



NECC El Hefni Technology Center
414 Common Street – Room LC301
Lawrence, MA 01840

ANNUAL MEETING

Minutes
Tuesday, October 25, 2016
7:30 AM

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Rosalin Acosta, Francisco Brea, Joseph Bevilacqua, Sr. Eileen Burns, Ron Contrado, Dennis DiZoglio, Michael Fiato, Evelyn Friedman, Dr. Lane Glenn, Andrew Herlihy, Supt. John Lavoie, Jeff Linehan, Michael Munday, Rosa Lopez, Joselyn Marte, Peter Matthews, Rosa Muñoz, Ann Ormond, Marianne Paley-Nadel, Carol Riemer, Fred Shaheen, Abel Vargas, Bob Westcott, Cal Williams, Anita Worden, Juan Yopez

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Edward Bartkiewicz, Rachel Concepcion, Brian DePena, Atty. Wendy Estrella, Susan Jepson, Supt. Maureen Lynch, Donna Rivera, Steve Salvo, Michael Strem, Kathryn Sweeney, Stanley Usovicz

GUESTS PRESENT:

Mayor Daniel Rivera, Senator Barbara L'Italien, Higher Ed Commissioner Carlos Santiago, Michael Mizzoni, the Commissioner's aide, Angela Vincent, Senator L'Italien aide, Amy Weatherbee, Michael Bevilacqua,

STAFF PRESENT:

Rafael Abislaiman, Susan Almono, Mary Kivell, Corina Ruiz

1. Call to Order

A quorum being present, Peter Matthews called the meeting to order at 7:35 a.m.

2. Approval of Minutes of June 28, 2016

Chairman Matthews asked for a motion on the minutes of the June 28, 2016 quarterly board meeting.

Motion by Ellen Weinhold to approve the minutes of the June 28, 2016 meeting as submitted. Bob Westcott seconded the motion and motion passed unanimously.

4. Report of Chair

Peter Matthews said that he was using the annual meeting to list the purposes of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. This list can be found in WIOA's purposes section that starts on House Register page 803-4. They are as follow:

"1) to increase, for individuals in the United States, particularly those individuals with barriers to employment, access to and opportunities for the employment, education, training, and support services they need to succeed in the labor market."

Peter said that we all know that there are many inner-city people and others in the Merrimack Valley who have barriers to employment. They benefit and could benefit from workforce development services. He mentioned that there are many different types of barriers to employment. Please note that purpose number one doesn't state that the individuals we are to serve necessarily have the highest or most problematic barriers. Instead it states that they have barriers we can address by helping them gain the know-how and job access they need to succeed as workers.

"2) To support the alignment of workforce investment, education, and economic development systems in support of a comprehensive, accessible, and high-quality workforce development system in the United States."

We try to do this at the MVWIB Planning Committee, at our Executive Committee and here at our quarterly meeting. That is why we are honored to have the Massachusetts Commissioner of Higher Education, Carlos Santiago, join us today. We should also note that this section refers to our alignment with education and economic development systems. The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act itself has three titles that deal specifically with different workforce development systems, that's Title I, which we work under, Title II, the one that adult basic and remedial education agencies work under and Title III, that in Massachusetts is implemented by State Department of Career Services staff. DCS strives to help both unemployed people and employers in Massachusetts.

The Act aligns us with education and economic development systems with the purpose of improving the public sector's contribution to workforce development. It also expects work towards the same purposes by the entities operating under the three Acts. But what the three entities are to do is not enumerated as the same type of work. They are instead listed as being different work activities that are aligned to help reach common goals.

"3) To improve the quality and labor market relevance of workforce investment, education, and economic development efforts to provide America's workers with the skills and credentials necessary to secure and advance in employment with family-sustaining wages and to provide America's employers with the skilled workers the employers need to succeed in a global economy."

Peter said that this is an important statement. Our system intends to add value to what the labor market already does. The market sets family sustaining wages. What is a family sustaining wage here in the Merrimack Valley is different from that number in the City of Boston or in Western Massachusetts and so on. We're trying to help our unemployed and underemployed customers come up to family sustaining wages within our regional job market. Although minimum wage may be a

step toward family sustaining wages, we are not primarily interested in putting people in minimum wage jobs because they do not offer family sustaining wages in our region.

