

Metro South/West Career Center Committee

Unofficial Minutes December 5, 2023

Members present: Bob Bower, Chair, Chris Brennan, Patrick Davis

Members on Zoom Conferencing: John Bogdan, Louise Lynch

Members absent: Rosemary Alexander, Shannon Laingen, Sue Medeiros

Other present: MassHire Metro South/West Workforce Board staff: Henry Bryson, Greg Bunn, Louise Meyer;
MassHire Metro South/West Career Center: Zoie Jaklitsch,
VOA: Shannon Teles; Admin Consultant, Cindy Cedrone

Welcome and Approval of October 31, 2023 Minutes

Greg Bunn welcomed the members and turned the meeting over to Bob Bower. Bob asked for a motion to approve the October 31, 2023 minutes. Louise Lynch made a motion, Chris Brennan seconded. Motion passed.

Career Center Updates

Henry Bryson said the website was being updated and that RFQs were being sent developing two new websites using the exist MSW site for the Career Center. We will eventually have three sites: 1. MassHire Metro South/West Career Center, 2. Metro South/West Workforce Board, 3. Metro South/West Youth Connections, which will all be linked. He reported that the Career Center Certification, required every three years, would be starting in early spring. He will also be overseeing the Annual Monitoring in late April/early May, which is due in June. He said the process would be the same as last year with a consensus-driven review team and asked that a committee member be part of the review team that will also make site visits.

Zoie Jaklitsch said she is concentrating on filling open positions and restructuring the Business Services Team. Greg noted one of the positions is Director of Business Partnerships who will be working mostly with employers through the Career Center, and also with Youth Connections and the Workforce Board. Zoie said there are continuing challenges with working with the migrant shelters and because the metro southwest region is the largest with more migrants needing work authorization. She said the ongoing challenges are: ESOL, transportation and childcare. Bob said the state supplemental budget was recently approved and hoped that some funds could be directed toward assisting with the work authorization process. Greg said there was a recruitment event to fill bus driver positions that was developed after reports from the Framingham School Committee that they are experiencing severe driver shortages.

Future Career Center Configuration Discussion

Greg said he wanted to open the discussion about the future of the career center, with the operator and office leases in Framingham and Norwood renewals pending in the next few years. He said he would like the committee to think about the overall philosophy and design of the career center, online vs brick and mortar, satellite locations, and how, and if, UI could be integrated. He said fraud is a huge issue. If customers encounter difficulty in proof of identity and eligibility, which are the first steps in the job search, there is limited access to UI issues and customers would have to go into the only UI office which is located Boston, or by calling which is very time consuming. Zoie said she would welcome a UI staff person, even one day a week so customers could make an appointment for assistance.

Career Center Activity Chart

PROGRAM	FUNCTION	DELIVERY PROCESS ??
(WIOA Title I) Training Enrollments	Administration of training funds and case management of participants	
(WIOA Title III) Wagner – Peyser	Basic Career Center Services: Resource Room, Walk-in Job Search Assistance, Workshops	
Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA)	Required orientation workshop and follow up one-on-one appointments to verify unemployment requirements are being met by claimants receiving checks	TBD
Disabled Veterans Outreach Program (DVOP)	Services to Veterans with an SBE (Significant Barrier to Employment)	
Business Services	Employer Services: Job posting, recruitments, job fairs and navigation of grant or tax incentives	
Unemployment Services / DUA	Application/Adjunction of unemployment benefits. We currently only have limited read only access to this system	

Bob asked for a motion to adjourn. John Bogdan made the motion. Patrick Davis seconded it. The meeting was adjourned at 11:00 a.m.

The next meeting is scheduled for January 9, 2024, at 10:00 a.m.