



**Northern Essex Community College  
Hartleb Technology Center, Room TC 103A  
100 Elliot Way  
Haverhill, MA 01830**

**QUARTERLY MEETING**

**Minutes  
Tuesday, June 27, 2017  
7:30 AM**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Joseph Bevilacqua, Christian Brennan, Eileen Burns, Ron Contrado, Beverly Donovan, Evelyn Friedman, Dr. Lane Glenn, Andrew Herlihy, Joselyn Marte, Peter Matthews, Carol Riemer, Karen Sawyer-Conard, Fred Shaheen, Ellen Weinhold, Bob Westcott, Cal Williams, Juan Yopez,

**MEMBERS ABSENT:**

Rosalin Acosta, Edward Bartkiewicz, Francisco Brea, Cesar Camargo, Atty. Wendy Estrella, Supt. Maureen Lynch, Rosa Muñoz, Michael Fiato, Jeff Linehan, Michael Munday, Ann Ormond, Marianne Paley-Nadel, Steve Salvo, Michael Strem, Kathryn Sweeney, Stanley Usovicz, Abel Vargas, Anita Worden

**GUESTS PRESENT:**

Dawn Beati, Michael Bevilacqua, Lisa Remington

**STAFF PRESENT:**

Rafael Abislaiman, Susan Almono, Brian Norris, Corina Ruiz

**1. Call to Order**

A quorum being present, Peter Matthews called the meeting to order at 7:45 a.m.

**2. Approval of Minutes of March 16, 2017**

Chairman Matthews asked for a motion on the minutes of the March 16, 2017 board meeting.

**Motion by Cal Williamns to approve the minutes of the March 16, 2017 meeting as submitted. Bob Westcott seconded the motion and motion passed unanimously.**

**4. Report of Chair**

Peter Matthews said that after being part of the City of Lawrence administration for more than forty years under one name or another, in less than a week we'll have a new ValleyWorks Career Center

operator, Northern Essex Community College, one of whose sites we're visiting today and whose staff member George Moriarty we are fortunate to have as today's keynote speaker.

We also have a new MA Secretary of Labor, Rosalin Acosta, who is resigning from the MVWIB in three days and who today is on Cape Cod taking the only vacation she'll have this summer. Rosalin sends her regrets and will visit us as Secretary when she gets her feet on the ground at the Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development.

We also have a relatively new Federal Administration in Washington that coincidentally has its own Labor Secretary named Acosta. But we have the better one because some folks in DC want to cut WIOA by another 21%. That's on top of the 14% WIOA formula fund cut we already have for incoming Fiscal Year 2018.

In any case, there are a lot of changes and the pace of change appears to be accelerating. In this fast-paced modern world, sometimes it's better to have time to reflect on how to improve rather than simply change things. NECC's career center proposal showed a lot of reflection on how to improve things and we'll have the opportunity today to listen to man who wrote it.

But you'll have to wait for George while I take this opportunity to outline a few things that the MVWIB, Northern Essex Community College and the staff at ValleyWorks will be dealing with in the years and decades to come. I'll be reviewing the hand-out whose first page is titled Projected State Population Growth by Age 2010-2035.

First, it's clear that the percentage of older people in the Massachusetts workforce will grow. Today's newborns, who'll be 18 in 2035, will be entering a workforce where one in three people will be close to 60 or older. On page 2 you see numbers indicating that the workforce will hopefully have many more Hispanic, Asian and Black members.

I say hopefully because it's clear that they and the foreign born are the demographically growing parts of the Massachusetts population. The number of white, non-Hispanic Massachusetts residents actually went down from 2000 to 2014. As seen on page 3, that change is even more pronounced in the Merrimack Valley. But it's increasingly unclear how many people will be working 18 years from now, and how many of them will have jobs worth having.

Most of the Commonwealth's population growth has been caused by an increase in the Hispanic population. Statewide, as seen on page 4, Hispanics now form 21% of the folks working in healthcare and 14% of those working in manufacturing. Those percentages are probably higher in our region and we'll try to get you those numbers soon.

Statewide numbers match MVWIB's emphasis on entry level healthcare and manufacturing training. But as seen on page 5, healthcare employment numbers are indeed growing while the number of people employed in manufacturing has gone down by almost a third from 2001 to 2015. The rate of manufacturing job decline has been about 10% slower in the Merrimack Valley and there's reason to hope that off-shoring jobs will remain on the ebb, and that more manufacturing jobs will return to this region. Automation is lowering the cost of labor so this region may again become a viable

manufacturing center. But as you'll see later in this presentation, it's not at all certain that manufacturing will need more people even if it again grows in this region.

