MASS WORKFORCE ASSOCIATION
ONE SYSTEM – ONE VOICE

Massachusetts Workforce Association
Membership Committee Meeting Notes

Tuesday, February 22, 2022, 11:00AM

In attendance: David Gadaire, Peter Farkas, Tonja Mettlach, Raija Vaisanen

Affiliate Membership/Recruitment

- Raija shared updated 2-pager emphasizing policy/advocacy benefits of membership
- MWA has a New Member: Dorchester Bay Economic Development Corp. (Jim Carey, Workforce Development Program Manager)
- Discussion regarding further connections to be made with economic development organizations and associations.
    - New Chair of Dave's board, Tessa Murphy-Romboletti, is and has been involved in a number of economic development efforts in Holyoke. She is also a Holyoke City Councilor.
- MWA will sponsor the New England Workforce Network conference again this year, though will have a table in-person this year. Should help make broader connections for membership.
- Peter is transitioning to a new job at Berkshire Community College. He offered to make a connection between MWA and other workforce development directors at the community colleges around the state once he is settled.

Member Program Feedback

- NYATEP Mental Health Training: Very positive feedback received from attendees who responded to our survey.
- Growing Equity Sessions 1 & 2: Very positive feedback received from attendees who responded to our survey.
    - Will share more details about our Growing Equity Series at our Annual Meeting

New Benefits

- Quarterly Virtual Open Office Hours for MWA members to connect informally with Tonja and Raija on any topics.
- Additional Subsidized Training with Partners: MASSCAP Managing a Multigenerational Workforce - MWA is paying for 10 members to attend the training.

2022 Annual Meeting

- MWA is planning to hold this year's Annual Meeting in-person in Pittsfield, as had been planned in 2020. The meeting will be held in early June and details will be sent to members shortly.

"Proud MWA Member" Sticker

- Dave suggested having a sticker on MWA member office doors that says "Proud Member of MWA." Raija suggested a "sticker" for members' websites, given the increasing use of remote/virtual services. Raija will look into design, something like MNN's member "badges."

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Tuesday, May 24, 2022, 11:00AM

In attendance: David Gadaire, Raija Vaisanen

Member Programs

- Growing Equity Series Feedback Session - Consider doing quarterly or twice yearly open forums on DEI work for members to share among each other
- MWA is going to start collecting demographic information of participants in registration. It will be optional and we will say that we are collecting it to understand our audience reach.
- Lunch and Learn Series well-received. Next sessions:
    - Gratitude in Minutes
    - Rest Management
- Cliff Effect Webinar 6/8 in partnership with SkillWorks, the United Way, and MASSCAP
- AHP/ATR SUD Training Series September 2022
- Dave asked that we ask members to share these programs with their staff when they are being marketed. We want our members' staff to know they are members too.
- Dave said he will ask his Social Media/Marketing manager Cindy Gagnon to look into how much it would cost to print our "Proud Member of MWA" badge into window stickers for member offices.

New Board Member and New Member Orientation

- Planning summer onboarding for board members w/Lunch with broad membership networking.
- New Member Outreach - process for inviting committee members or other key MWA members to reach out and informally welcome - Jim Carey and Bobby Tugbiyele are examples of new members. Tonja and Raija will reach out to ask members to do this.
- JET's Pam Herrup reached out interested in affiliate membership. Will keep committee posted.

Annual Meeting

- Will offer a membership committee update asking about:
    - best time to put out annual survey and the types of questions we'll be asking
    - ask members to share our program info and newsletter with staff
    - share that we will start collecting voluntary demographic data on program participation
- Ask for members staffing #s as a start to just get an idea of scale of membership - may be way to plant the seed to then get emails annually from members.

2022 Member Survey

- Avoid end of fiscal year
- Ask about Annual meeting
- Numbers of staff in organization

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Massachusetts Workforce Association
Membership Committee Meeting Notes

Tuesday, July 26, 2022, 11:00AM

In attendance: David Gadaire, Louise Meyer, Raija Vaisanen

Member Programs

- Lunch and Learn Self-Care Series received positive feedback and we will look to do more in the future with Happier Valley.
- Sept. 13th we are planning a peer learning lunch & learn on Mobile Career Centers/Meeting Jobseekers Where They Are
- Oct. 4 part AHP/ATR SUD Training Series
- Oct./Nov. - MassHire Award Finalists Workshops
- Dave suggested that Ramona on his staff might be willing to offer a peer learning opportunity related to the Recovery Ready Workplace work they have been doing with ATR/AHP.

New Board Member Orientation

- Summer Onboarding for New Board Members w/Lunch - 9/1 at Tower Hill
- Will encourage new board members to participate on Membership Committee

2022 Member Survey

- Thinking about what we'd like to ask related to strategic planning:
    - Which groups should we prioritize next to grow MWA membership?
    - Are our programs/services focused on sustaining current membership or growing new membership?
    - There is a lot of need to orient new directors, new staff, to the workforce system. Right now it happens on an informal, ad-hoc basis. Is there a role MWA could play in orienting new directors and connecting them with others who could mentor them?
    - Chief Elected Officials, Youth Staff, some categories of members don't have groups that convene them. Should MWA look at partnering with a group like MMA on joint workforce peer groups?