A person working at \$15 per hour for forty hours a week, 52 weeks a year earns \$31,200. Our Career Center customers' average wage is a bit over \$17 per hour or about \$36,000 so we're doing a bit better. We do not know the exact wage where employers avoid having a revolving door of employees coming and going in particular jobs. We can imagine some employers trying to keep employees close to minimum wage as long as possible but we know that most good employers want to keep people in jobs that are hard to fill and we generally want to work with those employers. We want to work with employers who need to fill hard to fill jobs. Really, only our youth customers are well-placed near minimum wage because they thus get the experience needed for better jobs.

"4) To promote improvement in the structure of and delivery of services through the United States workforce development system to better address the employment and skill needs of workers, jobseekers, and employers."

Peter said that this statement is worth stressing. It states that WIOA tasks us to help incumbent workers as well as jobseekers and employers. That help may mean more than us helping incumbent workers get better jobs. Workers and employers pay taxes. People who pay taxes do not want their money to be miss-spent. Workers and employers want us to help responsible people who can take advice and make good use of education and training.

We all make mistakes in our lives and more and more of us are losing jobs through global competition and automation than through any fault of ours. The global economy includes gross labor exploitation and the maximization of capital returns without regard to patriotism or the environment. With the world being what it is and is becoming, we must be ever more careful to ensure that we are spending our resources to put our unemployed fellow neighbors on work ladders where they'll ultimately take on some of the tax load that workers and employers carry.

"5) To increase the prosperity of workers and employers in the United States, the economic growth of communities, regions, and States, and the global competitiveness of the United States."

Peter said that this point reinforces the previous one. At least part of WIOA is about increasing prosperity, economic growth and global competitiveness in the United States. As a board that is 51% comprised of private sector employers, we must remember this. Global competitiveness is driven by the global market and we must work in tandem with market forces.

Peter then stated that finally, there is number six in the things we and the State Board are here to do under WIOA.

"6) To provide workforce investment activities, through statewide and local workforce development systems, that increase the employment, retention, and earnings of participants, and increase attainment of recognized postsecondary credentials by participants, and as a result, improve the quality of the workforce, reduce welfare dependency, increase economic self-sufficiency, meet the skill requirements of employers, and enhance the productivity and competitiveness of the Nation."

We've put out a Request for Proposal for career center operator services in cooperation with the City of Lawrence because WIOA obliges us to do so. With it we hope to help achieve the WIOA purposes listed in clause 6.

In Section 121 at HR 803-57, that is entitled ESTABLISHMENT OF ONE-STOP DELIVERY SYSTEMS, it states

“(a) IN GENERAL.—Consistent with an approved State plan, the local board for a local area, with the agreement of the chief elected official for the local area, shall-

- (1) Develop and enter into the memorandum of understanding described in subsection (c) with one-stop partners;
- (2) Designate or certify one-stop operators under subsection (d); and
- (3) Conduct oversight with respect to the one-stop delivery system in the local area.

(b) ONE-STOP PARTNERS.-

REQUIRED PARTNERS are defined as providing “access through the one-stop delivery system to such program or activities carried out by the entity, including making the career services described in section 134(c) (2) that are applicable to the program or activities available at the one-stop centers” that also “use a portion of the funds available for the program and activities to maintain the one-stop delivery system, including payment of the infrastructure costs of one-stop centers”.

We've entered in a required provisional contract with required partners and, alongside the MVWIB Executive Committee and Planning Committee, they were involved in the development of the Career Center Operator RFP that the City of Lawrence issued last week. They will also be involved in proposal reviews alongside the Executive Committee.

All Career Center Partners are representatives of other public sector entities. To make the proposal review committee majority private sector, we are looking for three additional private sector employers to join the Executive Committee as members of the review committee. Peter said to please speak to him, Secretary Ann Ormond or Ralph if you are interested in participating in the Career Center Proposal Review Committee.

Although there is clearly a social service in what we do, it is not the type of social service that helps unemployed people with barriers get more at ease in their status or position. We're all about increasing our competitiveness, employment, retention, and earnings and about helping educators and students “increase attainment of recognized postsecondary credentials”. We're here to help individuals and businesses “enhance the productivity and competitiveness of the Nation” in the global marketplace. That implies helping people aspire and work to overcome barriers.

5. Presentation: Carlos Santiago, Commissioner of Higher Education for Massachusetts

Northern Essex Community College President Lane Glenn welcomed board members and those who have not previously been to the El Hefni Technology Center. He said that they have three thousand students at the Center and that it is the crown jewel of the Lawrence campus.

