

Boston Employment Commission Hearing Minutes

A monthly hearing of the Boston Employment Commission (**BEC**) was held virtually on Zoom, March 19, 2025.

Present: Commissioners JoCole Burton, Travis Watson, Donald Alexis, Chaton Green and Priscilla Flint

Hearing Began: 1:05 PM

December 18, 2024 minutes approved (Commissioner Watson moved, Commissioner Alexis second).

January 15, 2025 minutes approved (Commissioner Watson moved, Commissioner Alexis second, Commissioner Green abstained).

February 19, 2025 minutes approved (Commissioner Watson moved, Commissioner Alexis second, Commissioners Green and Flint abstained)

Commissioner Burton began hearing with acknowledgement of Women's history month.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Duration: 4 mins.

Jodi Sugerman-Brozan (Deputy Chief, Office of Worker Empowerment): State of the City Address, tonight. Commissioners should have received in-person invites. **Tax Season:** Center for Working Families - 22 Free tax sites around the City boston.gov/tax-help Last year, 322 volunteers prepared 12,000+ tax returns and put \$23 million in tax refunds back into the pockets of those that needed it the most. **futureBOS** has thousands of opportunities for youth ages 14 - 18 and young adults ages 19 - 24 living in Boston. **Applications for summer jobs are now open!** Many jobs are competitive and will fill quickly, but don't forget to check back regularly as new opportunities will be added through May. boston.gov/futurebos **Youth Job Fair on March 29, 11:00-3:00 at the Reggie Lewis Center! Workers Rights Webinars (boston.gov/labor.policy):** focused on specific issues, and targeted to specific groups of workers. • Multilingual, depending on the needs of the registrants. • Agendas include expert speakers as well as City of Boston partners to give participants information, and access to resources. Government agencies like the AGO's Fair Labor Division, MCAD, and the DOL attend. • Resource partners like Greater Boston Legal Services, Fair Employment Project Justice at Work. • City of Boston partners like MOIA, MOLA and MOWA. • Last year more than 40 cases of wage theft and other labor violations were opened. **Free, multilingual OSHA 10 and OSHA 30:** A new Construction and Demolition Safety Ordinance went into effect in December 2023. Among other things, it requires that all construction sites in Boston larger than 50,000 square feet have a Site Safety Coordinate on site at all times that has at least 30 hours of OSHA training. To work on publicly funded construction sites in Boston, all workers must have 10 hours of OSHA Training. OLCWP offers FREE OSHA training to keep workers in Boston safe, and to ensure training is not a barrier to compliance or employment. • 9 Free OSHA 10 in English, Spanish, Portuguese and Haitian Creole • 8 Free OSHA-30 in English, Spanish and Portuguese. The calendar is on our website boston.gov/construction-safety. **Office of Workforce Development Funding Opportunities:** • Climate Expert to Advise and Support the Boston Climate Jobs Alliance • Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Youth Funding FY26 • Neighborhood Jobs Trust • FY25 Youth College Readiness • Good Jobs Metro Boston Coalition Wrap Around Supports - <https://www.boston.gov/departments/workforce-development/funding-opportunities>.

Union Diversity Initiatives/Greater Boston Labor Council:

