



Board of Directors Meeting

March 19, 2024

Zoom Meeting, 3:00 - 4:30pm

C. Brown	G. Golash-Kos	P. Samra
C. Burton	F. Grassetti	J. Sullivan
D. Butterfield	S. Kasa	G. Timmons
G. Cassidy	J. Mitchell	
K. Dunkelberg	E. O'Keefe	

Others Present:

MassHire Staff	Molly Jacobson, Commonwealth Corp	Cathy Buono, City of Springfield
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Meeting Materials

Emailed Out: Agenda, Minutes of the December 12, 2023 Meeting, Executive Committee Report (Ratification of Appointment of President & CEO, Appointment of MHHWCW Board Vice Chair, Signatory Authorization), President & CEO Report, Presentation on *Building Skills for a Strong Economy* by Molly Jacobson.

I. Welcome & Business Items

A. Welcome

David Cruise welcomed the Board Members and Cathy Buono, the newly appointed Chief Administrative and Financial Officer for the City of Springfield. Cathy will be joining the next scheduled Board meeting in June.

B. Approval of Minutes

Chair Patricia Samra called the meeting to order and introduced new MHHWCW's new President & CEO, Peter Farkas who comes in with 20 years of experience in workforce development. Patricia requested a motion to accept the December 12, 2024 meeting Minutes.

- **Action Taken:** A motion to accept the minutes from the December 12, 2023 meeting was seconded and approved.

C. Executive Committee Report

Report out on the Executive Committee Meeting that met on February 21, 2024.

- The Executive Committee voted unanimously to appoint Peter J. Farkas as the President & CEO of MassHire Hampden County Workforce Board, Inc. (the "Corporation"), effective as of March 18, 2024 and to enter into an Employment Agreement with him on behalf of the



Corporation, subject to ratification by the MHHWCW, Inc. Board Of Directors.

- **Action Taken:** A motion to ratify the election of Peter J. Farkas as the President & CEO of MassHire Hampden County Workforce Board, Inc. (the “Corporation”), effective as of March 18, 2024 with terms and conditions detailed in the Employment Agreement was second and approved.
- **Action Taken:** A motion to recommend to the MHHWCW of Directors at the December 2024 Business Meeting, the appointment of J. Jeffrey Sullivan as Vice Chair of the MHHWCW Board of Directors for a one year term effective January 1, 2025 with appointment as Board Chair for a three year term effective January 1, 2026 was second and approved.
 - Abstained - Jeffrey Sullivan

▪ **Signature Authorization**

- **Action Taken:** A vote to authorize Peter J. Farkas, President & CEO, to sign MHHWCW, Inc. contracts and other legal business documents on its behalf was second and approved.

II. New MHHWCW President & CEO Remarks

Peter J. Farkas started by introducing himself and shared some information about his background:

- 20 years of workforce development experience at a One-Stop Career Center, two workforce Boards and a community college
- Started career in youth services overseeing youth programming in Cambridge
- 5 years as the Executive Director of the MassHire Greater Lowell Workforce Board
- Transitioned to Berkshire Community College overseeing workforce development initiatives

Peter mentioned the MHHWCW has always been viewed as one of the top performing regions in the Commonwealth. He stated he wanted to return to Western Massachusetts and is excited for the opportunity. He let the Board know that he will be reaching out to everyone to further introduce himself, and hear their ideas for the organization moving forward. Peter also thanked David Cruise for assisting with the transition. Peter looks forward to working closely with everyone and encourages the Board to contact him to collaborate as well.

III. President & CEO Report

David Cruise provided some highlights and updates on the Workforce Board. Below are the highlights.

- Shared update on the financial projection and modifications for the current and upcoming quarter.
- Provided update on the Springfield-Holyoke Recompete Plan. The Phase 2 proposal is due to the US Economic Development Administration (EDA) by April 25th.
- The MHHWCW is currently in the process of procuring WIOA youth in-school and out-of-school providers. The procurement takes places biannually under the leadership of Cleveland Brown, who chairs the Youth Council.

IV. BOARD PRESENTATION – Molly Jacobson, Commonwealth Corporation

Chair, Patricia Samra introduced Molly Jacobson, the President and CEO of Commonwealth Corporation (CommCorp). Molly's biography was presented.

Molly is a former partner in the public sector practice of the Boston Consulting Group and has been involved with CommCorp in various initiatives aimed at strengthening workforce planning and training in Massachusetts. Prior to becoming President and CEO, she helped design and launch the 2019 Massachusetts Healthcare Workforce Collaborative and supported the deployment of American Rescue Plan funds for workforce development in the state.

Molly holds a Master's degree in Public Policy from the Harvard John F. Kennedy School of Government and a Master's degree in Business Administration from Harvard School of Business.

Below are a few highlights from her presentation:

- In FY'23, Commonwealth Corporation enrolled and served 41k participants across its various grantmaking programs.
- 3 key priority areas for CommCorp: expand their presence across the state, improve and smooth program operations, and focus on equitable outcomes for youth, and un/under employed job-seekers.
- The importance of serving diverse communities, that include, individuals of color, those with disabilities, and those for whom English is a second language.
- Molly acknowledged the importance of the hospitality sector and mentioned that they have significant funds going towards it
- Molly highlighted several sector programs including: the Career Technical Initiative (CTI), Workforce Competitive Trust Fund (WCTF), Workforce Training Fund (WTFP), and the Market Makers

V. New Business & Adjourn

The Board expressed their heartfelt gratitude towards David Cruise for his leadership and contributions over the years. They thanked him for his dedication and driving the organization forward. In addition, the Board gave a warm welcome to Peter J. Farkas, new President & CEO of MHHCWB.

With no further business coming before the Board, Patricia Samra thanked the Board and the meeting was adjourned at 4:14pm.

Submitted by Peter J. Farkas