President Glenn said that it is a pleasure to introduce Massachusetts Commissioner of Higher Education Carolos Santiago who was appointed by Governor Baker in 2015. He brings over thirty years of experience in public education. He was Chancellor of the University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee and also served as provost and chief operating officer at the University of Albany (SUNY). He also holds a Ph.D. in economics from Cornell University. Commissioner Santiago has also been named one of the one hundred of the most influential US Hispanics by Hispanic Business magazine.

Commissioner Santiago said what a gem Northern Essex is in Lawrence led by one of the stellar community college presidents. He said that he is proud to work with him. He said that he is in the process of visiting each public college campus and having conversations with businesses in the state.

His presentation is titled The Degree Gap – Closing the Degree Gap to Meet Workforce Need. He stated that Massachusetts is a knowledge based economy with the most educated workforce but the demographics are changing and we are facing a massive number of retirements (650,000) of the most educated component of our workforce. The success of Massachusetts' Innovation Economy depends on having the most educated population in the nation. There are enrollment challenges and demographic changes and we need to hone in on new strategies to build the skilled workforce. We have seen the third year of undergraduate enrollment decline in the last ten years for both community and state colleges. There is also a decline in public high school graduates of 5% or more in the northeast. Latinos are the only group expected to increase significantly in number.

Commissioner Santiago spoke about the gaps in educational attainment for Latinos and said that we need to raise the completion rates for all students. There are degree shortages and by 2022, the overall rate at which young residents earn college degrees will pivot from growth to decline unless public higher education can raise completion rates for all students. He noted that in New York and Wisconsin there is one appointed board for all campuses. In Massachusetts each college has their own board and because they are decentralized the system moves slower.

The Commissioner spoke about the importance of community colleges and degree qualifications. He said that remediation costs often drive students to drop out and said that there should be a push to integrate remediation into courses. He said if there were no gaps in college completion in public higher education, the Commonwealth would realize about \$25m per year in additional revenue and savings and if there were no caps in HS completion, college enrollment and college completion, the Commonwealth would realize approximately \$50 million per year in additional revenue and savings.

He said that an example of tension impacting higher education is lifelong learning. When you ask employers what they want in an employee they say the ability to think critically and write well. Campuses and businesses are speaking the same language. Other areas are health care funding and public education funding. Folks thought that the advent of technology would do away with the bricks and mortar education but that didn't happen. Commissioner Santiago said that we need to work with students at a younger age with dual enrollments and courses for juniors and seniors in high school. We need to be creative with how to engage students. There are issues with student hunger and homelessness and all the community colleges have food pantries as well as a number of part-time students who are working full time jobs.

There are three things we are honing in on going forward - improving college access and affordability; closing the achievement gaps; and raising college completion rates. We are looking for the 28 undergraduate college campuses to unite behind the Commonwealth Commitment plan. This is a first system-level plan to tie affordability and completion strategies launching fall 2016 & 2017. Students will be able to choose from dozens of MassTransfer "A2B" degree programs. We are also looking to scale up best practices.

Sr. Eileen said that there is a need to strengthen educational alignments to help people transition to college. Students are often ready to transition but there aren't sufficient support programs. She said that there needs to be more feeders to the college system especially in Lawrence. The Commissioner responded that non-profits often do that better and they merit support.

Bob Westcott wondered how long we are going to be able to avoid year-long school. The Commissioner said that there is a lot of forgetting time and getting college math courses in junior and senior years helps with placement exams. Cal wondered if there is any funding to close the gap in early childhood education. Commissioner Santiago said that early childhood educators are underpaid and they are looking at converting competency criteria into credentials and degrees in early childhood education.

The Commissioner said that there is a STEM Starter Academy (SSA) to boost STEM interest and degree completion in the 15 MA community colleges. SSA students are completing remedial math and enrolling in college-level math at higher rates than the general population. He also spoke about the 100 Males to College pilot program in Springfield and Framingham. They teamed-up with UMass Amherst. Westfield State, Springfield Tech CC & Framingham State and Mass Bay CC are soon to follow. There are overnight visits to campuses, dual enrollment classes and mentors. The results are that 100% of Springfield seniors are graduating high school; 96% going to college and 100% of Framingham seniors are going to college. Lane Glenn said that the 100 Males to Colleges from Lawrence High and Greater Lawrence Tech will connect with a University in the Dominican Republic.

