



**Board of Directors Meeting – Thursday, September 9, 2021**  
**Via: Zoom (remote platform)**



*Attendees*

	R. Adams	<b>Rep</b>	L. Harrison	✓	D. Moresi		Staff:
✓	D. Bissaillon		C. Holloway	✓	B. Morrison	✓	H. Boulger
✓	J. Brosnan	✓	B. House	*	B. Petropulos	✓	K. Toomey
✓	J. Burke	✓	A. Ingegni		R. Recker	✓	H. Williams
	J. Butler	✓	R. Keegan	✓	E. Sheridan	✓	S. Zayac
✓	B. Chaput	✓	E. Kennedy		M. Taylor		
*	E. Dellea	✓	B. Lepicier	✓	C. Tyer		Guests:
<b>Rep</b>	B. DiTomasso	✓	J. Lipa		B. Waternan		Beth Mitchell, General Dynamics
	D. Evans	✓	J. Lowenstein				Cassie Carmon, Elder Services
✓	P. Gage	✓	D. McNally				
✓	T. Gage		K. Messina		*excused absence		

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

*Pursuant to Chapter 20 of the Acts of 2021, this meeting will be conducted via remote means. Members of the public who wish to access 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, for reasons of economic hardship and despite best efforts, we will post on our website an audio or video recording, transcript, or other comprehensive record of proceedings as soon as possible after the meeting. <http://www.masshireberkshire.com>. Today’s agenda is posted on the City of Pittsfield and City of North Adams respective websites. Members of the public who wish to listen to the meeting may do so via Zoom video conference call. This meeting will be recorded and a roll call was conducted via Zoom Chat.*

**Call to Order:**

President Eva Sheridan opened the meeting at 8:01AM by welcoming everyone to the remote meeting and assuring a quorum. A moment of silence occurred for the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of 911 and the loss of the 13 soldiers in Afghanistan.

**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 FY2021 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 10, 2021 Board of Director meeting.*

2. *Recommendation to approve the YTD FY2022 Financial Statement reflecting \$21,113 income; \$64,530 expenses; showing net loss of -42,530. There is \$96,659 in account receivable and \$75,874 in money market.*
3. *Recommendation to approve the Youth Director Report.*
4. *Recommendation to approve the MassHire Berkshire Career Center Report.*

*A motion was made by Ellen Kennedy to approve the consent agenda items, seconded by Jim Brosnan, and the motion carried.*

Individual Training Accounts for Career Center customers were reviewed. There were 5 organizations with 41 programs approved. 7 programs were rejected due to costs exceeding the \$5K cap. The Executive Director will work with the rejected vendors to see if there are scholarships available. *Motion was made by Barbara Chaput to approve the Individual Training Account recommendations as presented. Seconded by Tammy Gage, the motion carried. Ellen Kennedy abstained.*

## **II. Announcements/Communications**

President Sheridan welcomed newest Board members David Bissailon from Smith Bros-McAndrews Ins. Agency and David Moresi from Moresi & Associates Development Company to the Board. The following meetings were announced:

- **Skills Cabinet Meeting 9/21/21 at 11am via zoom**
- **Youth Council Meeting 10/7/21 at 9am via zoom**
- **Executive Committee Meeting 10/13/21 at 8am via zoom**
- **Evaluation Committee Meeting 10/21/21 at 8am via zoom**
- **Fall Orientation Oct/Nov**
- **Black Economic Council Speed Networking 9.18.21 4-8 at the Stationery Factory**

Communications included new grants and upcoming funding opportunities:

- Market Maker \$25K
- Healthcare Hub \$235K
- EOHED Manufacturing - \$165K
- Manufacturing Bridge - \$13K
- Connecting Activities - \$326,630 (\$227; employer engagement; high needs; pathways; etc.)
- Re-Entry RFP due 10/1/21
- Behavioral Health RFP due 10/27/21
- WCTF released in fall
- Workforce Training Fund (incumbent workers) ongoing
- U.S.DOL Recovery & Reemployment conversation 9/15/21 at 10AM

## **III. New Business**

WIOA FY22 Plan – The Executive Director presented the WIOA FY22 plan to include:

WIOA Adults – 38 EER – 75%; Training credential – 31; Placement wage - \$16.00  
 WIOA Dislocated – 57 EER - 87%; Training credential 45; Placement wage - \$19.00  
 WIOA Youth – 44 EER - 65%; Degree/certificate 85%;  
 Wagner-Peyser – 3,000 individuals; 600 employers; 125 disabilities; 1,575 UI; 160 veterans

- ITA request increase from \$5K to \$6,500 starting 7/1/21
- 30-day public comment conducted in August 2021; submitting 9/13/21
- 7/1/21 - Career Center services available virtually
- 8/2/21 – Career Center services appt. only and virtual
- 9/7/21 – All Career Center staff in-person for appt. only
- 10/4/21 – Career Center open to the public
- \$2.5M budget; \$48K partners; \$65K to BWB

Discussion ensued and *a motion was made by Jim Brosnan to approve the FY22 WIOA Plan. Seconded by Brian Morrison, the motion approved.*

WIOA FY22 Negotiations – the state performance goals and Berkshire comparison chart were provided which shows that the only 2 goals that are not being met at 80% are the WIOA Adult (78%) and Youth Q4 (75%) entered employment rates. Discussion ensued about the large number of unemployed residents reentering the workforce, the lack of motivation due to COVID, and the barriers to employment including childcare/eldercare, transportation, etc. *A motion to approve the FY22 negotiations was made Brian Morrison, seconded by Ellen Kennedy and unanimously approved.*

Connecting Activities FY22 recommendation – The Executive Committee is recommending that \$41,000 be distributed to 11 high schools for college/career readiness programming.