- **Guest Speaker, Dr. Susanna Bohme**
Deputy Director, Community Labor United

Duration: 43 mins

Dr. Bohme presented a powerpoint speaking to Racial and gender diversity in Registered Apprenticeship Programs and expressed that the data from her research was largely drawn from the project for the City of Boston's Green New Deal Workforce Needs Assessment which focusing on joint employer union registered apprenticeship programs preparing Bostonians to succeed in good careers in the growing green economy. The data on women and people of color's participation in registered apprenticeship programs is a leading indicator of diversity in climate critical building trades (*so many new members enter unions through apprenticeship*). The mission is to unite grassroot organizations and labor unions to stabilize and strengthen working class families in communities of color in the City of Boston. Number of apprentices by demographic characteristics, all union and non-union Registered Apprenticeships statewide (August 2024): **Boston Residents (862 union/67 non-union); Women (720 union/96 non--union); People of Color (1939 union/464 non-union); Hispanic or Latino (865 union/271 non-union).** **Commissioner Watson:** In regard to the framing around apprenticeship, Commissioner Watson expressed concern with the celebratory tone of organized labor providing opportunities for Black people on the lowest paid opportunities in a 100+ year industry in Boston (*referenced 1960s federal government's model of city programs which Boston's was named Boston Urban Redevelopment*). The program was to provide small scale residential construction opportunities for black workers. Commissioner Watson reflected on the legacy of Boston's Black construction advocates and honored them (*Chuck Turner, Mel King, Leo Fletcher, Earl Quick and Herb KwakuZulu*) and felt it important to speak on this issue because there's still racial inequity. **Commissioner Burton:** Thank you Commissioner Watson for your historic comments. The BEC reviews projects and the ability to hire according to the BRJP Ordinance. This presentation provides the state of pre-apprenticeship programs and identifies a snapshot and outputs that may not align with a full picture. **Commissioner Green:** Commissioner Watson gave lots of quotes and history. I want to speak from experience. I may not have pursued the trades had I listened to the views of Commissioner Watson. We need hope. Thank you Susanna Bohme for your wonderful presentation that highlights the work that has been done. Every step forward is a celebration. Despite the history, pave your own path (*referenced retention and mentoring as giving back*). Registered apprenticeship should be through and through. My preference is union (*referenced the sustainability factor*). **Commissioner Burton:** Thank you Commissioner Green for your comments and perspective. I believe both things can be true, as there are experiences on both sides of the issue as it relates to success and challenges with equity and participation (*references herself as a business owner signatory to a union*). In my perspective, Commissioner Watson wasn't framing a dark night, but rather speaking to not moving the needle as we should even though we do have great success stories along the way. **Jodi Sugerman-Brozan (Deputy Director, Worker Empowerment):** I want to thank Dr. Bohme for showing us where the future of apprenticeship programs are and also acknowledging retention and all the things Commissioner Watson brought up. The purpose of asking for this presentation is to look at how we can move the needle as we work towards making sure people are getting good wages and family sustainable jobs which I know is the goal of this commission and the BRJP office. **Commissioner Burton:** gave context as to how this topic came to be presented as she was approached by a couple of women working for unions who were Boston residents and were sent to work outside of Boston. She wanted to explore what authorities the commission had to address that concern, and also understands there are other factors. **Commissioner Green:** Can we get the same information from Building Pathways and Youthbuild? **Dr. Bohme:** The slides did include Building

Pathways and Youthbuild, but there will be more detailed information as the research is finalized. **Commissioner Watson:** Is apprenticeship programs and organized labor funded by the US Dept of Labor? **Dr. Bohme:** It's largely funded by payroll-based contributions through negotiated collective bargaining agreements (*part of the payroll package of union members*). Any US Dept of Labor funding would be part of Special Competitive grants, but I'm not aware of any. **Commissioner Burton:** Thanked Dr. Boehme for the snapshot she provided in her presentation and for sitting through the challenges of the oversight of the Boston Employment Commission.

SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS

Harvard Standish (Non-Union)

Duration: 10 mins.

Present: My Lam (Nicoya Construction), Miriam Gee (TLee Development & Co-Everything), Celso Ribeiro (BRJP Construction Monitor)

In full disclosure, Commissioner Watson's employer, MHIC has a relationship with Necoya Construction.

