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Cavalier Johnson, Mayor, City of Milwaukee  
**Chief Elected Official**

Carla Cross, **Chair**

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**PROGRAM COMMITTEE MEETING**  
**Wednesday, May 14, 2025 – 9:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.**  
2342 North 27<sup>th</sup> Street, Milwaukee, WI 53210  
**APPROVED MINUTES**

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**Members Present:** Tracy Lubber, Mark Kessenich (Chair), Randy Crump, Julie Cayo, Erik Kennedy

**Guests:** Alexander Fischer

**Employ Milwaukee Staff Present:** Romell Greer, Suzanne Reinstein, Cindy Anderson, Kodi Harding, Carrie Hersh, Jeff McAlister, Brenda King

Chair called the meeting to order at 9:07 a.m.

- I. Minutes from February 19, 2025, Meeting:** Tracy Lubber motioned for approval of the minutes, Randy Crump seconded. The approval of minutes passed unanimously.

**II. New Grants and Funding**

Julie Cayo shared with the committee that Employ Milwaukee (EMI) received nearly \$2 million from the Department of Workforce Development (DWD) through the Worker Advancement Initiative. EMI will also assist the City of Milwaukee with a new certified pre-apprenticeship program through the Milwaukee Community Service Corps, providing stipends for participants. Additionally, EMI is collaborating with W RTP Big Step's Summer Trades Academy and implementing a paid work experience project with Northwestern Mutual. DWD has secured National Disaster Recovery Dislocated Worker Grants related to the opioid crisis. EMI will train and place peer support specialists through the FORWD grant. All state ARPA funds must be spent by next June.

Erik Kennedy motioned to approve, Tracy Lubber seconded. The approval passed unanimously.

**III. Compliance and Contracts**

**Compliance**

New assessments from partners must be pre-approved by Employ Milwaukee.

A form will be used to confirm the approval of the assessment policy.

**Contracts**

EMI has new contracts that need approval:

- Growth Opportunities Grant- \$414,260, subcontracting with Office of Community Safety and Wellness
- FORWD Grant- \$64,000, subcontracting with WCS
- Arborist Training Pre-Apprenticeship Program, funded by WAI (2 contracts)
- Teens Grow Greens- \$400,000

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- WRTP- \$250,000

Randy Crump motioned for approval of all contracts besides WRTP, seconded by Tracy Luber. The approval passed unanimously. Randy Crump motioned for approval of the WRTP contract, Mark Kessenich recused, Erik Kennedy seconded. The approval passed unanimously.

**IV. Labor Market Information**

The labor market is stable and layoffs, while present, are relatively light.

**V. Regional One-Stop Operator Report**

Beth Norris is distributing a referral guide that replaces the referral kiosks at the American Job Centers, helping individuals identify referral options. The workforce boards closed procurement to find a new Regional OSO after Beth's retirement. The boards received two proposals and will review them this week, with funding limited to \$15,000.

**VI. Program Report- Federal Funding**

Employ Milwaukee's grants are intact and there are currently no issues with funding from the DWD or the Department of Labor (DOL). Approximately 40% of EMI funding comes from WIOA formula funding, while the rest includes discretionary DOL grants. 98% of EMI's funding is federally sourced, with 2% from state or philanthropic sources. It's critical that EMI spends funds wisely and meets required outcomes to avoid being flagged for waste or fraud. Current WIOA funding ends on June 30, 2026, and there's uncertainty regarding future funding. The worst prediction is a 30% reduction in WIOA funding. Currently, a tentative budget proposal titled "Making America Skilled Again" lacks details, while a bill called "Stronger Workforce America" has passed the House but is pending in the Senate. Since WIOA hasn't been reauthorized, EMI will continue to monitor this situation closely.

**VII. Employer Engagement Updates**

Jeff McAlister, Business Solutions Manager, provided an update on hiring events. EMI recently held four hiring events- two for social services, one for manufacturing, and one for construction, with over 100 attendees at the majority of events. An upcoming hiring event in partnership with Maximus will focus on youth and young adults.

**VIII. Other Items**

No other items.

Meeting adjourned 10:02 a.m.

**IX. Next Program Committee: August 13, 2025**