

MassHire Franklin Hampshire Workforce Board  
Minutes of December 7, 2023 via Zoom  
8:00 AM to 8:56 AM

**Approved by the Workforce Board on 7 March 2024**

Members in Attendance:

Neil Scanlon (Chair)	Kecia Bossie	Mayor Gina Sciarra
Allison van der Velden	Colleen Kucinski	John Waite
Sue Turner	Brenda Evans	Jeff Napolitano
Alex Colonna	Shardool Parmar	Cindy Peeters
Anthony Scibelli	Mark Dore	Ken Messina

Staff in Attendance:

Maura Geary	Laura Robinson	Bridget, ASL interpreter
Jen Drosch	Rebecca Bialecki	

**Agenda Item I: Call to Order**

Allison van der Velden took over as Chair to Neil Scanlon experiencing audio issues. Allison called the meeting to order.

Motion: To approve the October 5, 2023 FHWB Minutes by Sue Turner, seconded by Neil Scanlon.  
No discussion followed.

Vote: Unanimous.

Jeff Napolitano introduced himself as the newest member. Introductions were made.  
Mark Dore mentioned that MassRehab will be getting rebranded in the new year.

**Agenda Item II: Career Center Updates**

Maura gave updates on the Career Center. Below are a few highlights:

- They are on track with all of performance measures.
- There is significant work happening with the new immigrants.
- A new website will be launched as part of the new marketing campaign to increase job seeker engagement.
- Actively engaged in state-wide legislation regarding the Career Center's state line item.

Rebecca gave a Workforce Board update. Due to the Federal Audit last spring, the Workforce Board needs to update policies on Career Planning and Follow-Up Services for WIOA Title I Adult and Dislocated Worker customers. The updated policies were reviewed.

Motion: To approve local policy on Career Planning for WIOA Title I Adult and Dislocated Worker customers by Alex Colonna, seconded by Susan Turner.

No discussion followed.

Vote: Unanimous. Jeff Napolitano abstained.

Motion: To approve local policy on Follow-Up Services for WIOA Title I Adult and Dislocated Worker customers by Alex Colonna, seconded by Susan Turner.

No discussion followed.

Vote: Unanimous. Jeff Napolitano abstained.

### **Agenda Item III: Director's Report**

Rebecca reviewed her updates.

Ken Messina added that Rapid Response is working with Coca Cola out of Northampton around their staggered layoffs due to the plan closing.

Rebecca presented the need to increase the Individual Training Account allotment from \$6,000 to \$7,500. ITA

Motion: To increase Individual Training Account to \$7,500 per customer by Alex Colonna, seconded by Susan Turner.

No discussion followed.

Vote: Unanimous. Jeff Napolitano abstained.

### **Agenda Item IV: Board Orientation Available**

The New Board member orientation offered annually is open to all members and date/s for this orientation will be sent in the new year. No discussion followed.

### **Agenda Item V: Other Business**

Alex mentioned Bobby Brown with the Machinist Union to partner with Voc Tech schools to increase participation within High Schools. The School to Career Team is working with Bobby and the Machinist Union has been invited to Construction & Trades Day on May

Allison says that the turnover rate at Community Health Center of Franklin County appears to be slowing down, but hiring for MAs and Dental Assistants is still difficult.

Jen mentioned that a new Workforce Competitiveness Trust Fund grant will be released early in the New Year. There are number of Career Fairs happening and interested parties should reach out. YouthWorks and WIOA youth are looking for employer sites to host youth year-round and over the summer.

Maura added that the Career Center is looking to do more On the Job (OJT) contracts. Stipulations apply, but employers can qualify for up to 75% of a new hire's wages covered for up to \$6,500 or 26 weeks, whichever occurs first.

### **Agenda Item VI: Adjourn**

Motion: To adjourn by Alex Colonna, seconded by Neil Scanlon.

Vote: Unanimous.