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## **Baltimore Workforce Development Board Meeting Minutes**

Date: June 17, 2022

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Time: 8:00a.m-10: 00a.m

Location: In Person & Virtual via Zoom

### **Attendance-**

#### **Board Members:**

Bob Embry, John Danko, Marc Broady, Marsha Netus, Marty Schwartz, Marci Hunn, Lisa Rusyniak, Rachel Pfeifer, Sara Cooper, Melanie Styles, Willy Moore, Yariela Kerr-Donovan, Jermaine Jones, Tanya Terrell, Lynda Perry,

#### **Non-Board Members:**

Julia Baez, Helany Sinkler, Jason Perkins-Cohen, Craig Lewis, Yvette Clark, Deral Falls, Jasmine Colbert,, Patti Morfe, Tina Schmitt, Kate Wolfson, Marvin McKenstry, William Carnes, Mike Digiacomio, Che Evans, Julie Torchia, Chris Kingsley, Susan Christiansen, Kristi France-Gibbs, Diedre Moore-Durant, Tobie Thomas, Shamekka Kuykendall, Sheldon Caplis, Krysti Dickerson, Anne Allen, Ken Lemberg, Kathy Christian, Jeremy Lares, Ryan Smith, Wendy Gordon, Jessica Cardott, Philip Leaf, Rasheem Shilvan, Brenda Sierra, Brandon Ferges, Tierra Mason, Jon Smeaton, Donnice Brown, Rachel Brash, Shantrice Cooper-Mckoy, Sidney Wilson, Sharon Harrison

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### **Welcome - BWDB Chair Yariela Kerr-Donovan**

Welcomed attendees and special guests to the hybrid June 2022 Board meeting at Enoch Pratt Library and requested all attendees to sign in using the chat function. The meeting agenda was shared with all attendees. March 2022 Meeting Minutes were formally approved by the Board.

- Reviewed “Vision for a Coordinated Workforce System” and the strategic movement and progress updates for Vision 2020:
  - In 2017 the Board created a coordinated workforce system where employers have a clear and simple way to find their workforce; and residents have a way to get the skills they need for the careers they desire.
  - Some key aspects of the access points and the assessment tools, where the job seeker focused engagement, the employer engagement piece with the job-matching tool, and making sure to stay connected within the industry sectors with needs.
- Members of the Board shared updates pertaining to the vision and the progress in the past two years:
  - **Yvette Clark w/ Employer Services shared:**
    - Employer services have been innovating different strategies to do job matching using a new Public tool, Breezy HR.

- This tool gives a larger reach and the option for phone screening or in person interviews for employers and recruit many more individuals.
  - Tried virtual job matching & assisted employers on board clients in a virtual aspect due to Covid 19.
- **Dr. Rachel Pfeifer shared:**
  - Continued partnership with MOED and Baltimore's Promise on Grads2Careers to give recent high school graduates opportunities to connect with workforce training programs that's are free.
  - In the midst of the pandemic, we reviewed and created a new strategic plan for career readiness; which included reviewing the CTE programming and where it is located.
  - Relocated some programs and sunset some programs based on Labor market data, revised curriculums, planned for new materials, and updated buildings as part of the long-term strategic plan to revitalize CTE in our schools.
  - One Friday a month, Career Friday's take place, where different industries are highlighted, and students receive hands on experience. As a result of this, an apprenticeship program was launched for young people; 13 apprenticeship opportunities were awarded.
- **Melanie Styles shared:**
  - The collaboration between the BWDB, MOED, and The Baltimore Workforce Funders Collaborative continues.
  - The ultimate goal is to understand and collect data systematically to understand how Baltimore City residents are experiencing the workforce system and to use the data to make improvements.
  - MOED is going to administer the WIDs and spent months to figure out what the governance is going to look like and the data platform.
  - Did a beta test on the performance metrics which are being used by the wage record steady, which is 16 organizations, submitted their data over 1700 data points which went smoothly.
- **Brenda Siera shared:**
  - Access Points is designed to create community connector sites comprised of all organizations and practitioners in the city that can link Baltimore City residents to coordinated care and support services that lead to training and employment opportunities.
  - Services were simplified via a unified referral process by data Integration and referrals to determine where the gaps of resource are. In late 2020 a tool to facilitate this process and to build a coordinated workforce system was identified, Unite Us.
  - Unite Us was implemented at MOED Workforce and One-Stop centers and currently being used system wide. Due to ARPA funding, the entire Mayor's Office of Employment was able to be licensed and actively engaging our divisions in using the tools.
  - The tool is available to any practitioner or partner organization who wants to onboard in the system and use the technology for themselves to connect to clients.

