



Greater Lawrence Technical High School
57 River Road
Andover, MA 01810

ANNUAL MEETING

Minutes
Tuesday, October 27, 2015
7:30 AM

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Rosalin Acosta, Francisco Brea, Joseph Bevilacqua, Stacey Bruzzese, Sr. Eileen Burns, Ron Contrado, Dennis DiZoglio, Evelyn Friedman, Andrew Herlihy, Susan Jepson, Supt. John Lavoie, Rosa Lopez, Supt. Maureen Lynch, Joselyn Marte, Peter Matthews, Rosa Muñoz, Ann Ormond, Marianne Paley-Nadel, Carol Riemer, Donna Rivera, Fred Shaheen, Bob Westcott, Cal Williams, Anita Worden, Juan Yopez

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Edward Bartkiewicz, Rachel Concepcion, Brian DePena, Atty. Wendy Estrella, Michael Fiato, Joseph Gangi, Jr., Dr. Lane Glenn, Jeff Linehan, Michael Munday, Steve Salvo, John Sarro, Michael Strem, Kathryn Sweeney, David Tibbetts, Stanley Usovicz, Abel Vargas

GUESTS PRESENT:

Dawn Beati, Michael Bevilacqua, June Black, Arthur Chilingirian, Jorge Cruz, Kelly D'Archangelo, Rep Marcos Devers, Jacqueline Dipersio for Rep. Linda Dean Campbell, Mayor James Fiorentini, Susan Kanoff, Cindy Key, Lisa Remington, Mayor Daniel Rivera, Secretary Ronald L. Walker, II; Amy Weatherbee

STAFF PRESENT:

Rafael Abislaiman, Susan Almono, Cristy Gomez, Franklin Fernandez, Mary Kivell, Corina Ruiz

1. Call to Order

A quorum being present, Peter Matthews called the meeting to order at 7:55 a.m. and called on Supt. John Lavoie. Superintendent Lavoie said that he is always pleased to welcome the MVWIB to Greater Lawrence Technical School. Greater Lawrence Voc's number one mission is to prepare students for the workforce and post-secondary education.

The Superintendent said that over the past two years enrollment increased from 1,200 to 1,400 because many students want to attend a technical high school and the Commonwealth is providing more support for them to do so. Supt. Lavoie said that they are looking to increase enrollment by another 200. He also said that they are looking to partner with the

MVWIB and are exploring adding a horticultural and masonry program as there is a need for workers in those jobs. He mentioned that seventy-five percent (75%) of their enrollment is from Lawrence. He said that currently they offer nineteen (19) vocational-technical programs.

Supt. Lavoie then spoke about a manufacturing program working with the WIB and NECC to address UI and underemployment. He said that they are also starting a Machine Tech program for 12-14 participants in the evening beginning in January and are trying to contract for more evening programs. The superintendent said that he looks forward to working with the MVWIB in the future.

Chairman Peter Matthews thanked the superintendent for hosting today's meeting.

2. Approval of Minutes of June 23, 2015

Chairman Matthews asked for a motion on the minutes of the June 23, 2015 quarterly board meeting.

Motion by Bob Westcott to approve the minutes of the June 23, 2015 meeting as submitted. Ron Contrado seconded the motion and motion passed unanimously.

4. Report of Chair

Peter Matthews said that as we undertake the transition to WIOA, it's helpful to consider the state of our current workforce. American workers still have more opportunity than most other workers around the world. But relative to the rest of the world and to American workers a couple of generations ago, workers today do not appear to be earning as much as they used to. Peter said that this may not have been avoidable and it needn't be seen as just a bad thing. There was no way the U.S. could have indefinitely maintained its extraordinary, post WW2 economic preeminence. At our peak we had 95% of the world's industrial production. Now, the amount we manufacture is about equal with China. Having more countries and more people getting the benefits of a global economy should foster more peace and stability.

Peter continued stating that in this country, state and region we want to succeed in a global economy without creating trade walls that make things more expensive and the world more dangerous. He said that the MVWIB must figure out how to make things better for our region's workers and employers within this tremendously changing global economy. As the distributed 2014 Social Security wage chart shows, about 65% of this nation's salaried workers earn less than \$43,000 a year. He thinks that we can discount the bottom 15% or so as wages earned by kids who live with their parents. There's no way that an adult wage earner can even attempt to survive on less than \$5,000 per year.

