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Baltimore Workforce Development Board Meeting Minutes

Date: December 15, 2023

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

Location: United Way of Central Maryland

Attendance

Board Members:

Marci Hunn, Senator Cory McCray, William Moore, Sara Cooper, Rachel Pfeifer, Tracy Queen, Lisa Rusyniak, Marty Schwartz, Melaine Styles, Lynda Perry, Tanya Terrell

Non-Board Members:

Mackenzie Garvin, Nancy Murphy, Brenda Sierra, Krysti Dickerson, Joanna Bartholomew, Donnice Brown, Shantrice Cooper-McKoy, Vonnya Pettigrew, Takia Ross, Kyara Gray, Monesha Phillips, Tiffani Truss, Bianca Jackson, Michelle Geiss, Tammira Lucas, Amanda Phillips De Lucas, Courtney Jenkins, Collin Tarbert, Barrington Branch, Josephine Cabi, Kendra Lindsey, Kristi France Gibbs, LeRoy Thomas, Sheldon Caplis, Windy Deese, Emily Sachs, Lay Davenport, Ryan Smith, Tavon Thomas, Linda Dworak, Noah Grant, Heather Naviasky, Albert Phillip, Christina Ralls, Anthony Roberts, Jonathan Law, Yolanda Diop, Rebecca Shipman, Derrick Colbert

Welcome –Mackenzie Garvin, Director, MOED

Welcomed attendees and special guests to the December 2023 Board meeting and requested all attendees to introduce themselves.

William Moore, Interim Chairman shared:

The September 2023 Meeting Minutes were formally approved by the Board.

Mackenzie Garvin, Director, MOED shared:

Workforce Hub

Baltimore's position in the Northeast Corridor makes it essential to the Administration's efforts to upgrade and improve the nation's rail service through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law. In January, President Biden visited Baltimore for the kickoff to replace the 150-year-old Frederick Douglass Tunnel—a project estimated to create 30,000 jobs that will be built with a project-labor agreement between Amtrak and the local building trade unions. The Baltimore region also has a burgeoning offshore wind industry. The Maryland Department of Labor won a Good Jobs Challenge award to support the industry's growth by implementing a new apprenticeship model in partnership with multiple employers and seven unions. Furthermore, the city is using \$30 million in American Rescue Plan funds to expand many workforce efforts, including credentialing programs to help workers get jobs within high demand industries

Mackenzie Garvin, Director, MOED shared:

American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA)

The workforce projects funded with City and State American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) provide residents' opportunities for meaningful work and a hopeful future in the COVID-19 economic recovery. All ARPA projects serve residents citywide and prioritize workers who were disproportionately impacted by the pandemic, and are unemployed or underemployed.

ARPA Workforce Strategy

The goal to serve 8,495 residents with the following programs:

- **Apprenticeship** – Purpose is to subsidize and coordinate new or restricted programs. The goal is to serve 200 residents. To date, 50 apprentices have started at 26 employer sites. The worksites include AEG Contracting, Alason, Arc Baltimore, Arica Consulting and Contracting, Benfield Electric Co., Constellation Home, Bluestone Communications, Carter Machinery Co, Chaney Enterprises, ConCor Networks, Inc., Danko Arlington, DECA Inc., Freestate Baltimore LLC, Glenelg, Inc., Hirsch Electric, Inc., JCM Control Systems, Inc., Key Systems, Inc. Miles Electric, Mona, Personal Electric, Inc., Pro Energy Electric, Quality Heating and Air Conditioning, Rommel Construction, Tissa Enterprises, Windsor Electric Co, Inc., and World Wide Corp.
- **Hire Up** – The purpose is to provide transitional jobs at \$15 per hour with wrap around support services. The goal is to serve 420 residents. To date, 283 residents have been hired through the program. Worksites include Baltimore City Department of Transportation, Baltimore City Department of Finance, Baltimore City Recreation and Parks Department, Baltimore City Department of Public Works, Parking Authority of Baltimore City, Downtown Partnership of Baltimore, Mayor's Office of African American Male Engagement, and Mayor's Office of Employment Development. The threshold is now \$16/hour or more for all placements since July 1, 2023.
- **Community Job Hubs** - To collaborate with high resident traffic non-profits with co- located workforce staff to offer various job readiness services. The goal is to serve 1,230 residents. A total of 1,098 residents have been served at the new job hubs and by Mobile Career Navigators from March 2022 – November 2023. There are four new job hubs which include Enoch Pratt Free Library at Waverly, Our Daily Bread Employment Center, House of Ruth, and International Rescue Committee.
- **Grads2Careers** – Purpose is to expand occupational skills training for high school seniors. The goal is to serve 330 residents.
- **YouthWorks** – Purpose is to support the annual summer jobs for youth. The goal is to serve 4,100 residents.
- **Subsidized Wages** – Purpose is to support new hires for minority and/or women-owned small businesses to help hire or re-hire their staff. The goal is to serve 250 residents. To date, 475 subsidies have been paid to employers.
- **Train Up** – Purpose is to support occupational skills training in high growth industries, based on 1B4J. The goal is to serve 1,650 residents. To date, 962 residents have been served. The Train Up Network includes partnerships in legal, behavioral health, community connectors, occupational skills training, adult literacy, and financial empowerment resources.
- **Transportation Pilot: Let's Ride to Work** – Purpose is to support newly hired employees within the first month on the job with rides to and from work. The goal is to serve 315 residents. To date, 368 residents have been served. The number of rides taken since April 2022 is 13,421 rides.
- **Support Service Partners** – Services include Adult Education provided by South Baltimore