- **Donnice Brown shared:**
  - Pre-pandemic, Youth Services (WIOA) put out an RFP request to gain support in providing mental health services for young adults. Presley Ridge was selected for a two-year contract until September 2022.
  - Presley Ridge provided virtual mental health services to help young adults battle the isolation and loneliness. They also provided monthly staff development opportunities and strategies to help deal with participants and how to cope with working.
  - The Nest, a transitional housing location for those in need of emergency shelter, is located at MOED Eastside Career Center. Young adults can stay there for 60-90 days. Young Adults are also able to register for the hubcap location at MOED's YO Center to gain wraparound services in the area of high school diploma assistance and workforce readiness support.
- **Rachel Brash shared:**
  - In ARPA programing, MOED built support services into those programs. Behavioral Health services and Legal will be available to all the participants in Train Up. Train up is an occupational training program for at least 1650 people over the course of two and half years. All Train up participants will receive these services.
  - For Behavioral Health, MOED is working with a provider that will provide individual and group mental health services to participants. For Mental Health MOED contracted with Maryland Legal Services Corporation and they ran a RFP to select providers, Maryland Legal Aid and Maryland Volunteer lawyers Service.
  - Financial Empowerment Counseling at MOED will be available to participants as well.
- **Jason Perkins-Cohen shared:**
  - Expressed gratitude to the Board in supporting the different initiatives, partnerships, and coordinated services.
  - The concept of the system is understood and the challenge of it will always be a work in progress.

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### **Breakout Groups:**

Questions for Discussion:

1. Where are there current gaps/opportunities in the Baltimore City Workforce System?
2. What are the barriers/challenges experienced by jobseekers/employers/training providers in the Baltimore City Workforce System?
3. What keeps you up at night?

### **Report out from Breakout Rooms**

- **Job Match Group, Yvette Clark shared:**
  - Team decided it would be an opportunity to bring employers together and invite them to be employer champions.
  - There's an opportunity for MOED, the Board, and anyone partnering with us in the Workforce System to convene individuals together such as employers,

practitioners, and college institutions to talk about their pain points to create a strategy together with the mission to create a talent pipeline.

- Proposed an idea to have a large event to bring employers together to rediscover possibilities for sector partnerships.
- Challenges proposed: Technology for job seekers and access to technology, employer commitment, the need for job seekers to have stackable credentials to be more attractive in the workplace, advocacy for higher wages, and competing priorities for job seeker, employer, and practitioners.
- There are so many resources that individuals do not know about.
- **Support Services Group, Sara Cooper shared:**
  - Supporting young people and what that looks like for long term and what does it take to support young people in Baltimore.
  - How to support clients that experience language access issues.
  - How to make strategic decisions for funders, what are the priorities, and how can we work together as a funding community to support the work and be strategic together.
- **Job Matching, Deral Falls shared:**
  - Suggested looking into the process of assessing the candidate to make a better job match.
  - Having more information sessions with employers and candidates so that the employer could teach a little bit about the job.
  - Create an app that could be shared that could introduce industries to students across the school systems.
- **Training and Education, Kristi France-Gibbs shared:**
  - There are issues with allocating for federal funding for some of the training providers
  - Find ways to work with employers to educate them on transferable skills to give Individuals that have a criminal background a second chance.
  - Transportation is a big gap and its unreliable at times in the accessibility to get to employment.
  - The entry level skills are lacking. Therefore, some form of job readiness to prepare clients are needed.
- **Access Points, Brenda Sierra shared:**
  - Gaps in the availability of computers and technology for all customers to do job search.
  - Are candidates qualified for the current job openings.
  - There are a lot of supportive educational services available in the city, but we do not see the customers taking advantage of these opportunities.
  - Suggested a public awareness campaign for public awareness and education.
  - The possibility of jobs going away if we do go into a recession and how to proceed if this occurs.
- **Workforce Integrated Data Systems, Christopher Kingsley shared:**
  - The Workforce systems effectiveness committee has been an important initiative and focused on tracking comments performance metrics that have been adopted by MOED and other service providers.

- Talked broadly on people placing jobs, staying in those jobs, and making this work.
- To continue engagement with organizations who provide training to the community and not just funders and think about what kind of information they need to make sense.
- Provide some targeted support for organizations that aren't super sophisticated with data systems.
- Data privacy, how data is presented, and transparency and contributing to this keeps folks up at night.
- **Support Services, Jessica Cardott**
  - The opportunities are there, just a matter of better integrating them.
  - Better use of our community partners we lifted specifically in terms of connecting people through our community partners and those resources exist.
  - Making sure our employers are able to access, have transparency in terms of understanding who they can connect workers that have the right skills.

**Helany Captured One Stop Operator:** Board members only was asked to cast their votes for the Baltimore City One Stop Operator. Blue Ops was selected preliminarily, votes were cast to approve or oppose the One Stop Operator.

**Brief ARPA Highlights (Full updates will be provided during the next Board Meeting):**

- **Train Up:** All 17 contracts have gone through BOE and over 200 residents have been enrolled in these programs.
- **Support Services:** All are going through contractual process and awaiting final approval.
- **Community Connector:** Process is complete and currently waiting to go through BOE process.
- **Higher UP:** Have over 100 residents who have been placed into a transitional job.
- **Let's Ride To Work:** Partnership with Lyft that pays for rides for individuals to go to and from work for their first months on the job.
- **Community Job Hubs:** Partner with non-profits across the city and hire staff who work at these nonprofits. Close to having three new hubs.
- **Mobile Navigator:** Staff with a vehicle to community visit organizations and offer services onsite.
- **Women Owned Business Wage Subsidy:** Reimbursed 80 employers for small business wage subsidy program.
- **Apprenticeship:** Worked with 16 different employers who have put forward applications to initiate apprenticeship.

**Closing**

Meeting concluded by thanking everyone for attending and displaying their continued support.