So about 50% of adults currently earn low-income wages. Being low-income doesn't mean that earners are poor or in poverty. People are considered in poverty depending on family size and individual poverty starts at a much lower dollar number. Other factors, including area costs, are also involved. But Peter said that it's clear that, according to the WIOA definition, most Merrimack Valley families are now middle class only when there are two or more income earners in the family.

Page 90 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act at Section 7, defines LOW-INCOME. It is defined as earning below a \$7,000 income in 1969 dollars or about \$43,000 today. Again,

about half of all adult U.S. wage earners are now low income earners because they earn less than \$43,000 a year. In the relatively high-cost Merrimack Valley, that's almost certainly the case. Here, an individual middle class income may start at more than \$43,000.

Peter said that, nowadays, the top range of individual middle income earners ends at the 99th percentile. Only the top 1% of individual income earners are not middle class but upper-class earners. When does that upper class earnings number start? If we use the Social Security chart, it starts at a salary of about \$250,000 per year. Peter said that sounds like a lot of money but for those fortunate enough to earn that, or maybe even more, here in metro Boston, \$250,000 isn't a lot - especially when you have to send kids to college or try to buy a good house. But it's about six times as much as 51% of U.S. wage earners make in a year.

As you can see in the SSN chart, people at the upper parts of the top 1% category have wages that are incredibly different than the wages earned by the folks at the bottom of the 1% category –many more than six times as large as \$250,000.

The Largest 200 Employers List for the Lower Merrimack Valley page reveals that there are only about twelve large employers, defined as one with 500 or more employees, in our region. Folks may recall the mid-80s when AT&T and later Lucent employed 13,000. The list leaves out Raytheon, one of this region's largest employers, so it may only be listing companies whose headquarters are here in this region. But the reality of the list is clear – relatively few Lower Merrimack companies are large private sector employers such as Lucent was in the past. At least half of the largest are in health care or part of the public sector. Many of these large companies' employees are better paid and thus pay higher taxes but as companies, some pay little or no taxes but instead provide services frequently covered by the tax payer.

Peter continued stating that in Massachusetts there are currently about 620,000 businesses. As the Small Business Profile handout page shows, almost 616,000 of them are small businesses and of that number, more than 480,000 have no employees other than the self-employed owner of the company. At the back of the same page you see that of the 480,000 single person or non-employer businesses, incorporated individuals earn \$61,433 per year and unincorporated ones a little less than \$31,000 per year. These individual businesspeople may make more money, but clearly, few of these small business owners are getting rich.

Information on New Hampshire's Small Businesses and the SBA Frequently Asked Questions are included for your information. The last two pages in your hand-out show Employment by NAICs and the Large Enterprise % of total employment. Health care and social service agencies, independent restaurants and motels, mom and pop stores, construction, professional, scientific and technical services, and manufacturing, together have the largest number of employees.

Manufacturing appears to be returning to America and it's surprising to see how much of that return is taking place at small companies. In the Merrimack Valley, the average size of a manufacturing company is about five people. These and larger small manufacturers are normally subcontracted by large companies such as Raytheon. Raytheon has been great to this State and region but you can be sure that large companies contract smaller ones because they do not want to grow a costly workforce. In American manufacturing, larger companies almost always pay more than smaller ones. If they now need more employees, large

companies poach the best employees from smaller ones. Much less in-house, entry-level training now occurs within larger companies. The MVWIB helps people get train and get jobs at small companies who are then often poached by big ones. Less training now occurs at large companies.

Peter said that the last page illustrates how large companies go to where labor is less expensive or where there is a clear difference in the availability of natural or human resources. Massachusetts is fortunate to have many of the best colleges and the best public education systems in the country. Most big companies are here because of our people. If they can get a better value elsewhere, they'll leave. Most MVWIB National Emergency Grants and Trade grants are due to larger companies relocating their operations elsewhere. Our NEG and Trade resources have been a very significant part of our total income for several years. It sometimes almost matched our WIA resources.

