



## Massachusetts Workforce Association Membership Committee Meeting Notes

Tuesday, September 10, 2019

### Introductions

- Participants - Peter Farkas, David Gadaire, Chris Kealey, Dean Rizzo, Tonja Mettlach and Raija Vaisanen

### Future meeting schedule

- The committee agreed to hold meetings by phone on a monthly basis to start. Later, as the committee becomes more established, a work plan is developed and a membership structure is developed for those beyond founding members (workforce boards and career centers), meetings will be held quarterly before board meetings.

### Committee goals/objectives-See updated committee charter

- The committee reviewed the charter and several members made suggestions for revisions including the following:
  - Under responsibilities we should include reviewing the membership structure and value proposition for members on a regular basis and update as necessary.
  - The committee should act as a resource/sounding board where the Executive Director and MWA staff can go for feedback on outside requests for membership when it is unclear if the membership would be the right fit for MWA.
  - Under goals we should add an intention to increase and maintain diversity and inclusion along all fronts in MWA, the board and its committees (geography, gender, race/ethnicity, industry/affiliation, etc.) If a member leaves the organization, we should be considerate when looking to recruit that the constituency that they represented is sought out.

### Value proposition of MWA

- The committee thought that “lead, advocate and convene” broadly expressed the value proposition of MWA today. Lead: through thought leadership in workforce development; Advocate: for resources and public policies that impact the system; Convene: members around best practices, to build relationships among state partners and bring people together from within and outside the workforce system.
- The committee also thought that representing a new, unified voice for the workforce system was an important part of MWA’s value. Additionally, the committee saw MWA as bringing value to not just directors of workforce boards and career centers, but also their staff.
- The committee discussed developing a regular feedback loop with members to understand what value they receive from MWA and how/if that should change. There was also conversation around the power of repetition and coming up with a values statement and embedding that in our work and our communications.

- Tonja suggested bringing up this value proposition of MWA question to the upcoming board meeting and council meetings and developing a concrete statement on MWA's value by the end of the year.

#### **Organizations/Partners we've already connected with**

- Tonja reported on early meetings she's had with organizations outside of MWA membership who may have an interest in becoming members in the future and others where membership may not make sense, but building a relationship between the organizations does.
- The committee discussed the need to potentially create a temporary/initial form of outside membership should there be organizations who are ready to engage/partner but who don't fit into the current form of membership.
- The committee agreed that in future meetings we will identify specific organizations and types of organizations to recruit new members from, once MWA has a website and collateral and a clear message on our value.

#### **Next Steps**

- Raija will take the lead in organizing future committee meetings, developing agendas and a clear work plan for FY20.



## Massachusetts Workforce Association Membership Committee Meeting Notes

Thursday, October 10, 2019

### Introductions

- Participants - Peter Farkas, David Gadaire, Dean Rizzo, Tonja Mettlach and Raija Vaisanen

### Approve updated charter document

- Discussion - There seemed to be general agreement that the charter looked good but that it is important to specifically state in the charter that part of our job is to redefine the definition of the workforce development system. Have it be more inclusive.
- Committee agreed to the structure of the charter and getting it approved at the December board meeting.

### Update on discussions re: value proposition of MWA - WBC, MWA Board, CCC

- Raija provided an update of our conversations with the workforce board council, MWA Board, and the career center committee.
- Draft Statement: Massachusetts Workforce Association leads, advocates and convenes on behalf of the Massachusetts workforce development system. We are thought-leaders for workforce development, sharing best practices and elevating our member's expertise and strengths statewide and nationwide. We advocate for public policies and resources at the state and federal level that support our members' missions to successfully meet the talent needs of local businesses and connect job seekers to good jobs. We convene our members for strategic partnership development, peer-to-peer learning and networking opportunities.
- Discussion -
  - The value proposition should be sure to be broad enough in who we represent so that we are inclusive of everyone.
  - MWA should now put itself into listening mode and take the draft statement out to the career center directors and workforce board directors. This can be done by Dean, Dave, and Pete. Goal would be that by next committee meeting we have received some outside feedback that folks can report back on.

### Review and give feedback on Membership Committee Work Plan for FY20

- Raija overviewed the committee work plan, which includes developing an ad hoc membership structure by December and a more concrete/developed membership structure by the end of FY20.
- MWA will list the 10 or 20 current membership benefits and come up with a framework for current members.
- Consider sponsorship vs. membership
- MWA will come up with a list of types of organizations to prioritize in terms of recruitment down the line for the Committee to consider and brainstorm off of

### Membership committee member recruitment

- Raija and Tonja discussed recruiting more people to participate in the Membership Committee and will send out emails with future meeting dates for members or their staff to participate.

