



Board of Directors Meeting – Thursday, December 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			✓	Christina Wynn, BCC
*	P. Gage	✓	J. Lowenstein				
✓	T. Gage	✓	D. McNally				
✓	L. Harrison	✓	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 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 8:00AM by welcoming everyone to the remote meeting and assuring a quorum.

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 September 10, 2020 Board of Director meeting.*

2. *Recommendation to approve the YTD FY2021 Financial Statement reflecting \$258,463 income; \$277,110 expenses; showing net loss of -18,647. There is \$17,852 in checking; \$75,874 in money market; and \$548 in savings.*
3. *Recommendation to approve the FY2020 annual audit reflecting \$691,674 in total revenues; \$702,348 total expenses; change in net assets (\$10,674); temp restricted \$53,594; admin expenses \$26,201; beginning net assets \$223,929; ending net assets \$213,255; and one non-material item on the management letter.*
4. *Recommendation to approve 19 programs from 4 vendors on the Individual Training Account list.*
5. *Recommendation to approve the 2021 employee benefits for health insurance BWB providing 80% of premiums and \$1500 towards the deductible and Guardian benefits at 100%.*
6. *Recommendation to approve the Executive Director Report.*
7. *Recommendation to approve the Youth Director Report.*
8. *Recommendation to approve the MassHire Berkshire Career Center Report.*

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

II. Announcements/Communications

- ▶ *BWB Offices closed December 24th & 25th, & January 1st*
- ▶ *Quarterly Board meeting – March 11th at 8AM*
- ▶ *Executive Committee – January 13th at 8AM*
- ▶ *Evaluation Committee – February 25th at 8AM*

- ▶ Thank you from LTI Smart Glass for providing on-the-job training resources for 4 unemployed (2 are still employed)
- ▶ Thank you from Pittsfield Public Schools for presenting at their Advisory Committee meeting
- ▶ Thank you from MCLA for assistance with STEM week

The Executive Director provided an update of activities since the September meeting:

- BWB assisting 168 companies since July (plus 312 March-June); Career Center assisting 1,641 job seekers & 124 employers (not UI);
- Rapid Response assisting 11 companies impacting 700+ employees;
- Received Healthcare Hub \$25K gran for 6 months which will lead to \$225K for 2.5 years of training;
- WCTF nursing assistant training completed 2 cohorts with 13 completing training; recruiting for January 11th cohort; challenging with no Red Cross Testing in place yet and clinicals impacted by COVID;
- Received Manufacturing Bridge grant \$13K for inventorying and needs assessment;
- Anticipate EOHED Manufacturing entry-level training \$165K working with BCC, McCann and PPS;
- Anticipate an Unemployed manufacturing training fast track program;
- BWB has provided 86 internships with 45 companies
- BWB provided 6 career awareness activities with 50 students
- BWB provided 7 career exploration activities for 86 students
- Created online career readiness resource library
- Assisted with STEM week – 2,422 FB views; 15 videos; all schools; can be found on PCTV
- Sponsored BIC's BETA program by sponsoring a youth.

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

III. New Business

Board ask: As part of Board certification, President Eva Sheridan **asked all Board members to complete the online Ethics Training and Open Meeting Law certificate** for their board member files. Discussion ensued about completing for multiple organization. A direct link will be sent with the minutes.

Board ask: As part of succession planning and board engagement, President Sheridan **asked every board member to engage a colleague in BWB activities by the next Board meeting in March.** Activities can include:

- ▶ Career Readiness Volunteers

- ▶ Training (incumbent, un/under employed)
- ▶ Participate in Committee/Board meeting committees, etc.
- ▶ Identify someone who likes data/labor market info
- ▶ Sponsor a youth (\$2,500)
- ▶ Forward a grant opportunity
- ▶ Introduce a staff member to BWB employees
- ▶ Complete Workforce Wednesday to highlight your company or interaction with Board/Career Center
- ▶ Be our community ambassadors!
- ▶ Like/Share our Berkshire Workforce Board FB page

On behalf of the Youth Council, Doug McNally encouraged Board members to provide a virtual or in person internship and/or to sponsor a youth for a work experience.