Manufacturing is returning to our country and region in good part because of automation and robotics are making things cheaper to produce with fewer employees. American workers are still much better paid than most workers in other parts of the world. Manufacturing may again thrive in the U.S. but it won't be because it employs a lot of American workers.

So we live in times of tremendous change and not all of them will be resolved through historical market forces. As members of the MVWIB, we are correct in thinking that thoughtful analysis, recommendations, and actions through more efficient and effective public institutions have an important role in making our region, State and country a better place for most businesses, workers and families. The importance of our role as a forum of discussion between employers, unions, educators and CBOs will increase as the speed of change around us increases.

Peter then called on past chairman Joseph Bevilacqua to come forward and he was presented a plaque in recognition of the exceptional leadership, guidance, and vision provided to the MVWIB on behalf of the workers and employers of the Merrimack Valley.

Peter recognized the attendance of Lawrence Mayor Rivera, Haverhill Mayor Fiorentini and Representative Devers. He then introduced Secretary Walker.

5. Presentation – Secretary Ronald L. Walker, II –Massachusetts Executive Office of Labor & Workforce Development

Secretary Walker said that it is good to see many familiar faces. He is speaking to people throughout the Commonwealth and getting to know business people and workforce development staff. He mentioned Rosalin Acosta as a former work colleague. He congratulated Joe Bevilacqua on his award and noted that Joe keeps him busy via the State WIN and the Skills Cabinet.

The Secretary then said that he would like to talk about three initiatives that the Governor is embarking on that correlate to the work being done here. Early in the administration the Governor implemented a Workforce Skills Cabinet and asked Secretary Walker to be its chair. It includes the Secretary of Education and Secretary of Housing and Economic Development. He said that they are working together more collaboratively for economic development and job creation. He said that the Workforce Cabinet has been meeting for the last eight months

which he mentioned had not been done before although there's a natural connection between the three agencies.

This collaboration has allowed them to take issues of economic development, job creation, business resources and better leverage education, WIBs and Career Centers in the process. An example is Amazon coming to Fall River. As bankers like Rosalin know, they negotiate tax credits with economic development in return for jobs. Amazon offered 300 jobs. Normally workforce development wouldn't be at the table around the job creation issue but Secretary Walker was. The career centers and WIBs create a job chain; education helps with credentials with information and with connections to community colleges and vocational schools. So the Baker Administration is building a supply chain model that better meets the employer demand side of the equation. When businesses call economic development they're also calling different agencies like workforce development.

The Workforce Skills Cabinet created Biz Works 2.0 which is a jobs portal and staffed by someone in Secretary Walker's office, David Muldrew, a former banker for twenty years, who leads it. Top administration officials and cabinet secretaries focus not just on economic development or education but also on job creation.

Secondly, Secretary Walker said that you have heard the Governor and him talk about Demand 2.0, a demand driven model. The issue as he sees it is that WIBs do a terrific job in their respective regions working with each other on the issues we talked about this morning. But when the Governor and he go out and talk to large and small manufacturing entities; one, they are not aware of the career centers and, two, they are not part of the discussion here so there is no awareness of the resources and talent, not only around this table but also at the career centers themselves.

He said that he asks top CEOs, bankers and their HR people one question, 'have you heard of career centers' and the answer is 'no', have you had experience with them, maybe one replied yes. He asks them if we could demonstrate the thousands of tools and resources we have to help you fill your jobs, would you be willing to work with us and the answer is 'yes.' He also said that he got the same response from the top hospitals.

Secretary Walker said that what we all need to do a better job of branding, marketing, and communicating our public workforce system services to the employers who have the jobs. He said that he thinks if we continue to focus internally and not beyond we are not going to meet the demand side of the equation. Therefore they created a Demand 2.0 and he has hired a couple of secretaries who report to him.

One great story is a small manufacturer with 20 individuals couldn't find two more key people. Secretary Walker said we all know that in a 20 person shop those 2 people make a difference. His office identified what credentials were required and the aligned them with two career centers. Consequently they hired two vets that had the right experience. He said that is on the small end but we need more of that and need to talk about more of that. He said that's it's no different than if Amazon or UPS just called up and said they need to hire two to three hundred employees. We need to create an employee supply chain for all Massachusetts companies.

