



MassHire Franklin Hampshire Workforce Board
Minutes of March 6, 2025 via Zoom
8:05 AM to 9:01 AM
(Approved by the Workforce Board)

Board Members in Attendance:

Neil Scanlon (Board Chair)	Alex Colonna	Sarah Sargent
Allison van der Velden (Board 1 st Vice Chair)	Jeff Napolitano	Brenda Evans
Mark Dore	Clare Higgins	John Waite
Sue Sumner	Colleen Kucinski	Ashley McFarlane
	Laurie Millman	

Board Members not in Attendance:

Melissa Eaton (2 nd Vice Chair)	Alan Wolf	Michelle Schutt
Ken Messina	Lisa Clauson	Andrew Linkenholder
Shardool Parmar	Zoy Soulis	Vyeluv "Mpress" Nembhard

MassHire Staff in Attendance:

Sarah Wilson	Maura Geary	Matt Allen
Laura Whittier	Cindy Ray	Aaron Kropft

Others in Attendance:

Erin Anhalt	ASL Interpreter Christine
	ASL Interpreter Sue

Agenda Items I: Welcome & Call to Order

Board Chair Neil Scanlon called the meeting to order and called for vote on meeting minutes.

Motion: To approve the December 5, 2024 FHWB Meeting Minutes by Allison van der Velden, seconded by Alex Colonna.

Vote: Unanimous. No discussion followed.

Agenda Item II: Introduction & Highlights

CEO for Community Health Center of Franklin County Allison van der Velden provided an overview of their wraparound services of primary care, dental, behavioral health, and pharmacy. CHC has offices in Franklin County and the North Quabbin. Mission of this 501C(3) include healthcare accessibility and outreach. CHC employs 140 persons with a large interdisciplinary primary care team. CHC serves all—not just low-income patients. When asked about collaboration with other medical centers in the area Allison rated it as high, and noted their focus on the gaps and the areas that that aren't being addressed by other folks' resources. As "everybody's community health center," CHC is a nonprofit mission driven organization, governed by a BOD. Sarah Wilson commented on how the WB conducted a healthcare site visit at CHC in January and the findings were favorable.

Sarah Wilson thanked Mark Dore for his work in coordinating a presentation by MassAbility for WB staff. Sarah recognized Laurie Millman for the collaborative work of Center for New Americans with the CC. All members of the subcommittees (Strategic Planning and Bid Review) were recognized for their hard work.

Agenda Item III: Learning Moment: LMI Report

WB Staff member Matt Allen led a presentation on Labor Market Information (LMI) for our service area. He provided a regional economy overview based off the numbers from last year. This overview included a look at top certifications desired by employers, wage data, analysis of job postings by county. Questions included the need for a closer look at postings including benefits and determination of which were part-time versus full-time.

Agenda Item IV: Workforce Area Policy Updates

FHCC Executive Director Maura Geary reviewed WIOA training fund policies and how the current caps on training funds have left gaps for businesses and jobseekers. Maura explained how both the Individual Training Account (ITA) and the On-The-Job (OJT) training funds are consistent with WIOA funding allowances for qualified MassHire customers.

Recently the Board passed a proposal to increase of the Individual Training Account (ITA) policy limit from \$6,000 to \$7,500. This discussion centered around the three other policies that are related to ITA that need to be adjusted to be consistent with the policy limit. Questions were posed by Board members about where the funding will come from. Maura explained how all the funding is within the WIOA Adult or DW line items already, it is simply a matter of raising the policy limit to better address the cumulative amount of training-related expenses that MassHire customers are facing.

On-The-Job (OJT) training funds that are used by MassHire to work closely with employers in developing a training curriculum, etc. A proposal was made to have the same limit for OJT as on the ITA, requiring an increase of the OJT policy limit from \$6,000 to \$7,500 to match the ITA policy allocation. Maura explained how the current policy regarding On-The-Job (OJT) training funds are used by MassHire to work closely with employers in developing a training curriculum, etc. A proposal was made to have the same limit for OJT as on the ITA, requiring an increase of the OJT policy limit from \$6,000 to \$7,500 to match the ITA policy allocation.

Motion: To approve the OTJ policy change and increase funding to align with ITA policy limit was made by Allison van der Velden, seconded by Clare Higgins.

Vote: Unanimous. No discussion followed.

Maura explained how the existing policy on training-related expenses is under-funded. A proposal was made to have the same allocation limit for the training-related expense fund as on the ITA, requiring an increase of the policy limit from \$6,000 to \$7,500.

Motion: To approve the training-related expense fund policy change and increase funding to match the ITA policy allocation was made by John Waite, seconded by Sue Surner.

Vote: Unanimous. No discussion followed.

Maura explained how the existing supportive services policy is under-funded. A proposal was made to raise the limit of allocation for supportive services expense fund from \$500 to \$650.

Motion: To approve the supportive services policy change and increase funding to align with ITA policy was made by Alexandra Colonna, seconded by Allison van der Velden.

Vote: Unanimous. No discussion followed.

Maura explained the geographic restriction on training funds for a final vote.

Motion: To approve the policy change on geographic restriction on training was made by Allison van der Velden, seconded by Sue Surner.

Vote: Unanimous. No discussion followed.

Agenda Item V: One-Stop Operator Procurement Update

Sarah reported on how the bid review team reviewed the application and proposal. The team voted to move forward with the proposal by FHETC.

Motion: To approve FHETC continuation as the One-Stop Operator was made by Neil Scanlon, seconded by Allison van der Velden.

Vote: Unanimous. No discussion followed.

Agenda Item VI: Executive Director's Report & Board Discussion

Sarah and Maura reported on how the FY26 budget numbers impact our work. A grants writer was hired to expedite diversified funding. The discussion turned to contingency funds before Sarah returned to her report. MassHire invited the Division of Apprenticeship Standards to visit and present on registered apprenticeships in the recreation industry; more than one participant indicated interest in moving forward.

MassHire is exploring becoming an intermediary for registered apprenticeships in the region.

Sarah reported on data collection from manufacturers via survey, and how identifying trends will inform the manufacturing council. In support of employers who are interested in using registered apprenticeships, MassHire would serve as an intermediary to help with the admin, the compliance and monitoring.

Sarah reported on continuing with workforce partner site visits at regional health care providers.

Agenda Item VII: Board Strategic Planning Updates

Sarah verbally reviewed how the data collection is complete and the team has moved into the review phase for identifying trends and coming up with initiatives that we should be moving forward on. The next stage is drafts.

Agenda Item VIII: Other Business

Mark Dore shared news of his retirement. The value he brought to the Board was discussed.

Agenda Item IX: Adjourn

Motion: To adjourn by John Waite, seconded by Allison van der Velden.

Vote: Unanimous. No discussion followed.