Evaluation Committee Report – Robert Keegan thanked Evaluation Committee members for their continued participation and encouraged others to join this important group. This team consisting of both board and non-board members reviews Individual Training Accounts (year to date there have been 59 courses from 9 providers). Program reviews have occurred through the fall including summer youth works; WIOA programs; job seeker and employer services. The career center continues to work hard to meet business/job seeker/youth needs. The only recommendation is to keep the Veterans program on a corrective action plan. Although they are meeting their performance numbers, the committee remains concerned about limited outreach and engagement activities. Veterans are priority of service and we need to make sure they career center is reaching out to agencies that can assist and coordinate activities to help our veterans participate in employment and training initiatives. ***A motion for the Veteran’s program to remain on a corrective action plan was made by Jerry Burke, seconded by John Lipa, and unanimously approved.***

The Evaluation committee also reviewed the career center Standard Operating Procedures which need to be adjusted in order to provide virtual services (which they have been doing since March 2020). The Workforce Board approves all policies and procedures of the career center. ***A motion was made by Tammy Gage to approve the updated career center standard operating procedures for virtual service delivery, reemployment services assessment, inspection verification form, and LMI form & worksheet when requesting funding for training. Seconded by Bryan House, the motion carried.***

IV. WIOA One Stop Operator/Service Provider Recommendation

Michael Taylor noted that the BCREB adhered to all procurement policies in requesting proposals as part of the WIOA Operator procurement. Although BCREB received 2 letters of support, only 1 full application was submitted; therefore, BCREB is conducting a failed bid and cost price analysis to ensure compliance. The rating/review team consisted of 8 reviewers from the Board, WIOA partners, and community leaders. The application received by Berkshire Training and Employment, Inc. (BTE) received a score of 101.75 out of possible 125 points. Overall perceptions of the application are that it was complete, well written, provided strong emphasis on virtual and in-person services and was realistic and manageable. The application would have been strengthened by providing stronger strategies for veterans as priority of service and for vulnerable customer responses; a marketing plan for outreach to new customers (job seekers and businesses); and more concrete ways to reach new employers. Discussion ensued. ***Doug McNally made a motion to recommend Berkshire Training and Employment, Inc. to be selected as the Berkshire WIOA One-Stop Career Center Operator/Service Provider for FY2022 and to present to CEO Mayor Tyer to allow MHBWB to enter into contract negotiations in order to have a completed and signed contract by June 2021 for July 1, 2021 implementation. Seconded by John Lipa, the motion carried.***

V. Strategic Discussion

Board members shared a variety of workforce items.

- John Lipa participated in a webinar discussing proactive strategic initiatives for technology and manufacturing including the importance of soft skills
- The pandemic has caused a shift from full-time workers to flex workers and the opportunity for business and education to collaborate remotely
- Discussion about the concern of our healthcare workers especially at the service level. Combined challenges include the need to stay home to school their children and those afraid to come to work and be exposed to the public. Shift from FTE to per-diem; finding it challenging to find enough people to backfill
- People are afraid to come into work
- The vaccine around the corner may help, but a change in mindset is needed and time will tell
- Hospitality workers are facing the same concerns – fear to anxiety to uncertainty to caring for elderly/children, etc.
- Healthcare & hospitality workers share similar skills. The BCREB training is intended to reskill these people for possible 2nd careers
- A report from New York indicated that their graduation rates have doubled by paying for rides to class and for books.
- Ken Messina noted that the Rapid Response Team has worked with hundreds of businesses – 1600 of which are new to the system. MassHire is prepared to retool customers to get them hired.
- There are thousands of job openings in the Berkshires and the Road to Reemployment activities are connecting people to jobs.
- Very concerned for small businesses and not having enough workers. Businesses and schools cannot plan.
- The CARES act ends in December which may trigger people to go back to work, however, the HERO act may extend benefits
- PPE was provided to WIBs and Career Centers
- Linda Harrison highlighted to good work that Mill Town Capital efforts to revitalize Tyler street by adding housing and other economic efforts. *It was suggested to issue a letter to Mill Town Capital honoring their efforts.*
- The budget has not gravely impacted the workforce system. It is anticipated that there will be workforce resources for Workforce Blueprint and road to reemployment efforts.

BWB staff noted that the Berkshire October unemployment rate is 6.9%; there are 1,989 job postings on JobQuest; there were 171,000 statewide UI fraud claims of which 97% were caught; and that the Massachusetts minimum wage rises to \$13.50/hour in January 2021.

VI. Old Business

None.

VII. Adjournment

Ken Messina noted that General Dynamic is up for a Mass Office of Business Development Economic Business incentive award. Additional information will be forwarded.

The next meeting of the full Board of Directors will be March 11, 2021. Eva Sheridan wished everyone a holiday season filled with health, peace and brightness! *With no further business to discuss, a motion to adjourn was made by Bryan House, seconded by Barbara Chaput, and unanimously approved.* Meeting closed at 8:55AM.

Respectfully submitted,
Chelsea Tyer, Secretary
HPB