My Lam is the founder of Necoya Construction and noted that Erise Builders, Inc. is a partnering General Contractor with a significant scope of this project. Miriam Gee is an architect and part of the development team and co-founder of Co-Everything. Overview of Project: The Harvard Standish project is a new construction homeownership project involving the land disposition of three city-owned parcels at 114-122 Harvard Street, 18-24 Standish Street, and Unnumbered Parcel Standish Street in the neighborhood of Dorchester in the City of Boston. The project consists of twenty-two (22) affordable homeownership units in two newly constructed three-story walk-up buildings. The Proposed Project also includes a little over 1,200 square feet of ground-floor retail space in the 114-122 Harvard Street building. The unit mix consists of five (5) one-bedroom units, nine (9) two-bedroom units, and eight (8) three-bedroom units, and a little over 1,200 SF ground floor commercial space that will be sold. The buildings will include six (6) handicap or accessible units, indoor bicycle storage with sixteen (16) spaces, as well as an outdoor courtyard space and a total of 11 parking spaces across the two sites. **Construction is estimated to begin the week of March 24, 2025** (*The process of the project from RFP to approval began 2018 - 2023*). **Nicoya Construction Management firm:** 8 full time employees—Dorchester Residents - Office is based in Roxbury - MBE certified - Focus primarily is on general construction and subcontracting in affordable housing developments - Founded with the mission to recruit small subcontractors to work on the City of Boston Affordable Housing construction. This is Nicoya's first General Contracting job with the City of Boston. **Major trades have been brought out:** Excavation, Concrete, Plumbing, Electrical, Mechanical, Framing, Siding, Windows, Roof package, MEP trades and Framing will have the majority hours, 80% of Plumbing, Electrical, Mechanical, Framing workers are Boston residents, 100% of workers are minorities. **Workforce Recruitment Efforts:** Install job applications box, Neighborhood meetings, Boston Jobs Bank, Local area newspapers. There is a community meeting being held tonight. **Commissioner Burton:** Since this is your first project with the city, we recommend you lean on Celso for his BRJP construction monitoring guidance. Thank you for your presentation.

PROJECT REVIEWS

41 LaGrange Street (Hybrid) - (Union)

Duration: 17 mins.

Present: David McKinnon (Dimeo Construction), Josh Weissman (St. Francis House and POUA), Chrissy Clark (Dimeo Construction) and Celso Ribeiro (BRJP Construction Monitor)

Overall Numerical Compliance: 25,675 workhours, 196 workers, 5 contractors, 22% Boston Residents, 37% People of Color, 8% Women

David McKinnon (Dimeo Construction): Project Summary - 41 LaGrange Street Chinatown, Boston consist of 126 Units of Affordable Housing, 70 Units will be set aside for permanent supportive housing for those experiencing homelessness, Building Gross SF: 120,000, Structure: 19 Story Cast in Place Concrete, Façade: ACM Panels, Precast Panels, Ground Floor Amenities: Full Kitchen and seating area, 2) Management Offices, Concierge, 128 Spot Bike Storage Room, Second Floor Amenities: Fitness Room, Lounge, 2) Conference Rooms and additional lounge area for residents and no on-site parking. **Project Team:** Owner Developer: Planning Office for Urban Affairs, Bill Grogan - President - Co-Owner Developer: Saint Francis House, Karen LaFrazia – President & CEO - City of Boston: Mayor’s Office of Housing, Steven McKiernan – Construction Specialist II - Owners Project Manager: Waypoint KLA, Ray Mitrano AIA – Principal, Mark Rollins – Project Executive - Architect: The Architectural Team, Jay Szymanski AIA – Principal, Al Donovan – Senior Project Manager - Construction Manager: Dimeo Construction Company, Kevin Ferreria – Vice President, Boston Operations, David McKinnon – Senior Project Manager - Renaissance, Sandy Paben – CEO Renaissance Groups, Ercilla Dometz – Compliance and Community Outreach Specialist. **Construction Schedule:** June 2024 - February 2026. **Construction Buyout (Awarded Subcontractors): Sitework:** The Welch Corporation & Phoenix Foundation; **Concrete:** G&C Concrete Construction Inc.; **Architectural Precast Panels:** Global Precast Inc.; **Masonry:** ACME Waterproofing; **Structural & Misc. Metals:** Capco Steel Erectors; **Interior Finish Carpentry:** East Coast Interiors/Millwork One; **Roofing:** Greenwood Industries; **Waterproofing:** The Waterproofing Co.; **Spray Foam:** Northeast Foam Solutions; **Curtain Wall, Windows, Panels:** Sunrise Erectors; **Doors/Frames/Hardware:** Unified Doors and Hardware; **Gypsum Drywall& ACT:** Century Drywall; **Resilient/Carpet/Floor Mats:** Allegheny Contract; **Tile:** Jantile Boston; **Div. 10 Specialties:** Automation Solutions; **Trash Chute:** Wilco Sales & Service, Inc.; **Residential Cabinetry:** Norfolk Multi-Family Cabinets; **Counter Tops:** Great in Counters; **Elevators:** Schindler; **Fire Protection:** Carlysle Engineering; **Plumbing:** D.J. Plumbing & Heating; **HVAC:** Vertex Mechanical Contracting; **Electrical:** Lighthouse Electrical Contracting Inc. **Workforce Diversity Efforts & Community Partners:** Outreach to Building Pathways, Boston Jobs Bank Coordinator, and Youth Build; Project is 100% Union; Ongoing BRJP Preconstruction meetings with Contractors; Dimeo Apprenticeship Program; Hosting OSHA 10 Class at Tierney Learning Center April 2nd & 3rd flyers will be posted at 2 Boylston St China Trade Building and surrounding community centers. **Job Application Process:** QR codes and application fliers are posted on the site; Applicant’s information is added to the hiring database; Renaissance will contact applicants and connect them with contractors. **Commissioner Burton:** For clarification, this project is Union? **David:** Yes, 100% Union. **Commissioner Watson:** Is the Chrissy Clark you mentioned formerly employed with Bald Hill Builders? **David:** Chrissy joined us two months ago. **Celso:** Yes. Commissioner Watson. **Commissioner Watson:** Chrissy is a great compliance person and you’ve got a good person on your team. **David:** We’re very excited about this new addition. **Janine McClaren (BRJP Jobs Bank Coordinator):** Because Jobs’ Bank candidates are not union affiliated, they would need sponsorship. Is Dimeo able to sponsor people into the unions you use? **David:** I’ll have to get back to you on that. We do have partnership with YouthBuild and Building Pathway and an apprenticeship program on the construction management side. We are also signatory to the carpenters and laborers union. **Celso Ribeiro (BRJP Construction Monitor):** The project is approx. 25% complete. G&C Concrete has the most hours worked at 13,981 total hours: 12% Boston Residents, 39% POC, and 4% Women. All the numbers across the board have gradually gone up through efforts by Dimeo. Although the numbers are not where we want them to be, through strong efforts the numbers will continue to rise towards our goals. This project is currently at 5% women. Boston Resident Verifications is at 77%, we will continue to work hard to assure that all Boston residents on site are verified. The Welch Corp is currently at 45% residents, 45% people of color and 8% Women. Carpenters are 12% women. Iron workers are 79% people of color. Carpenters are 17% Boston residents. Iron workers, Equipment operators and Electricians are at 0% Women. Light House electrical and DJ Plumbing and Heating are at 0% Women. All 7 compliance efforts are in good standing. **Commissioner Burton:** We have not seen in a long time numbers like the Welch Corporation has achieved - 45% Boston residents,

