



EMPLOY MILWAUKEE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

March 11, 2025 – 1:00 PM

Employ Milwaukee – 2342 N. 27th Street, Milwaukee, WI 53210

Via Video Conference (MS Teams)

APPROVED MINUTES

Members Present: Carla Cross (Chair), Andres Gonzalez, Mark Kessenich, Julie Cayo

Members Absent: Edgard Delgado

Employ Milwaukee Staff Present: Annemarie Probst, Brenda King

Guests Present: Alec Fischer

1. Call to Order

Chair Carla Cross called the meeting to order at 1:03 p.m.

2. Minutes

Andres Gonzalez motioned for approval of December 5, 2024, minutes. Mark Kessenich seconded. The minutes were approved unanimously.

3. Interim CEO and CFO Update

Julie Cayo informed the committee of new grants received.

Grant and Program Updates

US Department of Labor YouthBuild 1.5 million over 48 months

US Department of Labor Growth Opportunities 2 million over 42 months

WI DWD FOWRD Grant \$1,023,598

WI DWD Worker Advancement Initiative: Requested \$4.2 Million

- WRTP/BIG STEP Summer Trades Academy for 2 years, 2x Participants in 2026
- WRTO/BIG STEP cohort training – Women – Only CDL
- Teens Grow Greens paid work experience
- Earn & Learn – 500 Participants
- City of Milwaukee Arborist pre-apprenticeship
- RFP for additional projects to be posted this week.

Staffing Update

Staffing for the new grants, we still have a hold on hiring, we have a DOL grant that demanded that we have a project manager hired, so we are currently running 2 YouthBuild grants. The forward grant we have hired a consultant that is

contracted, they will work 20 hours a week to get this project rolling. We do have 5.5 FTEs to fill, that we will hold until the funds are guaranteed. Federal funding changes.

Federal Funding Risk

Employ Milwaukee's risk is currently high, 99% of our \$38 million is on the D.O.G.E review list. To date we lost 3 out of 5 federal program officers and 1 subsequently rehired and 1 made the decision to stay after discussions with DOL Leadership. We have not experienced any issues pulling down funding.

4. Board Chair - No Update

5. Committee Report

a. Personnel, Finance and Audit Committee

The Finance Committee reviewed the audit earlier in the morning. To briefly summarize the financial performance:

- Fiscal Year 2023 ended with a \$1.27 million loss.
- Fiscal Year 2024 closed with a \$250,000 gain.

It is important to note that the FY24 gain includes \$500,000 in revenue from a 'promise to give' from Kohl's. Although only half of that amount will be deposited in FY25, accounting standards required the full amount to be recognized in FY24. As a result, no revenue from Kohl's will be reflected in FY25, which may make the upcoming year more financially challenging.

Despite these considerations, the organization is pleased to report a small gain for FY24. Due to the seasonal nature of programming, particularly in the summer—ongoing fiscal monitoring is essential.

The committee discussed the ongoing IT outsourcing initiative, which is expected to yield approximately \$115,000 in annual savings. The savings are already being reallocated to address critical technology needs, including replacing obsolete laptops before Windows 10 support ends in October, and purchasing wireless access points to enhance network connectivity and security.

The cost savings will allow the organization to improve its IT infrastructure while still maintaining a financial surplus. Though there have been some minor operational disruptions, they have not exceeded what was experienced when full-time IT staff were on-site. Leadership expressed confidence that outsourcing IT was the right decision, and any future adjustments will be evaluated as needed.

Two longer-term considerations were also noted:

- The lease for the current office space expires at the end of the year. EMI may explore options to reduce its footprint or relocate to more cost-effective office space.
- Banking services with PNC may be re-evaluated. While no immediate changes are planned, more cost-efficient banking alternatives are being considered for the future.

Approval Items

Annual Audit – Andres Gonzalez motioned to approve the audit; Mark Kessenich seconded, motion carried unanimously. 

Employee Handbook Update – Furlough Policy - Andres Gonzalez motioned to approve the audit; Mark Kessenich seconded, motion carried unanimously

b. Governance, Nominating, & Compliance

Received application from Job Corp, we did place that on hold due to the make-up of the board, did speak with Marlon and he understood.

MPS leadership changes, Andres feels that we need to revisit it with all the personnel changes they are making.

c. Program Committee

Mark Kessenich committee to review the attachment regarding the WIOA In School and Out of School Youth Special Projects- UMOS will take the Out of School Youth and Cristo Rey High School will take the In School Youth. Carla wanted to confirm that we were not violating anything regarding child protection considering the recent events taking place at Cristo Rey.

Carla asked for a motion to have the Executive Committee approve; Mark Kessenich motioned for approval; Andres Gonzales seconded the motion and passed unanimously.

d. Youth Committee

The Youth Committee does have a new Chair, which is Michael Harris, that is the Chief Administration Officer for Milwaukee Public Schools. The committee discussed all the youth programs with the program managers. Alderman Moore expressed her strong desire for Earn & Learn to serve more youth.

6. Other Items

None to report

Chair Carla Cross adjourned the meeting at 2:33 PM.

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