

MHHCWB BOARD OF DIRECTORS' ANNUAL MEETING December 14, 2021 ~ 3:00 - 4:30 p.m. Zoom Meeting
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Members Present:

P. Bailey	T. Canavan	F. Grassetti
T. Barber	E. Cassidy	S. Kasa
C. Brown	J. Cook	J. Peters
C. Burton	E. Cummings	J. Sullivan
D. Butterfield	M. Galat	M. Wise

Others Present:

MassHire Staff	Rachel Reyes	
Anne Kandelis	Rep. B. Williams	
Sen. E Lesser		

MINUTES OF MEETING

Meeting Materials

Mailed Out: December 14, 2021 Agenda, Minutes of the September 14, 2021 Meeting, Executive Committee Report, MassLive Article: “Americans Quit Their Jobs in September at the Highest Numbers Yet; Where Are They Going?”

Screen Shared: N/A

I. Welcome & Business Items

A. Approval of the Minutes

Chair Meredith Wise, called the meeting to order and welcomed members. Meredith welcomed guests Senator Eric P. Lesser and State Representative Bud L. Williams and noted we looked forward to their comments and discussion. A roll call was then taken for attendance and Meredith began the meeting by asking for a motion to accept the September 14, 2021 meeting minutes. (Please see Attachment A, MHHCWB Board of Directors’ Meeting Votes which is considered an addendum to these minutes.)

- **Action Taken:** A motion to accept the minutes from the September 14, 2021 meeting was seconded and approved via roll call vote.

B. Executive Committee Report

Meredith went on to the Executive Committee Report who met on November 10, 2021 as page 4 in the agenda packet for their review. In the interest of time she focused on the following two items:

- Rudy D’Agostino, CPA of Meyers Brothers Kalicka, P.C., had reported on the results of the FY’20 Audit; which once again resulted in 3 clean, unmodified opinions of the financial statements, of the agency’s internal controls and for each major program; with no deficiencies or compliance issues to note; no adjusting journal entries required of the financial statements, and no findings or questioned costs. Diana Carr and the Finance/Audit Committee were congratulated for their work.

- Gina Golash-Kos had provided the Strategic Planning Committee report which included their review of the progress in the 1st QTR of the Strategic Plan KPIs and on a focused discussion on the status of the region’s Labor Force Participation rate and how it has changed since the onset of the pandemic.

C. Election of Directors & Officers

Meredith turned the meeting over to Governance Committee Chair, Craig Brown, who referred to page 5 in the agenda packet and recommended the following actions be approved:

1. Members with Terms Expiring December 2021

Craig noted that the Governance Committee had reviewed attendance for those members whose terms expire this December against the Board’s By-Law policy and discussed their re-election at their meeting and with the Executive Committee. They are as follows:

Name	Title	Company / City
1. Eugene Cassidy	President & CEO	Big E, West Springfield
2. Edward Demetrian	VP of Sales	Tiger Press, East Longmeadow
3. Keshawn Dodds	Executive Director	Boys & Girls Club Family Center, Springfield
4. Kermit Dunkelberg	Assistant VP, ABE & Workforce Development	HCC / Ludlow Adult Learning Center, Regional Rep for all DESE Programs
5. Spiros Hatiras	President & CEO	Valley Health Systems, Inc., Holyoke
6. Pia Kumar	Co-Owner	Universal Plastics, Holyoke
7. Dr. Christina Royal	President	Holyoke Community College
8. Henry Thomas	President	Urban League of Springfield, Inc., Springfield
9. Jacob Waah	President & CEO	Victory Home Healthcare, Inc., Holyoke

- **Action Requested:** That the Board re-elect the above members at the Board December Annual meeting, for terms ending December 2024 with the exception of Pia Kumar who is stepping down from the Board.

2. Election of Officers:

The slate of Officers needing to be voted on is as follows:

- Chair: Meredith Wise (3rd year of 3-year term)
- Vice-Chair: Patricia Samra (1-year term)
- Treasurer: Eugene Cassidy (1-year term)
- Clerk: Craig Brown (1-year term)
- President and Chief Executive Officer (non-voting): David M. Cruise
- Vice-President of Administration and Workforce Systems (non-voting): Christine Abramowitz
- Vice-President and Comptroller (non-voting): Diana Carr
- Vice-President of Workforce Operations (non-voting): Steven Trueman

- **Action Taken:** A motion was taken that the terms of Officers above be elected was seconded and unanimously approved.

II. President & CEO Report

Meredith turned the meeting over to David Cruise, who first thanked Patti Samra for agreeing to serve in the role as Vice-Chair to succeed Meredith at the end of her final term. He then set the stage for the board discussion by referring to the MassLive article included in the board packet:

“Americans Quit Their Jobs in September at the Highest Numbers Yet; Where Are They Going” and on the screen pointed out a few highlights from it; re: the statistics and the various reasons why people were leaving their jobs, as a base for discussion on the new ARPA money and how it might help mitigate these trends. Members provided reactions to the article and also noted other statistics like declining community college and training program enrollments. David then noted that the House and Senate Ways & Means Committees have each developed ARPA spending plans and would welcome Senator Lesser and Representative Williams to share the thought process that went into it, along with some highlights.

III. Board Discussion: The American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA): MA Legislature Funding Priorities and Impact on Regional Job Creation and Economic Expansion

Meredith re-introduced Senator Eric P. Lesser and State Representative Bud L. Williams. Senator Lesser provided comments first as follows:

- In looking at the best use of the federal funds the Senate assessed how cities were planning to use their separate allocations to ensure there would be no duplication of efforts.
- The state-level \$5B allocation was put into a Trust account and of that, \$3B was put into a multi-year budget and \$2B saved for future considerations not yet known. \$20B worth of requests were considered.
- Noting that this is a one-time infusion of funding, the focus was on capital infrastructure vs. on-going operations that may not be able to be sustained once the funding is gone.
- His particular high-level priorities included work skills expansion to address the supply-side demands, housing expansion for workforce; loan forgiveness for health-care and human services workers and expanding public healthcare capacity.
- He also noted that a Future of Work Commission has been formed to focus on these topics.

Representative Swan then added to those comments the following:

- The House received \$32B in requests and of that \$400M was funded for workforce related items and \$500M for unemployment insurance items.
- He then cited specific investments to support human service worker loan forgiveness and the nursing workforce; transfers to the Workforce Competitiveness Trust Fund for the Career Technical Initiative (CTI) with vocational technical schools, for other training programs and for young adult jobs programs.
- He also mentioned the importance of transportation infrastructure on the workforce like the east-west rail which is planned to be part of the Federal Infrastructure bill.

Discussion items following their presentations included the digital divide, commentary on the details on the healthcare loan forgiveness program on community-based health centers, how CTI has rolled out initially focused on adults in the evening but is also looking to target high school students in traditional schools in the late afternoon and the need for instructors to teach at those times. David closed the discussion by noting that now that the money is here we need to develop a menu of training options, new and innovative recruitment methods and to also continue to support incumbent worker training to open up mid and entry-level jobs.

Note: Two report links posted by Dr. John Cook in the Chat:

<https://www.americanprogress.org/article/the-role-of-people-of-color-in-the-future-workforce> and
<https://www.mass.edu/masstransfer/macomcom/home.asp>

With no further business, Meredith called the meeting to a close at 4:35

Submitted by David Cruise