Senator Barbara L'Italien spoke about the graduation rate from community colleges and said that private companies are helping with the accuplacer test. She said that some students take six years to complete and there is inflexibility in the requirements in public education when it takes six years to earn an associate degree. She spoke of her son who struggles with one subject but is able to handle others and the fact that there is a whole generation of kids who are in a cycle of continued college attendance without graduating. She said that there should be an effort to play to their strengths.

The Commissioner said that the 100 Males to College is the most sought after program. One issue they are working on is transferring credits from one institution to another. They are also moving away from the accuplacer test and using a high school cumulative GPA of 2.7 or higher with students succeeding at the same rate as accuplacer.

Rosalin said she would like to commend President Glenn and Commissioner Santiago for trying so hard. They are exploring many things that we can do. The Commissioner said that other States look to Massachusetts as the example of excellent higher education. We may be behind in funding but in terms of practice we are looked at as the education state.

Marianne Paley-Nadel mentioned that UI is going down and so is college enrollment. What innovative things can we do to bolster it? The Commissioner said that sometimes class schedules don't work and should be modified. Higher education is also looking to allow college credits transfers from one institution to another credit.

The Mayor said that he is glad to have had this conversation. President Glenn is a great leader. We need to look at how to get the immigrant community into higher education. The interchange with Universities in the Dominican Republic is a great idea. Some folks come with a degree and cannot get good paying jobs. He then mentioned the Urban Policing Center in Lawrence as an effort of Northern Essex Community College. The Commissioner supports conversation around police education.

Lane Glenn spoke about NECC working with Linden State, a public out-of-state 4-year college, to set up shop in Lawrence. That was difficult for some in Massachusetts to accept but MA 4-year colleges didn't prioritize being in Lawrence. All issues mentioned require thinking out of the box. The Mayor said that we shouldn't forget that we are competing with private higher education schools in MA.

Francisco Brea said it is good to hear the Commissioner's experience and to better understand the value of higher education. The Commissioner mentioned that we need to strengthen links with the Dominican Republic. He mentioned that Puerto Rico is experiencing higher rates of immigration since the 1950s which has implications for the southeast of the country. Evelyn Friedman said that in addition to college readiness many children experience a transition gap that needs to be discussed. Mike Fiato mentioned that he is working with NECC on dual enrollment.

Mayor Rivera said that the community college has seen a downtick in enrollment but still has the same overhead he said that perhaps we could slip some high school students into those slots. The Commissioner also said that they can have classes on the high school campus as well.

6. Reports of Committee Chairs

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

- ***Planning Committee***

Planning Committee Chairman Juan Yopez reported that this past quarter, the Planning Committee focused on discussions related to our move to a new downtown site and on discussions related to the Career Center RFP. Many of the items specific to our regional RFP requirements were discussed at the Planning Committee when Peter Matthews was its Chair and, more recently, with him as Chair.

Juan said that the Planning Committee created eligibility criteria for WIA and WIOA funded training. Apart from the majority passed motions documented in our minutes, those criteria were also outlined in our 2012 to 2016 Strategic Plan. The criteria's hallmark is that training eligibility is tied to unemployment levels. When unemployment is high we train better educated people with Dislocated Worker and Adult category funds so that those better prepared people can more quickly get trained, get jobs and start paying taxes to support our and every other U.S. system. When unemployment is low we focus on less educated people, educated defined as having at least 9th grade-level academic skills, because when there's low unemployment most of those 9th grade plus folks have jobs and employers will hire less prepared but reliable and hardworking people to fill their openings.

Our youth category is treated a little differently than the Dislocated and Adult categories because with Youth we're often talking about helping people choose to stay in high school. We wanted to discourage the view that our system is an alternative to finishing high school or to obtaining a GED/HiSet from our WIOA Title II partners. But WIOA increased the youth eligibility age to 24, and we may find that we need to lower our academic requirements for 23 and 24 year olds that cannot enroll in area public high schools.

Although we have not removed our high school diploma or GED/HiSet requirement for Individual Training Account youth selection, we recently lowered our academic criteria for a youth group training program. It's teaching electronic assembly. Low income youth without a high school diploma, or low income youth with a high school diploma performing at the sixth grade level or above, can both enroll in that youth program. Please note that we only choose low income youth for all of our ITAs. We are prioritizing amongst low income youth when we choose to enforce the high school diploma or GED/HiSet criteria. Many of those kids still have academic remediation issues and many would benefit from learning a job skill.