Learning Corporation, Community Connectors provided by Baltimore Safe Haven, Fusion Partners, and Goodwill Industries. Other services include Behavioral Health Services provided by Legal Services

Joanna Bartholomew, Assistant Director Chief of Strategic Initiatives, MOED moderated the End of Year Workforce Development Panel.

Panelists:

Tavon Thomas, Program Manager of Youth Opportunity Center at MOED

Donnice Brown, Assistant Director, Chief of Youth Services at MOED

Ryan Smith, Chief of Mission Services at Goodwill Industries of the Chesapeake, Inc

Linda Dworak, Maryland Philanthropy Network

Question 1: Where other Youth Opportunity Centers have unfortunately closed their doors due to various challenges, our Youth Opportunity Centers has two operational centers (East & West). What strategies are being used that you believe are keeping young people in the community engaged?

- **Tavon Thomas shared:** We connect young people to occupational skills training programs as well as case management services. The key is relationship building. Young people are comfortable coming to us when they are in crisis, or when they are in need. The idea is to create a space where young people feel welcomed, each and every time. If the center cannot service them, we will do a warm hand off to a referral agency.

Question 2: Youth Works had a momentous year in offering almost 8,000 youth employment at a rate of \$15/hr. Please share about the intentional partnerships and business relationships that supported reaching this accomplishment.

- **Donnice Brown shared:** You have to have engaged partners who are willing to step up to the table in order for us to be successful in serving young adults, youth between the age of 14-21 within YouthWorks. The program has grown over the past years, not only in the number of youth we serve but also in the way we serve them. The YouthWorks team is intentional in how they seek partners and organizations to serve as worksites for youth to have meaningful experiences. We encourage employer feedback to understand the experiences the employers are having as well. YouthWorks has great trajectory, our goal is to provide another 8,000 youth opportunities but we will have to balance it out as the wage increases. Our plan is to seek additional funding sources that will allow us to meet or exceed our goal.

Question 3: The Goodwill Industries of Chesapeake, Inc. opened the doors to their Excel Center this year. Please share some of the program strategies the Excel Center has implemented to holistically support Baltimore City residents to reach their academic goals.

- **Ryan Smith shared:** We were able to enroll individuals who were not able to obtain their high school diploma. After working in the program, individuals were able to successfully achieve their academic goal within two years. We also offer a number of support services. We had 168 students enrolled in the high school since September 2023.

Question 4: Explain Baltimore Workforce Funders Collaborative's role in the workforce ecosystem.

- **Linda Dworak shared:** The Baltimore Workforce Funders Collaborative is a group of philanthropic funders that come together once a month to share information and align strategies to bring resources to Baltimore and service intermediaries with funding. One of our operating

principles is to recognize that people doing the work with “boots on the ground” are our partners. It is our goal to listen and engage with those organizations.

Question 5: Linda, this year the funders collaborated conducted its first Workforce Community Conversation. Please share its purpose, some of the objectives, and highlights from the first community conversation.

Linda Dworak shared: As a collective, we focus on what will connect Baltimore residents to quality jobs. We created Workforce Community Conversations, which brought together a group of volunteers who were a mix of funders and workforce development organizations in Baltimore. The group worked together from January 2023- October 2023 to establish guiding principles, and in October launched their first collaborative event.

Joanna Bartholomew welcomed the BWDB 2024 Candidates who then shared brief introductions.