As seen on page 6, a smaller percentage of white people now work in manufacturing while the number and percentage of Hispanic people working in it increased.

Page 7 shows that, apart from agriculture, which no longer has many jobs in the Merrimack Valley, health care and manufacturing employ the largest percentage of people with a high school diploma or less. Page 8 notes that that the share and number of manufacturing employees with a high school diploma or above has decreased, while the share and number of employees with less than a high school diploma remained steady.

In manufacturing that's likely due to the average employee age now being close to sixty. Under-educated people who stayed in manufacturing are well paid by today's standards. They developed lots of machine experience, often doing piece work, and have been able to make well above average money without much of an education. The future availability of those well-paying jobs remains to be seen but fewer are very likely to exist.

In health care, the steady number of lower educated workers is probably due to our greying population, cost-cutting, and the increasing number of jobs that pay barely more than minimum wage. There's a lot of churn in low level health care jobs and the people who hold them often change. But the number of low level workers remains steady.

Low wage jobs are on the rise. Although Massachusetts and Merrimack Valley unemployment rates are low, most of the jobs recently created don't pay as much as older manufacturing jobs. Jumping to page 10, we see that though higher education levels correlate with higher labor force participation rates, but, during the unemployment rates recent decline, labor force participation also declined in all categories except sub-high school.

This phenomenon may be related to the older, white population retiring and the younger working adult population being more minority and, unfortunately, less well-educated. But how will that dynamic change in the years and decades ahead?

Page 9 shows how we've yet to reach the pre-recession labor force participation rate. Unless the current administration in Washington succeeds at 'Making America Great Again', the labor force participation rate may be driven even lower.

Many of us are old enough to remember when there were a lot more office jobs. Now most of us now do our own typing and too many machines are answering phones. Because of increasingly sophisticated software, there's less and less need for a battery of accountants and book keepers. Page 11 shows how there are now more people experienced in office and administrative support than there are those types of jobs. To work in an office one increasingly needs STEM and IT skills.

And finally, the article from the Economist that's on the final page shows that some of those STEM and IT jobs may also be at-risk. The article is too long to read right now but please do when you get a chance. It states that current increases in robot density, and the number of such machines at

many workplaces is increasing, 'does not seem to raise employment among any group of workers'. That hasn't been the case historically.

In past times, new machines needed to be made by men and women working with other machines. In our time, machines can increasingly be programmed just once. We don't know when artificial intelligence will be sophisticated enough to program other computers and machines, but that's already in the realm of the possible.

It's not indicated in my charts but more men are employed in transportation, in driving buses, taxis, trucks, trains and planes, than in any other job sector. The change to robot driven vehicles is already on the horizon unless political decisions moderate that trend.

So we, members of the MVWIB, and especially future members of this and other like organizations, will be at the forefront of addressing issues that will probably be best dealt with through discussion, negotiation, and compromise alongside market forces.

The market will always try to make things cheaper, faster and better for more short and long-term financial returns. We involved in workforce development will need to highlight other types of non-financial returns. Apart from issues related to equity, we have a role as advocates for human opportunities and human well-being.

Sister Eileen asked to table discussion and questions after the Chairman's concluded his presentation. She said that his report covered a lot of information and that it is hard to absorb it all at once. The Board needs to become more active and participate more. Rafael said that is an excellent idea and reminded everyone that the MVWIB minutes are very detailed and the topics discussed can be brought back for subsequent discussion. Peter added that the best meetings have been the ones with lengthy discussions where everyone has a chance to give their opinion.

- ***Delegation of MVWIB Annual Plan to the Planning/Career Center Committee***

Peter said in the past the Board has delegated the Planning/Career Center Committee with the annual plan development and approval. He asked for a motion to approve delegating the MVWIB Annual Plan Development to the Planning/Career Center Committee.

**Motion by Joe Bevilacqua to approve delegating the MVWIB Annual Plan Development to the Planning/Career Center Committee. Joselyn Marte seconded the motion and motion passed unanimously.**

Sister Eileen said she's not clear what they voted on and asked who the Planning Committee members are. Juan Yepez, Planning/Career Center Committee chair said the members are Bob Wescott, Mike Munday, Ron Contrado, Abel Vargas, Andrew Herlihy, new member Karen Conard and Rosalin Acosta who resigned to become the Mass Secretary of Labor and Workforce Development.