The Workforce Skills Cabinet is trying to come together to address the needs of the Commonwealth and his agency is about creating jobs. Secretary Walker continued stating that the second piece is a collaboration between the vocational schools, community colleges, employers, etc. He said that he thinks that manufacturing does this the best with some examples in Springfield and with us up here in northeaster Massachusetts. We need to work with the voke schools and community colleges to create a supply chain model and he said what they are trying to figure out is the scale of those models across the Commonwealth.

It does start with the vocational schools and colleges and we have an initiative within the cabinet to look at these models that work extremely well so we can scale and not necessarily re-invent the wheel. The Secretary said that we may have had experience with a grant on economic development or training or education or workforce development and they are not always aligned. Unless we are sitting at the same table when something comes up we are not sure how it affects economic development. We need to be at the same table together combining our resources in the public system and understand that we can have a real impact in this model. One piece is that we have a chronologically long list of grants to figure out where we should be working together and build opportunities of scale.

Secretary Walker said that one piece that was intriguing to him was the regional planning. The education piece, jobs and economic development all need a strategic plan and labor and workforce development also has a WIOA plan to do. Although there are similarities, plans are not aligned. One thing we are doing is making sure from a regional standpoint we are aligned so we can all sit at the table and aim for the same goal.

The next piece is that with 4.6% unemployment we still have 160,000 individuals unemployed including chronically unemployed people like youth, the disabled, Gulf War vets, African Americans and Latinos. He said that not all have the tools or social skills. We need to look at barriers so they will have more access to career centers. We have 32 career centers around the commonwealth but it looks like they were designed for those who had the skills. Those who had been working can navigate the system which is 96% federally funded. We need to do a better of job of getting those others through the system and work on barriers with a Massachusetts Based Public Workforce System.

He wondered how we could use resources to create a more robust, effective Mass Based Public Workforce System. WIOA is trying to do that with 10% discretionary funds to leverage partners on workforce development. The 10% will send a signal and the Governor will release the plan in late 2016. We must give our plans to the Governor in November and show how it parallels with the federal system. Leveraging will acknowledge different stakeholders and the role they play in serving targeted populations.

Secretary Walker said that the MVWIB workforce performance numbers are high and that is one thing the Governor and Secretary feel WIOA is moving towards; tracking, performance, and accountability. He congratulated this WIB on its overall work and his challenge is to figure out how we can do more. Working together we can see how we can better meet demands; identify what jobs are needed and create a better pipeline for those who want to work.

Dennis DiZoglio from the Merrimack Valley Planning Commission spoke of using regional planning agencies as a conduit for resources and possible partners. The Secretary said that

they are at the table and we will be leveraging the work they do. Evelyn Friedman raised the issues of women for child care support and transportation and the Secretary said that is something that has come up in the chronically unemployed task force and is being discussed. Haverhill Mayor Fiorentini spoke about a program in Albuquerque, New Mexico that picks up homeless and takes them to jobs and job training and wondered if he has given any thought to doing something like that. Secretary Walker said that he is aware of that model and best practices and that Lydia from the Pine Street Inn is on the task force to look at putting the homeless to work.

Cal Williams, Youth Committee Chair, asked if they are working on building a youth pipeline and that part of the Strategic Plan which is due November 16th will be specific on youth. The Secretary said that the system served 4,000 youth last year but that is not enough. We are working with Nancy Snyder of Commonwealth Corporation on a collaborative model on the demand side where kids would be getting skills along the way and the Governor is very supportive. Susan Jepson spoke about the older worker at the end of the pipeline and mentioned alternative forms of employment like job sharing and reduced hours which the Secretary said is also on the agenda.

Secretary Walker said that the commonwealth is open for business and there are some interesting models around jobs today. He said that they are focusing their direction on the sector piece. He also said that they are looking at how to work with corporations on the issue of the chronically unemployed to find ways to leverage their skill sets. Mayor Fiorentini asked the Secretary if they have looked at zoning issues. The Secretary said that what they are doing is looking at sector based regional demands.