- **Vonnya Pettigrew** - CEO and Founder of Root Branch Media Group, an award-winning media production firm headquartered in Baltimore, Maryland.
- **Takia Ross** - Business Coach known for conducting various business pitch competitions that provide access to funding sources and creative expansion tools for many small business owners. She also owns Accessmatized Make-Up Artistry, home of Pretty Mobile Baltimore, DMV's First Mobile Make-Up Studio.
- **Kyara Gray-Uqdah** - Co-founder of Charm City Buyers, known for her love for Baltimore and closing the wealth gap through real estate.
- **Monesha Phillips** - Owner of Pandora's Box Boutique. Pandora's Box Boutique provides a unique selection of the latest trends, jewelry, gifts, home decor, and personal accessories.
- **Tiffani Truss** - Senior Manager of Youth and Young Adult Workforce Strategies at Baltimore's Promise, playing a pivotal role in supporting workforce systems partners to advance a more coordinated system of support for youth and young adults.
- **Bianca Jackson** - Entrepreneur and Founder of BrickRose Exchange, a Metaverse service tech hub that has impacted 5000 people through its events. Through partnerships, she amplifies the reach of artists, creatives, and small business owners.
- **Michelle Geiss** - Executive Director and Co-Founder of Impact Hub Baltimore. As a community workspace for 230+ social entrepreneurs, Impact Hub Baltimore and its members are building an innovative local economy that advances equity and addresses the city's complex c

- **Vonnya Pettigrew** - CEO and Founder of Root Branch Media Group, an award-winning media production firm headquartered in Baltimore, Maryland.
- **Dr. Tammira Lucas** – Associate Professor at Coppin State University. Founder of The Cube, largest black women-owned co-working space in the United States that provides childcare services. Dr. Lucas is a strong advocate for women in business.
- **Amanda Phillips De Lucas** - Director for the Baltimore Neighborhood Indicators Alliance – Jacob France Institute. Dr. Phillips De Lucas comes to BNIAJFI from Cary Institute of Ecosystem Studies.
- **Brandi Carter** - Executive Director of the Bio-Technical Institute of Maryland (BTI), a workforce development training program in Baltimore, MD, that serves non-traditional adult students.
- **Courtney Jenkins** - President of the Metropolitan Baltimore AFL-CIO where he leads the region’s coalition of labor unions—responsible for advocating for strong workers’ rights in several jurisdictions.
- **Collin Tarbert** - President and CEO of the Baltimore Development Corporation (BDC), which serves as the economic development agency for Baltimore City.
- **Joshua Harrold** - Regional Director of 1199SEIU Training and Employment Fund Extended Leadership Team charged with developing and providing exceptional training and services to stakeholders.
- **Barrington Branch** - Public Policy & Advocacy Manager for the Baltimore City Department of Social Services (BCDSS) - Family Investment Administration. In this role, he interfaces with external agencies, forging relationships with stakeholders for initiatives throughout the City of Baltimore.

**Nancy Murphy, CEO, CSR Communications shared:
2024 – 2026 Strategic Plan THRIVING TOGETHER Implementation Phase**

Reasons for a Strategic Plan

- For shared understanding and celebration of progress to date on the Vision for a Coordinated Workforce System.
- For all Board members to be fully engaged, aligned, and contributing strategically.
- So that the Board is ready and able to lead progress toward the vision of a coordinated, equitable citywide workforce system that delivers on the promise of economic justice.

Accomplishments

- Benchmarked other workforce boards & local peer organizations.

- Interviewed Board members to identify opportunities for increased engagement and understanding of economic justice.
- Agreed on economic justice definition, that is now reflected in Board’s vision, mission and goals.
- Established strategic priorities and committees to serve those priorities and “jump start” activities to advance those priorities.

Vision

BWDB envisions a region where all Baltimore City residents have unhindered access to quality opportunities, livable wages, and economic mobility, and all employers value and have access to a robust, skilled, and talented workforce. This vision is grounded in the recognition that systemic barriers have locked people out of career opportunities and economic mobility.

Mission & Unique Contribution

BWDB aligns action of all workforce development system stakeholders to achieve an inclusive and equitable economy that works for all.

Goals

- Increase the number of Baltimore residents employed in quality jobs.
- Improve the skills and supports for Baltimore City’s workforce to ensure workers have everything they need to succeed.
- Increase the number of skilled and talented workers to meet employers’ growing and changing needs.

Strategic Priorities

- Advocacy
- Board Engagement
- Collaboration & Convening
- Data

**Nancy Murphy, CEO, CSR Communications shared:
2024 – 2026 Strategic Plan THRIVING TOGETHER Implementation Phase**

Next Steps

- BWDB candidates to be reviewed and confirmed by Mayor Scott. Accepted candidates to be onboarded and assigned to committees.
- Committees to complete jump start activities
- Implementation workbook and tools to support progress
- 90-Day Realignment Review in March/April

Implementation Workbook

How To Use	Assessment	Strategy Dashboard	Committee 90-Day Workplan	Additional Resources
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Directions on each tab in the workbook	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Key Elements• Scoring Rubric	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Overall Goals and Strategic Priorities• Scoring Rubric	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Committee Objectives• Outcome Status	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Tools• Articles

Meeting Adjourned

Meeting concluded by thanking everyone for attending and displaying their continued support. Next Board Meeting: March 15, 2024, Location: The Annie E. Casey Foundation