Peter said the delegation to the planning committee has been done for several years. Rafael added that the performance plan numbers are given and the budget is developed. Our timing is driven by the State because allocations have been slowly issued, there is still no plan due date. The annual plan is ultimately approved by the CEO, the City of Lawrence Mayor. This has been done for the past

seven years without problems. Juan welcomed anyone who is interested in attending the next planning/career center committee meeting.

Bob Wescott said the committee should have more private members now that Rosalin Acosta is leaving. The planning committee receives a lot of information at its meetings and interacts with staff. He added that by being a planning member, he has learned more about the WIB.

- ***Presentation of Mary Kivell's Plaque***

Peter Matthews presented the board with a plaque in memory of Mary Kivell, MVWIB Executive Assistant, whose outstanding contributions made a great difference to the Merrimack Valley. We all loved her very much. Rafael added that a plaque will be given to Frank, Mary's husband and the other will be placed in the MVWIB conference room.

**Joe Bevilacqua made a motion to name the MVWIB conference room after Mary Kivell. Chairman Matthews had no objections. Motion seconded by Sister Eileen to name the MVWIB conference room the *Mary Kivell Conference Room*. Motion passed unanimously.**

## **5. NECC Executive Director, Center for Corporate & Community Education**

George Moriarty thanked the Board for giving him time to discuss career center transition.

Northern Essex Community College (NECC) decided to apply for to be the operator of the one-stop career center because we recognized the need to better align education and workforce development. As many reports have indicated, the jobs in our economy now and in the future will require workers with more advanced skills and educational attainment.

The college believes it can play an important role in creating a bridge between the educational community and workforce development. And what better way to test that proposition than to take on a leadership role with the region's one-stop career center.

George first noted the tremendous cooperation he has received from Rafael, Tracy, Varsha, Corina, Susan, and all of the WIB staff, as we have worked on the transition from the City to NECC.

He also highlighted the invaluable help received from Amy Weatherbee over the past few months. Amy has been a consummate professional, who has shared her wealth of knowledge and experience without hesitation and has helped sort out both large issues, and the details that need attention as we move towards the July 1<sup>st</sup> turnover.

There are a host of technical, regulatory, personnel, budgetary, and operational issues that NECC has been working through to prepare for the transition on July 1<sup>st</sup>. All of that has been made manageable by the assistance received from the WIB, from Amy, and the ValleyWorks staff. George shared that one good news is that city staff will retain their years of service as NECC employees.

In sorting out all of those issues, however, the over-riding commitment has been to ensure that we have a smooth, seamless transition without any disruption of services for job seekers and employers.

NECC's focus now and in the first few months of the new fiscal year will be to put in place all of the necessary personnel and financial management systems needed as the center transitions to the college's human resource and fiscal systems. In this regard, George has relied on Steve Fabbrucci, Vice President of Human Resources for NECC, who has been working closely with the City of Lawrence and with ValleyWorks.

The college's comptroller, Michelle Tremblay, has been working with Tracy and Varsha to align the budget and financial reporting requirements between the two systems. The college is confident that the personnel changes and the fiscal administration will be in place and functioning well as the transition moves forward.

George said that Amy Weatherbee resigned and NECC posted the director's position. A search committee was established to handle the process and make a recommendation regarding a new director for the center. The search committee has representatives from the business community, adult basic education and ESOL providers, DCS, MVWIB, NECC and a current one-stop career center director. The committee is a balanced, diverse, and knowledgeable group and the college is confident they committee will arrive at the best recommendation. The new director is expected to be on board by early August. In the meantime, the college will appoint an interim director to lead the center.

As mentioned previously, NECC's initial focus will be on a seamless transition from the current operator to the management of the one-stop career center by the college. Once a director is on board, the college will begin to roll out the strategic initiatives that will serve as a blueprint for the one-stop career center for the next four years.

George then highlighted a few of those strategic initiatives. NECC believes in strong, comprehensive customer needs assessments as the first step toward providing the services job seekers need to achieve their education and training goals. It is also the first step needed by our employer customers to achieve their workforce development goals. Therefore, NECC will review the current assessment protocols and expand and improve them where needed. There will be research on best practices from around the state and across the country to ensure that we use the most effective approaches to assess customer needs.

When it comes to business engagement, Valleyworks has always had a strong connection to local businesses. NECC wants to build on that strength to create deeper connections to the business community, especially with the core industries like – healthcare and manufacturing – that are the primary drivers of our economic health.