Strategic Planning Process

- Tonja and Raija speaking with consultants to work with. Meeting with Nancy Snyder tomorrow.
- Plan to start this fall.
- Dave said we should continue to think about adding staff to support MWA and what that would cost/look like.

Notes:

What do Tonja/Raija do now that you would never want them to stop doing?

- Valerie - Advocacy work and reports are very informative. That is something that she is further removed from and so it is helpful to have us out there promoting the work and bringing it back to us.
- Maddrey - data collection, persistent issue and will be helpful for the future of the system.
- Louise - Pulling together everyone and communication capacity is very strong. Has been involved with prior versions of the association . Opportunity to get together and speak out on issues. Responsiveness is very helpful and supportive.
- Bobby - Communicating, data, etc. is very helpful for someone who is relatively new. Better understanding of the issues, and where the energy needs to be for advocacy. Also new member orientation was very helpful - either quarterly or bi-annually.
- Shannon - agree with everything that has
- Joe - New to the workforce association and the ability to get a lot of information and timely, very concise. The way they disseminate information is very helpful.
- LeeAnn - Helping the directors to get messaging together when talking to DCS. Think through how to share what we are thinking. The newsletter that comes out is a great way to share successes. Always forward the email to full staff.
- Dave - Listen. They go out of their way to learn the realities of the system so they can help best represent us. Worry about them burning out. And the research they do is very helpful.

Are there activities that you would like to see increased if there was more capacity?

- Joe - More in person meetings.
- LeeAnn - More training opportunities for the field
- Maddrey - People business so need to expand membership. Big divide around the DEI work with DCS and front line staff.
- Comm Corp is overreaching at this point.
- Common conversation we seem to have about Comm Corp

Three strategies are lead, advocate, and convene - how would you prioritize and allocate resources?

- Maddrey - first reaction was ⅓, ⅓, ⅓. But then some of it is seasonality around what you do.
- Regional voice should be under both lead and advocate. Needs to be fluid and reviewed based on the time of year and how we are operating.

- Dave - started with ⅓; ⅓; ⅓ but then lean towards 40, 40, 20 with 20 for convene. There is a lot of minutia work in convening and if we could get a third person that might help.
- Valerie - a lot of minutia work since it is us two. Where do they lead and where can the board assist. How can you make this easier on them to focus on the more important areas.

Where can MWA be a leader around DEI in the core strategies and beyond?

- Lead might need more information.
- DEI - real issues with the state and the work they are doing. Also a lack of data. Would like to see more data on senior leadership and is it reflective of who we serve. The perceptions of the career center and who they serve could be problematic long term.
- Dave - agree with Maddrey. Additional feedback - it would be good to just collect and unify all the separate DEI efforts.
- Joe - serve on two separate DEI committees for the city. Can't imagine what that is like across the Commonwealth.
- Maddrey – the system doesn't pass the eye test (senior leadership of color).

Opportunities to take advantage of over the next 3 years

- Take advantage of the economy (employers cannot afford to bring on payroll employees) and sell employers on apprenticeship/OJT. Take advantage of the opportunity to build the brand.
- Opportunity will be lost if all the money goes to Comm Corp. Position MWA as the lead not DCS or Comm Corp.
- How do we look at attracting philanthropic money to allow the system to be less reliant on Comm Corp?
- Expand what we call the workforce system. There are at least 5 other secretariats that do workforce development and we are missing an opportunity through membership.
- Bobby - State organization but one of the reasons that drove him to get involved was how to tie things together at a local level. How to get more buy in from local assets, public/private partnerships, etc. Break down silos that previously existed.

Biggest challenges in the next 3 years

- Dave - Staff capacity
- Joe
    - Maximizing staff
    - How do we stay relevant and prevalent in a changing economy.
    - Reining in Comm Corp

- Maddrey - overall procurement process for career centers and succession management. Also merit staff issues.

Three Years from Now - what would you like to point to for Association's successes?

- Maddrey - national recognition
- Bobby - making some progress in data and systems improvement. Being able to do a year over year review of where we were and where we've gone.
- Lee Ann - Getting us out of the hamster in the wheel mode. More of the system making progress and being outfront rather than reacting.
- Dave - benchmarks of membership and budget growth. A more unified system would be great.

Membership:

Is the Association the MassHire association or does it

- Maddrey - Under convene it has a larger group but under the other two it is very focused on MassHire.

What are the strategic growth opportunities the Association should pursue?

- Maddrey - WSG conference is great. Could we expand our annual meeting to a larger group? Share research. Bring more local flavor. Way to think about best practices and other intersecting issues (like housing and transportation).
- LeeAnn - wanted more CBOs that also do workforce development, couldn't CBOs have access to training/peer to peer learning opportunities? Discount to members and full price for non-members?
- Shannon - MASSCAP association that does a lot of good trainings. Look at that as a model.
- Dave - also think there is room for a little research to really identify where the state is spending money on workforce development and then to bring those leaders together to talk about how to align, eliminate duplication, better use our resources.
- Look at providing discounted prices for members and higher prices for non-members.

Wrap up

- Have to be able to explain what we've done with the money that the system has received.
- Dave - a more unified data measurement process. Continue to push the envelope.
- Bobby - Challenging mindsets. Systems and institutions are run by people. The reality is humans get in their own way. Get comfortable with being uncomfortable.