45% People of Color and 8% Women. We want to celebrate that achievement. Oftentimes we hear that Equipment Operators as it relates to Boston residents, people of color and women is challenging and we'd like to know what your strategy has been. This could serve as an example for others. In regard to the resident verification, we'd like to see improvement over the remaining 70+% work remaining. Celso is confident that this will improve and we trust that he's closer to the project and will accept his guidance on that. These are mainly statements, David. **David:** Thank you, Chair. **Commissioner Burton:** Would Josh Weissman, the owner's rep. like to have words? **Josh Weissman (Owner's Rep/St. Francis House/POUA):** Thank you, Chair Burton, it's been well covered. We are pleased thus far with the progress of the project and will continue pushing to keep numbers where they need to be. **Commissioner Burton:** We notice when there is representation from ownership, it shows the importance and the commitment to the inclusion of Boston residents on Boston projects. Thank you.

Landmark Phase III (Union)

Duration: 11 mins.

Present: J. Elliott (Samuels Real Estate), C. Caine (Samuels Real Estate), Kevin Luczkow (Samuels Real Estate), Brian Meyer (Alexandria Real Estate), Sokol Kodrasi (Suffolk Construction), Taylah Webster (InOrder Business), Kharlita Chambers-Walker (Suffolk Construction), Patricia Maragioglio (BRJP Construction Monitor)

Overall Numerical Compliance: 653,128 workhours, 1,622 workers, 38 contractors, 19% Boston Residents, 36% People of Color, 7% Women