Bob Westcott said that he is very impressed with the overview. Regarding youth unemployment, the demand in the past for summer jobs was agricultural and he doesn't see the demand today for employers to take youth for about eight weeks. The Secretary said that he agrees and we need to have good corporate citizens and a business model that may lead to further employment or support throughout the year.

Supt. John Lavoie asked the Secretary if the task force has looked at some of the issues around licensing and regulations that sometimes impact vocational schools. Secretary Walker said that the whole licensing review is going on now by the state and said he would talk to Secretary Peyser regarding the impact on schools.

Francisco Brea thanked the Secretary for coming today and for his support helping to provide jobs for this community. Joe Bevilacqua said he attended a recent conference where other states wondered why they aren't doing what Massachusetts is doing. He said that he wanted to commend the Secretary for his leadership.

Mayor Daniel Rivera thanked the Secretary for his presentation and also for the state's workforce training focus in Massachusetts on veterans and unemployment, particularly in Lawrence. He said that he feels that there will always be a need in Lawrence as we move one group of immigrants along others come and need direction. There will always be people coming to Lawrence that need help. He thanked Mayor Fiorentini for coming as well as members of the state delegation. Mayor Rivera said that he is asking folks to support the MVWIB election under the new leadership of Peter Matthews and thanked Joe Bevilacqua for

putting us on track and also Rafael Abislaiman for his steadfast leadership as well as staff for their work bringing us up to speed on WIOA.

Mayor Rivera said that we will be issuing a RFP to find a new location for the WIB/Career Center offices. He said that the highest number of clients come from Methuen and Lawrence. It costs \$6 to take a cab from Park Street or two buses. Other communities have more accessible ways to get to the center. We are looking to bring the career center closer to downtown. He closed his remarks stating that he is thrilled with all the work that Peter, Ralph and staff have done this past year.

Peter then said that, under WIOA, we are not required to have a Youth Council/Committee but this WIB decided it is far too important to keep the Youth Committee with Cal William as chair and is pleased we are in sync with the secretary and governor regarding the importance of working with youth.

6. Reports of Committee Chairs

Peter then called on Juan Yopez to give the Planning Committee report.

- ***Planning Committee***

Planning Committee Chairman Juan Yopez reported that the FY 2015 numbers presented in meeting packets will improve a bit when the Department of Career Services releases their version of the numbers based on UI wage match. Over the last several years, our numbers have gone down for four known reasons. First, the early numbers included WIA services provided with several additional WIA dollars incorporated into the short-term American Recovery Act. Second, the number of people on UI or looking for work has been going down for several years. Since 2012, the number of single clients we've seen has decreased from 16,000 to 15,000 to 12,000 and now today to 10,000. Remember that individual clients must visit the career center at least twice and that many visit many more times than that so there have been several tens of thousands of visits every year. Third, career center visit numbers are going down because of UI on line. That system is working and many people are using the internet or phone to apply and follow-up on their unemployment insurance. They previously had to apply and check their status at career centers.

Our region has many individuals with language barriers so our numbers have dropped less than many other regions. Fourth, we now have several large programs that are not necessarily populated with WIA or WIOA category customers and they are thus not included in those numbers. Those other training activities go towards putting workers into Environmental Protection jobs with EPA funding, towards helping incumbent Certified Nurse Assistants/CNAs rise in their fields, and towards training folks for jobs at manufacturing companies.

The MVWIB recently received its third two year grant from the EPA. Our worker de-leading and asbestos removal training has helped Lawrence become the US city with the highest per capita number of remediation workers. Most of these workers are very hard working limited English speakers willing to take on difficult but high paying jobs throughout New England, New York and New Jersey. We've helped about 75 people get remediation jobs over the past few years. Juan said that now we are helping to train about twenty-six incumbent CNAs at two area nursing homes. Sister Eileen Burns, a new member of the Board, is helping coordinate that activity. Juan said that we've also helped train about thirty people for jobs in manufacturing.

