

Final

Task Force on the Modernization of the State Personnel Management System

Meeting Minutes

Date: 10/17/2023, 10:00am-11:30am (Meeting #4)

Location: Web: Microsoft Teams Meeting

Video Conferencing: [Meeting Recording Link](#)

Presentation link: [Link to Presentations](#)

Task Force email: spms.taskforce@maryland.gov

Members Present: Secretary Tisha Edwards, Chair
Dianna Rosborough, Member
Cindy Kollner, Member
Erin McMullen, Member
Aaron Jacobs, Member
Gwen Schindler, Member
Tara Nelson, Member
Rosemary Wertz, Member
Denise Gilmore, Member
Joel Martinez, Member
Kimberly Prescott, Member
Jerry Smith, Member
June Dwyer, Member Substitute*

*June Dwyer substituted for Secretary Serena McIlwain from the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE).

Members Absent: Secretary Serena McIlwain, Member
Rianna Matthews-Brown, Member

Staff Present: Raquel Coombs
Laura-Vykol Gray
Max Pierce

Presenters: Mark Townend, Director of Recruitment and Examination Division,
Department of Budget and Management,

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Jawauna Greene, Assistant Secretary of Public Affairs and Strategy,
Maryland Department of Transportation
Tara Nelson, Human Resources Director, Department of Public Safety and
Correctional Services
Kimberly Prescott, President of Prescott HR Inc.

Call to Order: Secretary Tisha Edwards, Chair, called the third meeting of the Task Force on the Modernization of the State Personnel Management System (SPMS) to order at 10:00am via Microsoft Teams web video conferencing. The Chair introduced herself and the members of the Task Force and welcomed all participants and members to the meeting. The Chair reminded all attendees that this meeting is being recorded. The Chair reminded the body of the charges put before the Task Force and that there is a post meeting survey that needs to be completed after every meeting by the body. The Chair reminded the public that if they wish to contribute to the discussion they may email the Task Force at spms.taskforce@maryland.gov. The Chair then reminded all presenters that presentations shall be timed and kept to no more than 15 minutes per presentation.

Old Business: None.

New Business: **Presentation #1 Applicant Statistics Overview:** Mark Townend, Department of Budget and Management's (DBM) Director of the Recruitment and Examination Division (RED) presented some key statistics from applicant surveys of people applying for State positions. The participation in this survey is voluntary. Mr. Townend highlighted that most applicants are in their late 40s, come from a variety of backgrounds, hear about State jobs mostly via our website/the internet, and primarily seek State service for stability and for a chance to serve and do meaningful work. Mr. Townend went on to explain that RED is the central control for the State's participation across all job boards and job seeking platforms. The Chair then passed the floor over to the next presentation.

Task Force Discussion of Presentation #1: None

Presentation #2 MDOT Branding and Recruitment Campaign:
Jawauna Greene, Assistant Secretary of Public Affairs and Strategy,
Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) went over in detail their

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most recent digital advertising campaign. The agency's goals were to fill vacancies, humanize MDOT, attract younger applicants, and recruit heavily into their skilled trades. Ms. Greene explained that, using a budget of approximately \$600,000, they were able to implement a testimonial based campaign using their own workforce on why MDOT is a great place to work. Their campaign focused on adults aged 24-49 and utilized paid and traditional marketing, radio, television, sports partnerships, and Spanish radio placements to reach a wide audience. Ms. Greene showed examples of their digital marketing using pictures and branding of their employees and explained how one of the strengths of this campaign was how customizable their advertisements can be. The preliminary impacts of this campaign show a 92% increase in applications since August 2023 and have been able to lower their vacancy rate by about 3 percent. Ms. Greene further stressed the importance of the ongoing collaboration between MDOT's human resources staff and their paid advertising partners. Ms. Greene then showed a short video example of their advertisements. The Chair then opened the floor to questions and thanked Ms. Greene for her presentation.

Task Force Discussion of Presentation #2: The Chair expressed her support of the campaign and asked a few questions. Ms. Greene explained that the campaign has run on and off since August and that it will continue to cycle as budget permits. Ms. Greene went on to attribute that the recent increase in applications is believed to be a result of their campaign. The budget of the total campaign was \$598,000 and that \$390,000 was spent on media and \$180,000 was spent on production. The Chair then asked for a further explanation of their vacancy rate and proposed impact of the campaign. Ms. Greene asked that Dianna Rosborough answer this question. Ms. Rosborough explained that their current vacancy rate is 8.72% and that before this campaign it was closer to 12%. Ms. Rosborough went further on to explain that the current trends they are seeing are hard to analyze due to the lack of time between the start of the campaign and that a deeper analysis will occur further into the campaign. The Chair then commended MDOT as being the agency that has done the best to make job postings most accessible to the average applicant and moving away from government jargon. The Chair finally asked Ms. Rosborough how MDOT is handling the processing of the current large influx of applications. Ms. Rosborough responded that skilled labor positions (e.g. bus operators) are a little easier to analyze than executive positions. Lissette Smith (MDOT) further explained that MDOT has been

