

**MassHire Metro South/West
Career Center Committee**

Unofficial Minutes from February 20, 2020

Members on Zoom Conferencing: Gwenn O’Keefe, chair, Rosemary Alexander, Shannon Laingen, Mary Lou Regan

Members absent: John Bogdan, Patrick Davis, Louise Lynch

Other: MassHire Metro South/West Workforce Board staff: Greg Bunn, Henry Bryson, Cindy Cedrone; Brittany Raposa, SMOC

Welcome and overview of agenda

Greg announced that Patrick Davis was continuing on the career center committee, but he was stepping down as chair. Greg welcomed Gwenn O’Keefe as the new committee chair, and announced that Louise Lynch, Department of Transitional Assistance is a new non-WIOA member of the committee.

Greg presented “Description and Duties of the Career Center Committee” (attached).

RFI/RFP

Greg presented three slides showing the “Procurement History and Plans Going Forward” (attached). He stated that an RFI would be sent by the beginning of March to get an idea of potential bidders. Mary Lou Regan asked about the status of transitioning to Norwood, if Tony Mazzucco was notified about the RFI and where it would be distributed. Greg replied the Norwood transition was stagnant at the moment, that Tony would be getting a copy for comment before it was released and there would be a “wide net” cast distribution which the DOL monitor encouraged. Rosemary Alexander asked if ETA was planning to bid. Greg said yes and emphasized the need for the procurement development process to be confidential with regard to potential bidders and avoid any potential conflicts of interest and as such, erring on the side of caution, he had held a meeting with DCS to discuss these conflicts and firewalls. It was noted that any potential bidders on the committee would have to recuse themselves from the process. Brittany Raposa asked if the City of Framingham had been considered for the career center operator. Greg stated a potential RFI distribution plan would include municipalities and they would be getting the RFI and RFP. Greg stated that the DOC monitor said there could be clauses in the RFP requesting existing staff be considered for interviews. Mary Lou suggested “financial management” be highlighted in the RFI and RFP and that “multi-lingual capabilities” would be an asset. Rosemary asked for language in the RFI to state that not responding to the RFI would not preclude anyone from responding to the RFP and the responses to the RFI would be confidential. Greg said if there were no responses to the RFI, or if they were not of sound quality the board could possibly utilize a “sole source procurement” as long as documentation justifies it.

Greg asked the committee to start thinking about what they would want to see in the RFP which would be released late summer. Shannon Laingen asked for an organizational chart of the career center showing how the roles relate to one another. Rosemary asked if other locations closer to public transportation were being considered. Greg said yes, that there was a possibility of occupying space with MassBay when they build a Life Sciences Center in downtown Framingham, but he also noted that people were very happy with the parking availability at the current location on Route 9. Greg also mentioned that a constraining factor when considering a more appropriate or accessible location is the leases for each site that typically have 2-3 years left and would likely require some sort of buyout if we chose to ruminant early. Mary Lou noted that the economy could change in the near future and wondered about the scalability of the career center. Greg talked about expanding virtual services. Rosemary noted that the Lowell career center had a model. Greg also said there could be language in the RFP suggesting other areas where services should be delivered.

Next Steps/Future Discussion Topics

Greg said the draft RFI would be sent to the committee for comments to be sent back as soon as possible and the draft would be sent to Tony. The previous RFP and a DCS procurement template would also be sent to all.

RFI responses must be received by March 27. The next meeting to review the responses will be set for mid to late April.

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