Juan continued stating that overall, our region has ranked fourth in the State in WIA job placement although we rank only eighth in the amount of WIA funding received. We've also usually been number one in the percentage of our customers who get jobs with non-WIA, Wagner-Peyser dollars but we have issues to resolve. Three years ago we received the Massachusetts gold award as the best in the state for veteran job services. Since then, our veterans' numbers have significantly dropped after a Federal law came out in 2014 stating that career center veterans' staff can't serve veterans unless the veteran has some sort of barrier.

Juan said that we also need to find a better way to count the number of youth served. Right now we track youth when they're enrolled in training and those numbers don't show our full effort. Historically our youth programs worked with youth who had significant issues such as being school drop-outs, court involved or performing below grade level. About five years ago, the board correctly decided to focus training resources on poor and low income youth who graduate from high school and receive a diploma, or on others who earn a GED and who don't necessarily have other significant barriers. Our expectation is that, with limited resources, focusing on those kids, most of whom live in Lawrence, will help them mainstream and boost minority hiring at area businesses.

Unfortunately, many hard to serve issues are not remedied during kids' K-12 experience, where currently about a quarter million dollars are spent on each student over twelve or thirteen years. Receiver Superintendent Reilly and Headmaster Mike Fiato, who is a member of our board, are doing superb jobs of improving Lawrence schools but some problematic echoes of the past persist. The MVWIB currently allocates only \$6,000. The K-12 system awards a quarter million dollars to each youth.

In an ideal world where money is no object, we might be able to make great employees out of all the hardest to serve youth and adults while also making employers happy. In the real world, we will need to balance our responsiveness to employers with helping the hardest to serve. The new WIOA has goals similar to WIA but there is an expectation that WIBs better coordinate efforts and work with the TANF or the welfare office, Mass Rehab, and remedial education. We will need to ensure that we are not duplicating what our partner entities do and that we are instead effectively coordinating services with them.

Regarding manufacturing training mentioned earlier, Juan said that since the last quarterly meeting we've learned that we will be fiscal agent for a new three year \$1.1m manufacturing training grant in Northeastern Massachusetts. NE MASS has also received notice of Manufacturing Apprenticeship Training Funds totaling about \$650,000. Our specific region has also received notice of a separate Federal Sector Partnership National Emergency grant that is not exclusively for manufacturing but that may total more than \$2 million over several years.

All of these grants, although Federal, come by way of Secretary Walker's Division of Career Services and we are grateful to him and his great team at DCS. Juan said that our current plan is to split most manufacturing funds between CNC machinist and electronic technician training. Perhaps we will also be able to do some food production and IT related training as well.

Juan continued his remarks stating that in January, a manufacturing program will begin and use the superb CNC training facility here at Greater Lawrence Vocational School. It is a state of the art facility and Juan said that he hoped many board members tour it after this meeting. Manufacturing jobs account for about 17% of the workforce in the Lower Merrimack Valley and those jobs contribute many more times that number in cash terms. It is important that we safeguard manufacturing in the Merrimack Valley.

In closing Juan said that he would like to restate that though we expected to put our career center up to bid, now, this fall, DCS informed us that we risk having our decision be overturned if we are out of compliance with new Federal and State WIOA policies that are as yet incomplete. We are now waiting for that policy direction from the Feds before we undertake to RFP our center as mandated by WIOA.

Finally, Juan said that though Chili had planned to retire this past September, he has pushed retirement back till next year in order to help with the WIOA transition. He has worked in the State system for over 38 years, has done an excellent job, and is now working when he could be taking it easy. Juan said that we are grateful for his time and energy. He also noted that Amy Weatherbee has joined Chili as his deputy director and has been a tremendous help. Board members applauded.

Sr. Eileen said she wanted to mention that Adult Education has been asked to work more closely with the WIBs and she wanted to put it on the table to try to find more ways to align more closely with the WIB. The city has an ad hoc committee to get everyone on the same page. We now have a city wide wait list for ESOL. Juan said that we are constantly looking at all the different programs and how we can improve and work not only with youth but also with adults. Rosalin said that she feels we could do a better job of collaboration and joint meetings with so many non-profits in the city. Mayor Rivera spoke about a grant through the Federal Reserve Bank and said that perhaps we could use the Working Families model for the greater Lawrence area and maybe do a joint grant with the WIB.