NECC wants to ensure that services to communities across the Merrimack Valley, ones that may not have been as engaged as we would like, are expanded. Some of these communities are Newburyport, Amesbury, and Merrimac who are important contributors to our region's economic strength.

Over time, NECC intends to expand the number of business service representatives, budget permitting, and explore creative ways to connect more effectively with employers. In keeping with the emphasis on employer engagement, NECC will work with local companies to address the skills gap that is a challenge for so many employers. NECC will implement a "hire first/train later"

approach. The hope is to take advantage of opportunities and resources that will allow companies to hire individuals who may not have the required skills but who can be trained to quickly to get the knowledge and skills needed to meet industry needs. There are resources such as the workforce training fund, on-the-job training models, and apprenticeship initiatives that offer real promise for better preparing the local workforce using the “hire first/train later” approach.

At the core of NECC’s strategic initiatives is the need to maintain services for job seekers and employers that are the best we can deliver. Customer satisfaction must be a guiding principle. The college will build on the customer satisfaction initiatives that are in place and look for ways to gain more feedback from our customers. That information will enable us to improve services where needed. George said that 2-3 weeks ago a secret shopper visited the center and shared information on the great service that was provided.

ValleyWorks benefits greatly from its partnerships. Whether it is with the adult basic education and ESOL providers, local employers, community based organizations or our partners at the state level. Work will continue with career center mandated partners, such as Mass Rehabilitation Commission, the Department of Transitional Assistance and the Department of Career Services. NECC ValleyWorks will also explore ways to engage other partners that offer services that align with and complement the services of the one-stop career center.

In closing, George emphasized that the goal is to build on the strength and legacy of ValleyWorks. Valleyworks has been an important and valuable asset for the Merrimack Valley. NECC will protect that asset and continue to build on it so that job seekers and employers can continue to receive the services they need.

Sister Eileen asked about staff benefits and George said that the credible years of service only applies to their retirement pension. ValleyWorks staff will receive sick, vacation and personal time buyout from the City of Lawrence and will start earning time starting July 1<sup>st</sup> depending on the union they will be in.

## **6. Reports of Committee Chairs**

Peter then called on Juan Yopez to give the Planning Committee report.

- ***Planning Committee***

Juan said the Planning Committee approved staff working with the Lawrence Partnership to have a “learn and earn” program using Summer Youth Works funds to provide subsidized employment to 20 Lawrence High School graduating seniors while area health employers simultaneously pay for Summer post-secondary education. The Lawrence Partnership is, in many ways, a NECC initiative. As far as we now know, there will be 16 youth going into CNA/HHA training at NECC and 4 into the medical assistant training offered at LARE. Our Youth Committee Chair will provide more information.

At this past quarter’s Planning meetings, new Labor Secretary Rosalin Acosta encouraged us to continue and expand work with non-profits that do workforce development. She believes that by combining resources and efforts we’ll be more effective, especially if we are having a hard time finding youth to enroll in job skills training programs.

Rosalin also asked how we recruited for Summer Youthworks. We responded by outlining how, out of the 229 youth we recruited, almost 100 of them are in CBO and public programs that separately employ youth with their own funds. This is a result of Mayor Rivera's emphasis on helping employers who separately provide youth with summer jobs using their own funds. The Mayor's plan was for employers to hire a youth and get an additional one from our Summer Youth Works program. With a few exceptions, private sector employers were not receptive to that. But we succeeded with non-profits because they hired youth for the summer. Under this partnership, we use the youth they separately hire as match while we pay for part of their summer workforce with Youthworks funds. We also prioritize private sector employers who hire youth permanently after the summer.

Separate partnership events include our fourth EPA grant for \$200,000. Working with non-profits and various training vendors, we have succeeded at three previous ones over the last five years. We trained people for entry level environmental remediation jobs. Although our three previous EPA initiatives were good efforts when unemployment was three times as high as it is today, there were issues. Environmental work of the type we were training for normally doesn't result in permanent jobs. Too many remediation jobs are under temp contracts or seasonal. Some are too close to minimum wage.

So we changed our focus to heavy equipment operator and CDL training. We are calling it a second rung training program and are focusing more on driving hazmat tanker trucks, garbage trucks, etc. at hazardous waste sites and elsewhere. This EPA program will follow-up on the successful equipment operator training program that Susan Almono and Matthias Bohler work on. It's been funded by Commonwealth Corporation. We have been working with the Teamsters Union to get this done over the past three years. Bob Wescott and Ron Contrado, Planning Committee members, state that they'll help us develop a relationship with Clean Harbors and see if they'll hire a few of the folks trained.

