

# Boston Employment Commission Hearing Minutes

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A monthly hearing of the Boston Employment Commission (**BEC**) was held virtually on Zoom, May 21, 2025.

**Present:** Commissioners Travis Watson, Donald Alexis and Chaton Green

Commissioner Watson is chairing the hearing in Commissioner Burton's absence.

**Hearing Began:** 1:05 PM

Due to lack of a quorum, April 16, 2025 minutes will be approved at the June 18, 2025 BEC Hearing.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

Duration: 5 mins.

**Jodi Sugerman-Brozan (Deputy Chief, Office of Worker Empowerment):** Neighborhood Coffee Hours w/Mayor Wu and city staff - [boston.gov/coffee-hours](https://boston.gov/coffee-hours). Applications for summer jobs are now available - **futureBOS** has thousands of opportunities for youth ages 14 - 18 and young adults ages 19 - 24 living in Boston [boston.gov/futurebos](https://boston.gov/futurebos). **Small Business Month - Workplace responsibilities** [boston.gov/small-business](https://boston.gov/small-business). **Immigration Enforcement: Employers' Rights and Responsibilities. Free Health and Safety Training** - OSHA 10 AND OSHA 30 thru June 30th ([boston.gov/labor.policy](https://boston.gov/labor.policy)).

## Boston Planning Advisory Council - Anti-Displacement Action Plan

Duration: 25 mins.

**Katharine Lusk, Executive Director of the Planning Advisory Council:** In response to the community, a cross-departmental team spanning more than 20 departments worked over the past year to develop Boston's first citywide plan to confront displacement. It consists of a 9 member internal coordinating body of cabinet chiefs. Through this effort, the City of Boston is working to: **Mitigate residential, commercial (ie small business), and cultural displacement; Raise awareness of the many tools the City deploys already; Address gaps in our existing "toolkit"; Anchor our efforts to stabilize Boston's people and neighborhoods alongside our work to foster good growth, address climate; Prioritize actions in our control.** To be most effective, we started with a common understanding of what we mean when we say displacement. In general, it means *when people are forced to leave their homes and neighborhoods due to external pressures*. But there are different kinds of displacement. **Direct Displacement:** When a household is forced to move. E.g. due to an eviction or foreclosure. **Economic Displacement:** When people are priced out of their chosen community, due to rising costs/expenses or lack of supply relative to demand. **Commercial/Cultural Displacement:** Closure or relocation of a business due to direct or economic displacement. **Gentrification:** Pattern of neighborhood change where a neighborhood experiences new public or private investment and demographic change. All materials are available on [boston.gov/anti-displacement](https://boston.gov/anti-displacement). **Commissioner Watson:** Your passion is contagious. Is there something you are energized about from the plan? **Katharine:** It was gratifying to hear from other cities that Boston is a leading example. The Mayor of Raleigh asked for Boston's plan. I'm thankful to Jodi for being part of a coalition of the willing and lastly, hearing from residents that they want to be engaged with the city on the issues that impact their quality of life in the city of Boston. **Commissioner Watson:** I commend the extensive approach. **Commissioner Green:** From my own personal experience of displacement, I appreciate this presentation and the strategies addressing people's concerns. I'm excited to see the

impact. **Commissioner Watson:** Thank you Director Sugerman-Brozan for inviting this presentation. I too look forward to seeing the impact.

## **SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS**

### **273 Highland Street**

**Duration: 15 mins.**

**Present: Patrick Larcom and Peter Lavelle (Haycon), Jon Rudzinski (Owner/Rees Larkin Development) and Robert Woodson (BRJP Construction Monitor)**

**Patrick Larcom (Haycon):** New construction of a 5-story (1 partially below grade) residential building at 273 Highland St in Roxbury. 23 -1-bedroom to 3-bedroom rental units, 12 Group 2 units. All units to be income-restricted below 60% AMI. Shared indoor amenity/gallery space & outdoor shared patio spaces. 19 covered parking spaces (2 EV-installed spaces, 4 EV-ready spaces) 26 covered resident bike capacity, 6 bike guest capacity. Designed to LEED Platinum and PHIUS energy standards for certification.

**Construction Schedule:** Received notice to proceed construction on February 7, 2025 and the expected completion of this project is the Summer of 2026. **Construction buyout** is mostly completed (includes M/WBEs) with a projected list of subcontractors pending. **Workforce Diversity Efforts:** Partner with community organizations including YouthBuild Boston, MassHire Boston, BHA, La Colaborativa, TND, etc.; Host Job Fairs targeting members of the community (*Job Fair tomorrow*); Work with and hire trade partners with BRJP experience & past success; Onsite hiring signs placed at Jobsite with interactive QR code application; Met and strategized with BRJP Consultant Shelley Webster of InOrder Business.

**Commissioner Watson:** Robert, are there any anticipated concerns? **Robert Woodson (BRJP Construction Monitor):** No initial concerns. I've worked with Haycon on previous projects and I'm

confident they will adhere to BRJP requirements. **Commissioner Green:** Based on the organizations you named, is there a number of hires from that outreach or is it still in process? **Peter Lavelle (Haycon):** Good question. We are working on the hiring challenges.

**Commissioner Green:** A small win is seeing people from these community organizations making it on a job site.

**Commissioner Watson:** Patrick, I appreciate that you note working with Trade partners with BRJP experience. I can see improvement from Haycon's previous BEC presentation some years ago. **Patrick:** We are making efforts to do better.