- ***Youth Council***

Youth Council Chair Cal Williams said that a few years ago, the MVWIB commissioned Drexel University Professor Paul Harrington to complete a report entitled "Employment and School Activities in Lawrence". It found that early work experience and high school completion are key ingredients to youth becoming self-sufficient adults. Cal said that your efforts contribute to that here in the Merrimack Valley. Your 2015 Youth Summer Employment activities placed more than 250 Lawrence, Haverhill and Methuen youth in jobs where they gained work experience, one of the two key ingredients for their future success! Sixty-three area firms and non-profit organizations hired youth and provided them with supervision and mentoring during the summer.

Now, after the summer, staff at the MVWIB and ValleyWorks are continuing to work with some of these employers to assist even more youth develop the basic skills they need to get ahead. Our year-round youth employment program also helps better identify details on what employers need. With more information we can better assist employers meet those needs. Cal continued stating that during the summer we partnered with the Greater Lawrence Community Boating as part of our Careers in Clean Energy program. The Greater Lawrence

Community Boating taught coordinated, and paid eight (8) Greater Lawrence Public School instructors to teach kids Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) information related to the Merrimack River. Supplementary funding for this activity came from the Massachusetts Clean Energy Centers. About 1,000 youngsters attend Community Boating programs every summer so we partnered with their staff and nine of our youth employment kids worked at their lovely site here in Lawrence. Teacher and youth instruction at Community Boating occurred in both classroom and outdoor settings. Classroom instruction occurred in a Science Computer Lab equipped with computers on loan from MVWIB and the ValleyWorks Career Center. An electric microscope and TV screen attached to a computer allowed groups of teachers and students to see what was being magnified via the microscope. Outdoor instruction occurred in the environs of the Merrimack River –both along the shoreline and on the river itself. About one hundred and twenty (120) youth were exposed to Clean Energy and 'Green' concepts with our youth often helping STEM teachers.

Cal said that if employer board members are not yet involved as a youth worksite, he is asking for their support and agreement to become one. Please remember that employers are able to screen youth and accept the ones most suitable for their business. If employers can't agree to participate now, please work with us in the future. Also, he said to please help us connect with other private sector employers.

Cal noted that we currently put a lot of our youth participants into public sector jobs and at not-for-profit agencies. One of the reasons we do so is that they know that our kids contribute and do good work. The same thing happens at private sector businesses but we need more of them to participate. This summer, youth worked 25-30 hours per week for approximately 6 weeks and earned \$9.00 per hour. We've had excellent reports back from participating employers and youth.

Apart from work, youth attended Career Readiness workshops. Topics included workplace safety; dependability /professionalism; effective work relationships; mock interviews; and financial literacy - over 200 youth participants also opened their first bank account!

Cal expressed thanks to Commonwealth Corporation for the workshop curriculum and for allocating us YouthWorks funding. Those are State funds so we also want to thank Massachusetts Labor Secretary Walker for his hard work on our behalf. Cal also said that ultimately we want to thank you, because our financial support comes from you, the Massachusetts tax payer. He also thanked the hardworking MVWIB and VWCC youth staff who make our program succeed and who, we can't forget, also pay taxes! Lastly, a big shout-out to the YouthWorks youth who gained work experience, a paycheck, and skills essential for future success. As a result of our summer program, over 25 youth obtained unsubsidized employment.

Cal said that in September the Department of Career Services (DCS) monitored our Fiscal Year 2015 WIA Title I Youth Program Systems. Cal was happy to report that we received a glowing report and continue to be fully certified. He said that as we transition into the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), please know that the Youth Committee remains committed to youth workforce development. We hope to increase opportunities, particularly for those youth facing barriers to employment and highlight the important and clear connection between a good education and good employment. Youth programming's transition

to the new WIOA service parameters will be tricky, but we expect to do it right with your continued commitment and with the help of our training partners, grantors, employers, and, importantly, the youth who learn and work. We all wish we had more funding to serve more of them!

- ***Nominating Committee***

Nominating Committee Chair Ann Ormond presented the following slate of officers for the coming year: Peter Matthews, Chair; Juan Yepez, Vice Chair; Bob Westcott, Treasurer; and Ann Ormond, Clerk.