This past quarter, I attended a couple of State WIB events as MVWIB Planning Committee Chair. Prior to the events, I wasn't aware that WIB Executive Directors meet on the first Monday of every month. There they discuss things like career center partners working together with career centers and about WIB super regions that may be part of an effort to consolidate Massachusetts' 16 WIBs into 7. But the State is silent about if and when consolidation may happen. Many people think super region planning is a step in that direction. WIBs nationwide are going through super region planning and a consultant has been hired to lead that effort in Massachusetts.

At the State WIB conference in North Adams, there was talk about branding and how the State is looking to rename career centers and redesign their website and logo. The branding presentation received mixed reviews from MVWIB attendees. Susan Almono and I found it interesting but Sister Eileen and Rafael thought it was an expensive initiative of doubtful value. When we discussed it at the Planning Committee, members discussed how difficult is it to navigate the State workforce development website and how making web links easier to find would be useful. The State doesn't need re-branding for that.

At the State conference, there was also much discussion about WIOA funding reductions. Our WIB is doing ok because we apply for additional funding but not all do as much grant proposal writing as we do. For example, MVWIB Deputy Director and fund development coordinator Susan recently wrote a successful corrections-related proposal.

The MVWIB recently received a \$25,000 WCTF planning grant from Commonwealth Corporation to design training for Latino ex-offenders for Laborer jobs. There were eighteen proposals submitted and the MVWIB was one of two that were chosen. Four of the proposals submitted were from Lawrence, MA. After the planning period, this grant will ultimately provide \$250,000. We will work with the Sheriff's Department and with the Lawrence probation office to help people who are on probation find employment.

MVWIB applies for many of non-formula or non-automatic grants. DCS has recently gone through extensive federal monitoring that has delayed the release of some of those funds to the MVWIB. Some say that staffing changes at Federal and State levels is delaying the release of funds. But what is happening is not clear.

What is clear is that we will be in for a difficult funding year. Apart from a known 14% WIOA budget cut for this region, future, even deeper rescissions are possible. We will also have more responsibilities. For example, in the new fiscal year, WIBs will be responsible for career center operational monitoring that has historically been handled by the State. There won't be more regional funding to facilitate that.

Unless there are questions, that concludes my presentation.

- ***Youth Committee***

Youth Council Chair Cal Williams said that in the past months, youth committee members provided support to the region's Youth programming. Our youth programs: AMP It Up!, BOG, Connecting Activities, CA STEM, WIOA, YouthWorks Year Round and Summer, are assisting area young adults via ITAs and group training, with career exploration and guidance. We provide continued support for educational attainment and opportunities for skills training in in-demand industries that culminate with jobs along a career pathway or in enrollment in post-secondary education.

Since the beginning of April our YouthWorks staff have been recruiting youth and employers for the 2017 YouthWorks Summer Jobs program. Our primary goal is to provide good subsidized summer employment for at least 229 eligible youth between the ages of 14 and 21. This number is down from previous years because there is less funding and the minimum wage went up to \$11/hr. Our second priority is to enhance enrolled young people's job-related skills by training them on the Signal Success curriculum. Enhanced job readiness training workshops and on-going job coaching by employers and program staff will help youth build critical job skills. Our goal is to help prepare youth to find and keep unsubsidized jobs in the future.

The third program goal is to reinforce the connection between academic achievement and a successful future. All participants are encouraged to attain their high school diplomas or to take the High School Equivalency Exam and pursue secondary education or training as well as unsubsidized jobs. For more information about the program or if you would like to host a youth, please contact Cristy Gomez at the MVWIB.

The Connecting Activities STEM initiative, conducted in partnership with Haverhill High School and Greater Lawrence Technical School, provided enrolled students from their Healthcare programs, with

career exploration / immersion experiences that facilitated greater understanding of education and work opportunities. It helps students excel in the healthcare industry. As this program ends June 30<sup>th</sup>, we would like to thank our partner schools for their commitment to this project.

We are working with the Lawrence Partnership on a Health Care Pilot Program for Lawrence High School graduating seniors. Graduating seniors have the opportunity to train as Certified Nurse Assistants or Medical Assistants. The trainings will be fully paid by the employer partners and the MVWIB YouthWorks Summer program will subsidize a work component to reinforce student learning.