Juan continued stating that another recent change that occurred this past quarter was the Planning Committee volunteering to serve also as the MVWIB Career Center Committee. A Career Center Committee is mandated under WIOA. It makes sense for the Planning Committee to serve in that role because many of our Planning Committee discussions focus on Career Center performance.

Juan said that if any MVWIB private sector member is interested in serving on the Planning Committee, please let Peter Matthews, Rafael Abislaiman or him, know. Because of our increasing workload, we are looking to populate the committee with additional board members. As was announced at the last Quarterly meeting, Planning Committee member Dennis DiZoglio is retiring so we will also be looking for another public sector regional planner to fill his spot.

Juan said that we now expect to move into our new 255 Essex Street site at the end of December or towards the end of January. Members received draft CAD drawings of our soon to be site and the specific move date will depend on contractor progress. Contractors are now ordering customized manufactured products like heating and cooling system coils and a few other items. Our new building is sound. The city has so far replaced the roof, upgraded elevators, knocked down and built walls, installed a ramp for wheel chair accessibility and installed two ADA accessible bathrooms.

Juan continued stating that the MVWIB and Career Center staff will occupy about 20,000 sq. ft. or about as much as we currently use. Lawrence Public School Administration and the Lawrence Family Resource Center will be our neighbor at the 237 Essex Street side of the building. They'll have about 25,000 ft. Like most Career Centers in Massachusetts, ours won't have its own parking lot so most customers will either park at municipal garages or on the street. The City has committed to adding two handicap parking spaces at lots immediately adjacent to our site and Massachusetts residents with handicap plates/placards can park in any spot and not be ticketed. Rental payments will be discounted to cover the holdover costs incurred on our current lease. All such costs will be documented by the WIB and Career Center and discounted from our first months' license payments. A copy of the holdover agreement was included in your meeting packet.

As a result of our move, downtown economic activity will be stimulated. It will also be easier for many Career Center customers to access the Career Center because many of our repeat career center customers reside in North Lawrence. Because our current landlord did not submit the lowest bid, we would have had to move from our current site in any case. Our current landlord bid \$14.50 a square foot and the least costly bidder charged \$12.65. The city will be charging approximately \$11.92 per square foot with utilities included at 255 Essex Street. Juan said that in sum, after more than forty years of municipal and state staff paying rent to private sector landlords, Lawrence municipal staff will now be in a municipal building, the new Lawrence City Hall annex.

- ***Youth Committee***

Youth Council Chair Cal Williams said that our 2016 Summer Youthworks Employment program went very well. Commonwealth Corporation YouthWorks funding, provided by Massachusetts tax-payers, allowed us to provide 268 youth with jobs at \$10 per hour for about 30 hours a week for 6 weeks. The Lawrence Mayor's Youth Initiative provided an additional 70 or so youth with other, separate, partner funding. The Mayor's Initiative makes it possible for area for profit and non-profit partners to receive additional youth if they separately employ unsubsidized youth. The initiative reflects Mayor Rivera's goal of increasing youth employment and of providing the work experience youth need to later find and keep full-time unsubsidized jobs.

Cal reported that 273 of the 278 youth who started our program successfully completed the required 15 hours of comprehensive career readiness and exploration workshops and 268 of the Youth who completed the required workshops were job matched - 178 from Lawrence, 68 from Haverhill and 22 from Methuen. As always, that number split follows Commonwealth Corporation's job distribution formulas. He said that Youth also received Financial Literacy training as part of the 15 hours of workshops and then we helped 230 youth open bank accounts in partnership with NESB. We more than met our general enrollment goal and met 75% of our at-risk youth goal so only about 15% of enrolled youth were not only low income but also court involved.

Business Service Representatives reached out to over 85 employers within the Merrimack Valley area. Youth were placed in 68 employer worksites, some of our new employer partners are Sueños Basketball, US Taekwondo Academy, Top-Notch Scholars, the Phoenix Academy and Lawrence General Hospital. Our program also received positive media attention in the Eagle Tribune. One of their articles featured our kids at the Essex Art Center & Food for the World partnership. Our Summer Youth program staff recruited, trained, job placed and paid the salaries of youth who assisted the Mural Painter in his creation of a mural that honors Food for the World and its founder.

Anne Berrigan, Commonwealth Corporation, Youth Employment Initiatives Program Director, monitored our program and wrote a very nice note which reads as follows, "Thank you for providing a great site visit yesterday! We were impressed with the young people we met and the employer partners involved in your program. Lawrence is fortunate to have you working on behalf of teens and young adults." Cal congratulated staff on a job well done.

