



Massachusetts Workforce Association Governance Committee Meeting Notes

Friday, September 17, 2021

In attendance: Maddrey Goode, Sheila Sullivan-Jardim, Shannon Norton, Tonja Mettlach, and Raija Vaisanen

Recap Summer MWA Board onboarding

- Tonja provided a recap of the summer onboarding session. Overall the concept was good, but unfortunately two new board members could not join in-person and one was late. However, we put together comprehensive binders that were passed along to Lauren and Charles and were able to have an informal discussion with the board members who did attend the orientation (Jim, Joe, and Mary).
- In the future we think combining a board orientation with a member in-person event is a great idea and that in the future hopefully more board members can attend and participate.
- We received lots of positive feedback from those who attended the Summer Member Lunch that followed the onboarding at Tower Hill.

Racial Justice Work

- Tonja and Raija provided an overview of the DEI working strategic plan that was included in the materials sent out to the committee. We view this document as a working document and plan to incorporate it into MWA's broader strategic plan. We also asked the committee for approval of the document so that we could present it at the September 28th MWA Board meeting.
- Committee discussion:
 - Maddrey asked about what the state is doing related to DEI and improving access to quality jobs for jobseekers. Raija provided an update based on her participation in two state DEI committees: the SPAC DEI Committee and the MassHire DEI Committee. MWA will ask MassHire representatives on these committees to include updates at future CCC and WBC meetings, or we will provide updates. MWA is not looking to duplicate efforts with these committees.
 - Sheila asked if we are considering DEI from the right organizational perspective. Discussion continued on thinking about the number of people of color in decision making roles - on committees, the board. Can lower level staff than just directors participate and be given leadership opportunities in this way - thereby planning for succession and also diversifying participation and viewpoints?
 - Shannon also shared about what they are doing in Lowell and the challenges and opportunities her organization is facing.

Member Survey Results

- Tonja and Raija provided an overview of the latest MWA member survey.
- Sheila asked what we found most surprising in the answers:
 - Members continue to want advocacy to be our most important priority.
 - Members who participated in Workforce Webinars over the year found them very effective (about two thirds of respondents). Other respondents had not participated. This may be because most participants come from managers and staff vs. directors who were answering the survey.
 - Members are looking forward to in-person networking opportunities most once it is safe to do so.

In person meetings and other updates

- MWA will continue to monitor public health guidance and member comfort with in-person meetings and events. In the meantime, we will look to offer another virtual networking or informal gathering in late fall or winter.
- If you have ideas about creative virtual events that MWA should consider, please reach out to Tonja or Raija anytime.