

Meeting of Montgomery County Local Workforce Development Board
November 3rd, 2021
8:30

Board Attendees: Michelle Bell-Smith, John Cain, Mark Drury, Barbara Ebel, Wyatt Genser, Steve Greenfield, Jeff Guido, Courtney Hall, Mahesh Kalva, Mary Lang, Beth Lash, Omar Lazo, Lesley MacDonald, Roxana Mejia, Helen Nixon, Yomi Ntewo, Sharon Strauss, Diego Uriburu, Ben Wu

Non-Board Attendees: Elane Chang, Amelia Kalant, Kathleen McKirchy

Staff: Tina Edmundson, Administrative Coordinator; Anthony Featherstone, Executive Director; John Hattery, Director of Strategic Initiatives; Sarah Van De Weert, Director of Government Relations

CHAIRPERSON WELCOME/CALL TO ORDER

Mark Drury, Chair, opened the meeting. He then welcomed new member, Helen Nixon, Director of Human Resources, Montgomery County Public Schools. Helen Nixon then gave an overview of her background and excitement to join and add value to the board and workforce system.

September Meeting Minutes: Meeting minutes from the meeting held on September 1st were unanimously approved.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT

Anthony Featherstone had to exit at the beginning of the presentation due a fire alarm; he was able to rejoin within 5 minutes.

Mr. Featherstone discussed the forthcoming GROW program (Grant Relief for Onboarding Workers). He explained the program was designed to provide relief via ARPA funds to local business negatively impacted by the public health crisis. The program provides grants equal to 50-75% of a new employee's wages for the first twelve (12) weeks of employment.

WSM recently met with Marty Walsh, US Secretary of Labor, Senator Chris Van Hollen, Congressman David Trone, Maryland Secretary of Labor Tiffany Robinson, Montgomery County Executive Marc Elrich and Councilmember Craig Rice. The meeting focused on re-entry services to be offered at the Montgomery County Correctional Facility as well as the community services through the American Job Center.

WSM recently held a kick-off meeting for their new Young Adult program and partnership with Latin American Youth Center and Identity Inc. The program is completing start-up activities but is actively enrolling and serving participants.

WSM will submit a proposed FY '23 budget and request to Montgomery County government on or before November 8, 2021. More detailed information will be provided to the board during the next meeting as the request was just received over the past few days.

BOARD MEMBERSHIP & VACANCIES

Ms. Van De Weert provided an update on the remaining vacancies of the Board which included at least 6 positions and informed the group that the Nominating Committee had interviewed several candidates and were prepared to provide recommendations to the County Executive's Office by the New Year.

BOARD LEADERSHIP

Ms. Van De Weert led a discussion on committee membership and activity. The board has 4 committees: Business & Community Engagement; Programs; Employment Recovery; and Executive. It was noted that the Business & Community Engagement and Employment Recovery Committees are currently without Chairs. Helen Nixon expressed interest in chairing the Employment Recovery Committee but would like further information on the charge for the committee. Sarah Van De Weert thanked her for her willingness to chair as a new member and informed her that a separate meeting would be scheduled to discuss the role of the committee. Steve Greenfield and Mary Lang expressed interest in co-chairing the Business & Community Engagement Committee. They both agreed to connect after the meeting to discuss and confirm.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned by Mark Drury at 10:00 AM.

The next meeting will take place on January 5th, 2022 @ 8:30 AM.