Cal then said that we continue to have recruitment problems for WIOA youth training. The new eligible age increase is starting to help us recruit youth who are up to 24 years old but the vendor we selected to provide group youth training, LARE/ American Training, had enrolled only two youth at the end of September. That group training activity waived the MVWIB high school diploma and

GED/HiSet training requirement and lowered the minimum academic level of the youth that can be enrolled to a little below the sixth grade level. It was created to cast a wider net for youth training enrollment. We're working with LARE to substantially increase the number before the end of November.

- ***Nominating Committee***

Nominating Committee Chair Ann Ormond presented the following slate of officers for the coming year: Peter Matthews, Chair; Juan Yepez, Vice Chair; Bob Westcott, Treasurer; and Ann Ormond, Clerk.

Evelyn Friedman made a motion to approve the election of Peter Matthews, Chair; Juan Yepez, Vice Chair; Bob Westcott, Treasurer; and Ann Ormond, Clerk. Marianne Paley-Nadel seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

- ***Finance Report***

Treasurer Bob Westcott said that we have a very good accounting system. He did say he wondered about the OJT funding and asked Amy if she could explain that. Amy Weatherbee said that unfortunately the budget doesn't show the plan. We have one OJT for dislocated workers and if there is potential more activity we can move dollars from training to OJT.

Bob mentioned that the city has been very fair, if not generous, to credit us the cost for the over stay on our current lease and for making the space to meet our needs. We save and the city saves money and the facility of our design. There will be quite a lot of charges once we commence the move but those funds have been budgeted.

7. Report of Executive Director

Rafael said he would like to thank Mayor Rivera for attending today's meeting. He also thanked the WIB staff for working hard and the new career center director Amy Weatherbee who had taken over for Arthur Chilingirian who has retired. The state is deciding who should be on the career center RFP review team. They propose a number of public sector partners such as DTA, MassRehab, Higher Ed, DMH, and other public sector entities. We will invite all of them to participate in this region but we will have at least 51% of the reviewers be from the private sector. We are dealing with adding public sector value to workforce development, that development is fundamentally a private sector role when dealing with adults. We are also lucky to have Francisco Brea from labor as a board member.

Rafael said that he attended a meeting with Commonwealth Corporation at the Greater Lawrence Technical High School and he and Supt. Lavoie were impressed with their presentation on a product to teach soft skills. Superintendent Lavoie said that he was very impressed with the curriculum and program and is looking to adopt it next year. The program addresses specific careers and needs. The Superintendent said that that soft skills are more important than technical skills and he would encourage everyone to look at this program. Mike Fiato also said that he would like to set up a meeting in the future to look into this program.

Rafael said that the Commissioner noted that there would be \$40-\$50m in savings if more students graduated from high school and college but that is about 1% of the state budget and seems extraordinarily low. Clearly something should be done with health care training and cost

containment. We have a proposal into US DOL and hope it will provide additional funding for college kids interested in health care.

Rafael said that the next thing on the horizon is the career center RFP. We are also seeking proposals for a telecom system for our new downtown site. There will be charges for the moving and furnishings and we have budgeted \$100,000 but the costs may be higher.

Andy Herlihy said that he wanted to mention that he would like the board to have a discussion on the Haverhill Career Center and take a look at moving its presence. He said that this is a conversation that we need to have as a board after the dust settles on the current RFP.

Mayor Rivera said that we went through a good process to move the career center in Lawrence and it will be a win/win to accommodate clients and staff. We are going in the right direction. UI is its lowest since 2005 with larger numbers of folks employed. He mentioned that Polartec and Lawrence Pump are leaving but he said that the business park is leasing space and the Everett Mill has a new company with 100 employees. We will increase the number of employers on the board.

Francisco Brea mentioned that Rapid Response is working with them for jobs or training with trade adjustment assistance. The Mayor mentioned that Polartec is a great site and he feels that the companies which are leaving is the tail end of industries going south.

Northern Essex President Lane Glenn said that he is involved with the Lawrence Partnership initiative and thanked those who participated in their employer survey. He said they would be having their annual meeting on November 17th and they are looking to do three things. The first is a proposal for a mechatronics program, the second is a health care bilingual medical assistant program and third a customer services/sales program.

8. Other Business

There was no other business.

9. Adjournment

Having no further business Francisco Brea made a motion to adjourn and Ron Contrado seconded the motion. Motion passed and meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Mary Kivell
Recorder