- Drury High School - \$3500
- Hoosac Valley High School - \$4000
- Lee High School - \$4000
- Lenox High School - \$4000
- McCann High School - \$2000
- Monument Mountain - \$4500
- Mt. Everett - \$4000
- Mt. Greylock - \$2500
- Pittsfield & Taconic - \$5500
- Wahconah - \$3500
- Bart Charter - \$3500

Discussion ensued and *a motion was made by Doug McNally to approve the recommendation. Seconded by Bryan House, the motion carried. Tammy Gage and Jim Brosnan abstained.*

#### **IV. Program Update**

Healthcare programming – Shannon Zayac noted that the **Berkshire Nursing Assistant Program** WCTF funding is extended through January 2022 and there were 3 day courses and 3 blended online courses with 40 completions since September 2020 with a final day course scheduled for November 2021.

BWB has been awarded a \$235K **Berkshire Healthcare Hub Grant** April 2021-April 2023 to offer CNA refresher course for Red Cross Training; continuation of blended online courses (2 cohorts); the addition of a North County CNA course at MCLA (4 cohorts); and supporting BHS Medical Assistant Training (2 cohorts).

New Opportunities in the pipeline – **Behavioral Health Hub** (due October 2021) targeted for behavioral health, substance and opioid counseling positions.

Summer Programming – Kat Toomey highlighted the **North County Summer YouthWorks** program which operated for 6-7 weeks over the summer for 10 high school participants. Funded by First Congregational Church of Williamstown & MountainOne and the Career Center provided payroll / coverage. *Tuesdays - Employability skill & cultural awareness training (at Hoosac Valley); Wednesdays – planting & harvesting Drury gardens with Jennifer Munoz, environmental / social justice training with Greenagers, Inc. (at Drury High School); Thursdays - weekly field trips to engage in community-service learning throughout the region at April Hill Farm/Greenagers, The Brien Center, Berkshire County House of Correction Aquaponics Lab, UNO Community Center and Many Forks Farm.* Youth developed PSA's for their final projects and video clips were shared – view them on the Berkshire Workforce Board Instagram and FB sites!

**Pittsfield Summer YouthWorks** – funded by Commonwealth Corporation and implemented by the Career Center provided 3 tiers of programming:

1. Service and Project Based Learning for youth who are 14 & 15 – 3 North County service-learning gardening program and 10 youth in a virtual health and wellness project-based learning experience
2. Early and Career Trajectory Experiences for Youth ages 16-21 – 5 online work placements in landscaping, administrative, food prep, coaching and customer service; 12 youth placed in virtual social media project-based learning.
3. Career pathway training for youth ages 17-21 – 20 hours week for 20 youth; free college courses; met with local professionals; visited worksites and participated in job shadowing

**Berkshire Museum High School Interns** – funded by Berkshire Taconic Community Foundation for 2 youth (one was hired on) to serve as interns for the Museum’s STEM summer camps.

Connecting Activities – Heather Williams noted FY22 Goals/Priorities of MyCap / College & Career Planning, College & Career Teams, Career Readiness Model Expansion & Innovation College & Career Pathways. FY22 Funding was highlighted and includes Connecting Activities Funds totaling **\$326,630** (\$289,650 in FY21). Additional funds in FY22 will be prioritized for Employer Engagement, Innovation Pathways expansion and support and overall expansion of partnering school/districts’ Career Readiness Models (including high focus on College & Career Planning). Staff are meeting with partnering districts in September & October. South County college and career pathway/MyCap work is supported by Berkshire Taconic Community Foundation. Heather also noted that Lenox High School now has pathway development in healthcare and business. Doug McNally applauded the efforts of the youth department.

## **V. Strategic Discussion**

Board members shared a variety of workforce items.

- Department of Health is contracting with a new nursing assistant provider (Red Cross ends in October 2021)
- Shortages in healthcare positions especially nursing assistants and technicians. Concerns with recruitment and retention due to childcare and transportation. Lagging effect from COVID, many direct care workers feeling burnout and working more hours.
- BCC has doubled their ADNs from 50/year to 100/year and there has been a slight decline in LPNs
- Education/training has been responsive.
- PPS has added early education in all of their schools
- Concerns about unemployment sanctions and ghosting acceptance
- Higher education reporting that about 40% of new hires were from outside of the region and 20% working remotely.
- Berkshires receiving national attention for quality of life; population may be stabilizing
- Continued concern for adequate housing for new comers and affordable housing overall. Advocacy of political leaders for more housing. Businesses do keep leaders informed of needs.
- Future of work is changing – more remote work
- Important for our Board to focus on workforce items that we can have an impact on – pipeline development, recruitment and retention are FY22 priorities.

## **VI. Adjournment**

The next meeting of the full Board of Directors will be December 9, 2021. ***With no further business to discuss, a motion to adjourn was made by Tammy Gage, seconded by John Lipa, and unanimously approved.*** Meeting closed at 9:00AM.

Respectfully submitted,  
Chelsea Tyer, Secretary/HPB