Patricia Maragioglio (BRJP Construction Monitor): Project Overview - The Landmark is located in Fenway at 421 Park Drive. It's a 14 Story Building with 3 sublevels - Core and Shell Contract for future mixed use building that includes Parking, Grocery, Restaurant, and Lab Space. From the last review, 3/20/24 - Work hours increased by 515,035, 1,016 workers have been added, 18 contractors added, Residents increased .6%. POC increased 4% and Women decreased 1.6% . The overall project is reporting within 7 days of the period ending date. Boston Resident Verification is at 90%. Laborers and Iron workers are exceeding POC goals; Laborers are also exceeding the Women goal of 12%, they are currently at 13%. In the top 5 contractors, G&C Concrete, JF Stern are exceeding POC goals; Liberty construction is meeting the 12% goal for women. This project is monitored by a diversity consultant that is also an MWBE. IOB shares the same goals as the BRJP office to ensure diversity goals are met. The concern is the Boston residents goal will continue to be a challenge to meet as we are at 70% completion and it's less than half. All 7 compliance efforts are in good standing. **Commissioner Burton:** Thank you Patricia for a well detailed report. Taylah thank you for all that you have done to support the project. I believe InOrder Business was brought on later in this project. **Taylah Webster (InOrder Business):** Yes, I began working with this project in late 2022 or early 2023. Congratulations and welcome Kharlita Chambers-Walker, formerly with the City of Boston's Economic Development and now with Suffolk Construction. (*Commissioner Burton referred to the women as All Stars in their respective roles*). **Kharlita-Chambers-Walkers:** Thank you for the acknowledgement. I'm here to listen and soak it all in and look forward to working with everyone on the call. **Commissioner Burton:** Usually the interior work has begun by 60% of the project. With the project completion at 70%, can anyone from Suffolk speak to the challenges? **Sokol Kodrasi (Suffolk Construction):** It's a core & shell building (*Super Structure*). Not many finishes due to the nature of the project. **Commissioner Burton:** Thank you for that insight. **Taylah:** Just wanted to add in regard to Community Engagement that IOB has engaged with Youth Build and Building Pathways for site visits, Building Pathways did a site tour and my goal for the remainder of the project is to make sure those subcontractors on site are maintaining their numbers and the community engagement with Building Pathways and YouthBuild. **Commissioner Burton:** Thank you for that. The real lesson is that there is a tremendous amount of reliance on interior finisher sub contractors to bring the numbers up. This is a good case study of core & shell projects and the opportunities for improvement.

BEC Commissioners' Follow-up Requests/Concerns

Sanction Recommendation – Nothing Outstanding

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Duration: 6 mins.

Jodi Sugerman Brozan (Deputy Chief, Worker Empowerment): Celebrating Women in Construction event, 3/26/25. The extended Open Law for virtual meetings is set to expire 3/31/25 and we will resume in-person meetings at City Hall for April 16, 2025 BEC Hearing. **February 2025 Compliance Monitoring Snapshot:** Per monthly reports provided by Construction Monitors, BRJP is currently Monitoring 160 Projects*: 39 projects are less than 25% complete or not started yet; 23 projects are 25% - 50% complete; 40 projects are 50% - 75% complete; 46 projects 75% or more complete; 7 projects were completed this month 60 projects, Union (number of projects, not work hours) 86 projects, Open Shop (number of projects, not work hours) 69 projects, prevailing wage/Davis Bacon Conducted 24 Corrective Action meetings (*missing data from 1 monitor). **Bi-Annual City Council Hearing:** Scheduled for Friday, April 18 from 10:00-1:00 pm in person In addition to Christopher Brown and Jodi Sugerman-Brozan, Michael Endale from the Boston Planning Department will present the annual economic impact analysis which he is presenting to the Boston Employment Commission on April 16. **Upcoming Guest Speaker:** May 21 City of Boston Anti-Displacement Initiative Katharine Lusk, Policy Advisory, Boston Planning Advisory Council. **Sanctions:** New Process under legal team review.

Commission Burton: I want to thank both Commissioner Watson and Commissioner Green for their passion and vulnerability expressed today on behalf of their respective experiences in the construction industry and their commitment to challenges in advocating for things that are right and equitable. I'm thankful to do this work alongside you.

Motion to adjourn, Commissioner Burton - So moved, Commissioner Watson, 2nd - Commissioner Flint

Meeting adjourned 2:44 pm

KO/Executive Coordinator