a concern for getting students to worksites for these opportunities. ***A motion to approve the recommendation as presented was made by Bryan House and seconded by Jeff Lowenstein. The motion carried. Tammy Gage, James Brosnan and Eva Sheridan abstained.***

One-Stop Procurement – The Executive Director noted that the current contract with Berkshire Training and Employment, Inc. expires on June 30, 2021 and although EOLWD asked for an extension and/or a waiver, it was not approved; therefore, the BWB must competitively bid the One-Stop operator prior to December 31, 2020. This is a four-year process. A tentative timeline was discussed and Board members were asked to notify the Executive Director if interested in participating in this important selection process. ***A motion to establish a complete selection process and timeline was made by James Brosnan and seconded by Tammy Gage. The motion carried.***

Career Center In-Person Services – The Executive Director noted that both the BWB and Career Center staff have been working remotely since March. There are a number of state issues indicating that telework will continue through 12/31/20. Heather Boulger is on a state reopening career center committee which is strongly advocating for CONSISTENT reopening of centers; SECURITY to be provided; and to follow LOCAL COMMUNITY protocols. Through the 9/30/20 the priority was ensuring the centers could work remotely and providing focused outreach to

customers. The next phase will be to prepare for physical reopening and a new normal. Discussion ensued about the quality of remote services that is currently happening; the concern about customers who do not have technology or broadband; being responsive to the community needs; lending tablets and training to our most vulnerable customers; reaching out to customers (possibly via billboards and advertising); trying to get back to in-person as soon as possible and being consistent with other career centers. Career Center staff are open to ideas and suggestions. No action taken.

IV. Special Recognition

BWB staff thought it would be important to recognize those outstanding community leaders who are making a difference in the workforce system and throughout Berkshire County.

- Board Member **Brian Morrison** was awarded our Social Media Superhero Award for always supporting our posts
- The **1Berkshire Team** was awarded the COVID-19 Innovators Award for creating programming and support during the pandemic that is helping businesses
- **Melanie Herzig** from the MassHire Berkshire Career Center was awarded the 2020 Workforce Professional Award for always going above and beyond in her role as Business Services Representative to help companies with their business needs, establishing job fairs and virtual job fairs, and many other services
- **Mayor Linda Tyer** was honored as the 2020 Workforce Ambassador for her consistent commitment to supporting workforce programming, engaging the BWB in business discussions, and her leadership in forging workforce initiatives forward.

Certificates will be mailed to awardees along with a gift card for lunch at Otto's in Pittsfield.

V. Strategic Discussion

This is an opportunity to share concerns and workforce related items.

New business - John Lipa inquired about whether the new business that is in the old Crane Stationery building is utilizing workforce services. BWB and CC staff will follow up.

DTA services - Deni Evans noted that the Department of Transitional Assistance (DTA) has a work at home policy until 12/31/20 and their office has established ways to work with vulnerable customers via the telephone to walk through registrations for services. She encouraged the Board to forward their number 413.236.2000 to anyone needing assistance.

Workforce Strategic Plan FY2021 will include:

1. Catalyst for innovative workforce and labor market resource
2. Bridge skills gap between labor market needs and workforce
3. Expand Career Readiness programming and core competencies of youth
4. Ensure continued success through evaluation and adherence to mandates
5. Complete career center procurement

A motion to approve the FY21 strategies was made by Tammy Gage, seconded by Bob Keegan, and unanimously carried.

VI. Adjournment

The next meeting of the full Board of Directors will be December 10, 2020. *With no further business to discuss, a motion to adjourn was made by Ellen Kennedy, seconded by Tammy Gage, and unanimously approved.* Meeting closed at 9:04AM.

Respectfully submitted,
Chelsea Tyer, Secretary
HPB