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working on how to streamline their internal HR processes for their staff and what areas they can improve to cut down internal barriers. The Chair appreciates MDOT's efforts. Joel Martinez appreciated the presentation and asked how MDOT currently handles employee referrals and asked how State job postings interact with those on unemployment benefits. Ms. Greene answered that employee referrals are an internal issue they are working on and is part of their process. The Chair commended the idea about advertising open positions to benefit receivers. Denise Gilmore asked if the State can centralize job posting on one website as opposed to keeping SPMS and MDOT separate. Ms. Rosborough explained that each website has a link to the other but that such provisions are not sufficient. Cindy Kollner responded that the systems are kept separate because MDOT and SPMS use different applicant tracking systems. Ms. Greene responded that MDOT has been working closely with the Department of Labor (DOL) and has been sharing their information. Mr. Townend then further explained that SPMS uses Jobsaps and MDOT chose to use Neogov instead. Mr. Townend went on to explain that the State already has an existing partnership with the DOL to circulate existing job postings to those on unemployment benefits and have a set time frame to send applicants to the job postings for consideration.

Tara Nelson asked for more information about the number of vendors used in MDOT's campaign and what the process was like for developing creative content. Ms. Greene responded that her HR team worked closely with the consultant provider and that it was a single vendor used. Aaron Jacobs asked for further information about the partnership. Ms. Greene responded that expertise was essential for data management, demographic targeting, and key points that should be stressed in their campaign. Cindy Kollner asked about their advertisement placement strategy and what focus the campaign had. Ms. Greene responded that their campaign was deeply targeted using age, race and desired position to be filled. Ms. Greene further explained that based on feedback they can manipulate all targeting and advertisement elements as needed. The Chair then asked for the other outreach events that MDOT is using to be sent over to her after the meeting and was reaffirmed that this type of campaign was the first of its type in the state. The Chair then introduced the next presentation

Presentation #3 Recruitment Hiring Events: Tara Nelson, Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services (DPSCS) presented on the process and success of their department's one-day hiring events for their

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correctional officer series. Ms. Nelson explained that large one-day hiring events have helped improve the efficiency, applicant pool, departmental image, candidate experience, and cost for their hiring process for correctional officers. The process while well practiced is a considerable lift for her department and that many logistics and challenges are considered during these events. The agency also engages in limited advertising whenever possible to push for high attendance at their hiring events. These events are able to be a one stop shop for information about the job and progress as far as a virtual interview with conditional offer or the establishment of a secondary interview if needed. Ms. Nelson's HR team engages in robust follow up with registered applicants and this process is always in the process of being improved upon. DPSCS also utilizes their own resume bank for further assistance in their recruitment processes.

Task Force Discussion of Presentation #3: The Chair asked why DPSCS uses a resume bank platform and how it interacts with the existing application structure. Ms. Nelson responded that the resume bank assists in job matching especially when a streamlined process is utilized. The Chair thanked DPSCS for all their hard work and introduced the final presenter.

Presentation #4 Elements of a Recruitment Strategy: Kimberly Prescott, President of Prescott HR presented on how to successfully implement a recruitment strategy. Ms. Prescott covered how to find quality applicants or "source sources", how to build a company brand, and core elements of a positive candidate/applicant experience.

Task Force Discussion of Presentation #4: June Dwyer asked Cindy Kollner if the State has any plans to implement a similar campaign to the one MDOT is currently implementing. Ms. Kollner expressed that she would bring this up with Secretary Grady and that she is aware that State agencies have not had access to advertising funding in a long time. The Chair then brought up that MDOT's campaign should be viewed as a pilot and that all learnings would be essential for future expansion. Rosemary Wertz asked for further information about continuous communication with applicants. Ms. Prescott explained that it is typically robust email communication or a status bar and is often specific to the job platform. The Chair followed up that current DBM procedures of automatic communication needs to be updated and that job referrals needs to be

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further considered. Ms. Wertz suggested the State look into more ways to allow applicants to see what jobs they are qualified for during the application process. The Chair agreed and said that the State should look into a career assessment tool to aid in this process and how do we get more value as both the employer and the applicant out of every job application. Ms. Prescott responded that the State could look into a skills inventory which may allow to implement basic job matching for applicants.

Minute Approval: The minutes were then unanimously approved with Denise Gilmore abstaining.

Closing Discussion: The Chair then asked the body to fill out the follow up survey with their comments and suggestions. The Chair also asked the body to consider the addition of an additional meeting to the schedule.

Next Meeting Dates (10:00am-11:30am):

- October 31, 2023
- November 14, 2023

Adjournment