The participating employer partners are Greater Lawrence Family Health Center, Pentucket Medical, Holy Family Hospital, Lawrence General Hospital, Mary Immaculate Health Care Services and Home Health Foundation. CNA/HHA training will be provided by NECC and the Medical Assisting (MA) by American Training - LARE. Upon completion of the training program, employers are committing to hiring the candidates for a year. There are currently 14 students enrolled in the program.

Cal concluded by thanking the VWCC and MVWIB staff for their tremendous job. He also suggested that Cristy spells out the acronyms in the reports moving forward for better understanding.

- ***Nominating Committee***

There was no nomination of officers or nominating report for this meeting.

- ***Finance Report***

Treasurer Bob Westcott said that spending is on schedule. We will be making vacation and sick-day payouts to staff leaving City of Lawrence employment to become NECC employees.

## **7. Report of Executive Director**

Rafael said a couple of things have come up recently that indicate there will be a financial crunch for the next 4-8 years. Some issues will improve and others may make the workforce development situation worse. We clearly need improvements. The degree and the type of improvement needed is the question. Recently in Massachusetts there was a 400 million dollar drop in tax revenues. That is only 1% of the 40 billion annual budget but it is troubling when we're almost at full employment. Reduced employment is likely to have a huge impact. Automation means that there will be less work for people. Money can go anywhere and people are going to need negotiate political decisions to promote human work and local financial expenditure. Our region must promote that everybody able to have work, that they learn and that they aspire to climb.

Rafael expressed that having to help the people with the most barriers is an impediment to poor people with fewer barrier who are also poor. By definition, if you only work to help the hardest to serve people, you spend money with little or no return. There are an increasing number of poor people and if we focus on the hardest to serve, poor people who could move up with a little help stay stuck in poverty.

A lot of the poverty is stratified by race. We don't want to create a system where it is assumed that Hispanics or African Americans are naturally needy because they aren't. It's our social construct that that perpetuates that perception and much supposed need. There is only a finite amount of money and in his perspective, we should help poor and low-income people who can help themselves move

forward. Rafael welcomed comments from anyone who do not agree with his point of view because he may be incorrect in his analysis.

The MVWIB took assumptions believed state and nation wide and challenged them. The idea that a youth programs should help primarily delinquent youth was changed. Seven years ago, Summer YouthWorks was an anti-crime program. That was changed to include all poor and low income youth and the change was worth making. There are other things that should be changed and we are making headway on them. The MVWIB is headed in the right direction and NECC will help us move forward in a direction of fairness and equity but also in the direction of real returns for taxpayer dollars. Susan added that those customers not ready for training are being referred to the appropriate partner that can assist them, whether it's education, ABE ESOL, SNAP/TANF or any need that is keeping them from advancing.

Peter said that Rafael's point has been discussed in the past and that as a financial institution, it is hard to hire an ex-offender. The credit union has one position where he can hire an ex-offender. For all the other positions, if it hires and ex-offender the credit union cannot get bonded. However, recently the credit union was able to hire an ex-offender in the position they have in maintenance who's been there for a month. Peter is very happy they have him. We can't spend 100% of our money on people with all the barriers but on a case-by-case basis we can help them.

Andrew suggested having the Sherriff at our next meeting. Rafael said two years ago, the MVWIB decided to apply for a large federal grant to serve incarcerated men and at the last minute had to change it to incarcerated women because Sherriff Cousins indicated that the recidivism rate at the Lawrence farm was over 70% for men and the grant was looking to reduce the recidivism rate to no more than 30%. The recidivism rate for women was only about 36% at the time.

## **8. Other Business**

Chris Brennan introduced himself and said better union jobs can be found by building relations with partners. There are agencies beating higher employment costs by hiring immigrant workers who are not giving back to the community but sending remissions overseas. Union members give back to the community and pay taxes and unions are able and willing to adjust rates. People tend to pushback when they are requested to hire union workers and that attitude has to change. Chairman Matthews welcomed Chris as a new member to the board and told him he's in the right place to make those arguments.

Juan expressed how happy he is about how Amy has handled her pending departure and how active she's been to make sure everything is left in order before she leaves.

## **9. Adjournment**

**Having no further business Fred Shaheen made a motion to adjourn and Beverly Donovan seconded the motion. Motion passed and meeting was adjourned.**

Respectfully submitted,

*Corina Ruiz*

Recorder