Cal Williams made a motion to approve the election of Peter Matthews, Chair; Juan Yepez, Vice Chair; Bob Westcott, Treasurer; and Ann Ormond, Clerk. Rosalin Acosta seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

- ***Finance Report***

Treasurer Bob Westcott said it is an interesting challenge to interpret funding streams and said that he has spoken with DGA Fiscal Director Tracy Myszkowski who explained there were four (4) cost pools prior to WIOA and now there are fourteen (14) to account for. The big test was the recent summer youth program which required documentation for 250 youth who needed to be processed like any other employee and put on payroll. Bob said that the budget is a little bigger than last year with a \$6,000 cap on ITAs this year. He said that we made some good decisions at the Planning Committee and can always use more funds. We are 20% spent at this point but there will be a clearer picture as we move through the year.

7. Report of Executive Director

Rafael said he would like to recognize June Black from Congresswoman Tsongas' office and then asked new board members to introduce themselves. Sr. Eileen Burns, Supt. Maureen Lynch, and Stacey Bruzzese did so. Rafael then called on Rep. Devers who said that it is great to be at this meeting as he serves on the House Joint Committee on Labor and Workforce Development. He asked that folks give him a heads up on bills or grants needing his support.

Rafael said that many workers in Massachusetts are employed in small business. He said that things are changing radically and that it is often difficult to get real numbers on jobs and employment. He referred to the SBA sheets indicating that unincorporated self-employed businesspeople earn around \$31,000 per year but if incorporated earn \$60,000. More and more folks have to rely on themselves and hustle as single-person companies. The middle class is less strong than a generation or two ago with the top 1% earning from \$250,000 to over \$88M per year and taking a larger piece of the economic pie.

Rafael said that we live in interesting times. Manufacturing is coming back to the US due to increased automation and robotics. We are likely to see less employment there. We need to protect the middle class because they are the employers and workers most connected to this country. Bigger corporations are like citizens of the world they go anywhere. But we don't want to promote more economic development overseas at our expense.

Rafael stated that this country is the bastion of democracy. If the US middle class is not here to set an example of moderation and self-interest balanced by community concern, who knows what will happen here and in the rest of the world. The responsibility for workforce

development is sometimes difficult when there are private companies such as Monster efficiently making money on workforce development. Public workforce development must balance employer responsiveness with responsiveness to workers and the commonwealth.

Rafael then recognized another new board member John Tettreault. John Tettreault mentioned that JPS Industries recently added twenty-two people. He said that their biggest challenge is finding bilingual English/Spanish employees with good math skills. Mr. Tettreault said that JPS Industries is a Chelsea based company with plants in both Lawrence and Chelsea. Their workers face challenges with transportation and child care particularly when work is ramping-up and overtime comes up. John said that they provide side by side training and the Lawrence plant's retention rate is higher. He also said that they receive 80% more female applications than male. He said that he plans to re-introduce his human resource department to this group. Arthur Chilingirian, ValleyWorks Career Center Director, said that he would meet with Mr. Tettreault after the meeting.

Rafael continued his remarks stating that private companies are doing workforce development and making money doing it by matching the best people to jobs. Our system has to keep in mind the public good so we need to balance both. If we only help people with barriers we will lose employers who want to make money and need the best people to succeed. Our system needs to balance helping the least advantaged gain opportunities while helping Massachusetts employers succeed. There will always be differences of opinion on whether we have the right balance but that's our challenge.

Joe Bevilacqua said that he wanted to thank the Ralph, the board and staff who are truly making a difference in the Merrimack Valley.

Peter Matthews asked board members to review the MVWIB member October 21, 2015 Board Orientation package prepared by Rafael Abislaiman. Peter said it is an outstanding overview of WIOA. He said that this orientation packet is an excellent tool helping board members understand the very complicated WIOA regulations that govern what we do and encouraged all members to read it.

8. Other Business

There was no other business

9. Adjournment

Having no further business Ann Ormond made a motion to adjourn and Andrew Herlihy seconded the motion. Motion passed and meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Mary Kivell
Recorder