**Organizations/Partners for MWA staff to connect with**

- To come back to at the next meeting

**Next Steps**

- Dean, Dave and Pete to share draft value proposition statement with their colleagues at the workforce boards and career centers for feedback
- Review Dean's documents and put an ad hoc membership structure into writing



## **Massachusetts Workforce Association Membership Committee Meeting Notes**

Thursday, November 14, 2019, 10AM - 10:50AM

### **Introductions:**

- Participants: Peter Farkas, David Gadaire, Dean Rizzo, Michael Weekes, Raija Vaisanen

### **Debrief on CWA and NYATEP Conversations:**

- Membership structures evolved over time in these organizations, both of which have been established for decades, starting with boards and still need evaluation and consideration of new ways to offer value to members based on their membership level.
- Tension between members who have voting rights on the board and those that do not; between those who pay more and those who do not; those whose entire organizations are included in membership (like a community college) vs. a small non-profit or individual.
- Affiliate members (non-board/career center) primarily become members for access to conference/meeting discounts. These organizations make money off of major conferences they put on. These affiliate members come and go in terms of being members - often based on budgets/economy. They aren't consistent.
- Value: Advocacy/access to legislative leaders and insider information, and networking opportunities are the two offerings that members seem to get the most benefit out of, outside of the conferences, which involve learning opportunities/workshops
- Request for MWA to share with committee how they describe/visualize their membership benefits and structures on their websites
- What percentage of their budget comes from membership dues vs. other income? CWA was about 1/3 dues based 6 years ago, now the share is the much lower given the addition of large multi-million dollar contracts for technical assistance from the state workforce board.

### **CWC Update:**

- Early discussions with Susan Crandall about MWA taking on CWC conference and convening brand. She still needs to talk to Roger Herzog at CEDAC about this. She does not have the capacity, given other funding and capacity challenges, to staff and resource CWC.
- Reactions: Take time with thinking about this. It isn't a bad idea, but long ago CWC used to not be a proponent of state system. Members felt like a target at conferences by smaller organizations competing for funding. If we are in favor of broadening the tent for MWA this could be a good thing.

### **Member benefits:**

- Committee still needs to review draft statement of current member benefits. Will review in time for next call to offer any feedback/edits.
- Should be able to share benefits with board in meeting before June

**Update on discussions re: value proposition of MWA - WBC, MWA Board, CCC:**

- Sent updated statement based on workforce board director feedback to incorporate local/regional expertise emphasis. Otherwise positive feedback that this reflects who we are.
- No feedback yet from any career center directors.
- One question - how do we define good jobs for our members? Consider updating statement to allow for the variety of job seekers our system serves and their individual needs.
- MWA will circulate updated statement to committee and

**Updates/Review Membership Committee Work Plan for FY20:**

- Reviewed work plan and reiterated goals and timeline for finalizing membership structure and fees by end of FY20.
- Discussed next steps for receiving feedback on current member benefits and giving updates to the board.

**Next Steps:**

- Reschedule next call for Tuesday, December 17 at 3:30PM - Calendar hold sent out
- MWA will share links to other association websites for examples of how they articulate member benefits and structures
- Value Proposition Statement will be edited and recirculated via e-mail for preparation for Board vote in December
- Committee will review member benefits description for feedback before Dec. call
- MWA will draft membership structure for reactions





## Massachusetts Workforce Association Membership Committee Meeting Notes

Tuesday, December 17, 2019

In attendance by phone: Peter Farkas, Chris Kealey, Dean Rizzo, Tonja Mettlach and Raija Vaisanen

Member benefits feedback: Are we missing anything?

- Member benefits for current members (boards and career centers) seem complete.
- Over time, as we hear feedback from our members about the value they think we bring, we can add or change some of these. Hearing this feedback can also make our pitches better to prospective members.

Membership Structure

1. How does this look as a starting framework? (MWA Partner and MWA Champion)
  - a. Simple like this is good to start, with just one level in addition to current members. "Need to walk before we can run."
  - b. We also might need to try some things and have them not succeed but we will learn from it and we need to be okay with that.
  - c. Important to consider things like how many staff in a new member organization would be able to access benefits (think large institution like a community college). Other states have also had to consider this and in some cases, adjust membership cost based on the size of organization.
  - d. By joining, a new member can be part of a larger voice supporting workforce development.
  - e. As we develop a new membership type - need to think of constant check-ins, finding the right balance between existing members and new members. Will be a constant balance.
2. Are we missing anything from the description of benefits an MWA Partner would receive?
  - a. Setting modest goals as we start out for new membership makes sense.
  - b. For our first year, we should be flexible and it is o.k. to learn as we go and as we start to talk to prospective members. In conversation with them, they may tell us what they would value by joining and it will help us refine our message.
  - c. We should be discerning about the members we want to accept at this point so that we don't over extend ourselves with organizations that aren't as closely aligned with our mission and goals.
  - d. Value of membership isn't always a \$ for \$ calculation.
  - e. Think about length of membership - do you renew on a calendar or fiscal year basis, or do you allow people to start a year of membership at any time - pluses and minuses to each approach.
  - f. Be prepared to explain how much of dues goes toward lobbying efforts so that non-profits could be comfortable joining.

Next Steps

1. Incorporate this feedback into updated structure.



2. Have a strategic and structured conversation with MWA members about this draft structure.
3. At the next committee meeting, review MWA 2020 Calendar of Meetings and Events and review feedback on membership structure in order to be able to prepare language for our website.