**Commissioner Watson:** Thank you for the presentation. We look forward to the review.

### **Hamilton at Mt. Everett**

**Duration: 15 mins.**

**Present: Matt Yarmolnsky (Owner's Rept), Sheryce Hearn, Matt DiPlacido, Brianna Clark (Dellbrook JKS) and Robert Woodson (BRJP Construction Monitor)**

**Matt DiPlacido (Dellbrook JKS):** VietAID (Vietnamese American Initiative for Development) is developing a senior housing project called Hamilton at Mount Everett in Dorchester, Massachusetts. This project will create 36 one-bedroom, income-restricted rental units for seniors aged 62 and up, with a focus on supporting individuals transitioning from homelessness. Nine of the 36 units will be affordable to households earning at or below 30% area median income. The project includes common spaces, parking, and bicycle parking, and is part of VietAID's broader mission to build a strong Vietnamese American community and revitalize the Fields Corner neighborhood. Notice to proceed construction received on May 12, 2025. Fully bought out includes M/WBE - 25.17% (MBE) and 5.72% (WBE). **Walk-on Application**

**Process:** A job sign is posted at 25 Hamilton St. Dorchester with a QR scan code. Once the code is scanned, they are prompted to fill out a job application. All applications are received by Dellbrook's Diversity email address and responded to within 48 hours. Their application is saved, reviewed, and sent to subcontractors that are not in compliance and in need of workers. Shared with Jobs Bank Coordinator.

**Project Reporting:** We have invested in **B2G Now and LCP tracker**, which are both cloud-based software

platforms to ensure we have accurate, efficient, and timely information on all payroll reporting projects.

**Community, Trade Partner and Organization Engagement** (Job Fairs and Osha 10 Training).

**Subcontractor Corrective Action Process:** Subcontractors who do not demonstrate best faith efforts to comply with BRJP will have the following actions taken against them: The project team is notified and made aware of the subcontractors' delinquency/noncompliance. A corrective action meeting is held. Payment is held. Meet with the owner of the company. Removal from the project. Subcontractors are penalized for future projects. **Commissioner Watson:** Robert, any concerns? **Robert:** Nothing to add.

**Commissioner Watson:** Seeing Matt Yarmolnsky (owner) and Sheryce Hearn (compliance), the project is in good hands. The subcontractors' Corrective Action Process is the most thought out plan of accountability as it penalizes future work with subcontractors. **Commissioner Green:** Are you tracking hires from the job fairs? **Brianna Clarke (Dellbrook JKS):** We have a list of those who attended and applications were forwarded but unfortunately we have no numbers on hires. **Commissioner Green:** No pressure. I'd like to see results of real opportunities from community engagement. **Commissioner Watson:** Thank you for the presentation. We look forward to the review.

## PROJECT REVIEWS

**Benjamin Franklin Institute of Technology (BFIT)**

**Duration: 10 mins.**

Commissioner Watson recused himself due to his employer's (MHIC) financial connection with this project. Director Jodi Sugerman-Brozan filled in.

**Present: Kevin Hepner (Franklin Cummings), Sheryce Hearn (Dellbrook JKS) and Takara Hamilton (BRJP Construction Monitor)**

**Overall Numerical Compliance: 49,540 workhours, 346 workers, 22 contractors, 16% Boston Residents, 55% People of Color, 5% Women**

**Takara Hamilton (BRJP Construction Monitor):** Benjamin Franklin Institute of Technology ("BFIT") is proposing a relocation of the college to 1003-1013 Harrison Avenue in Roxbury, a site abutting Harrison Avenue to the southeast, Eustis Street to the southwest, and the Eustis Street Firehouse and Eliot Burying Ground to the northwest. The Project proposes a new 3-story building of classrooms, labs, workshops and offices. The BPDA and Dellbrook had eight pre-construction meetings to onboard all 23 contractors. Contractors appeared at the meeting they were scheduled to attend and were provided with BRJP Ordinance Documentation and supplemental paperwork (i.e., RVFS, Workforce Request forms); Contractors were reminded of the BRJP goals for this project and were encouraged to send a monthly BFE if they were struggling to meet the diversity goals; Contractors were encouraged to participate in "Hiring Logs" as BFE, which detail all potential applicants, their current location in the hiring process, and whether or not they were hired and why; All 23 Active Contractors comply with the weekly certified payrolls; Apprentice POC and women's goals exceed overall project goals, which indicates that more women and POC are entering the trades; POC participation is very high on this project; All Contractors have submitted the necessary paperwork under the BRJP(QWPF and Questionnaires); Resident Verification is at 73%; Weekly Submission rate: 6 (within 7-day grace period). **Commissioner Green:** Like seeing the Hiring Log process. **Jodi:** Thank you for the presentation. Takara, I would like to learn more about the Hiring Log.

**175 N. Harvard Street**

**Duration: 11 mins.**

**Present: Brooke Woodson, Mark Mazza and Samantha Glatfelter, Dan Ryan (Shawmut Construction) and Takara Hamilton (BRJP Construction Monitor)**

**Overall Numerical Compliance: 54,584 workhours, 337 workers, 11 contractors, 18% Boston Residents, 37% People of Color, 5% Women**

**Takara Hamilton (BRJP Construction Monitor):** The mixed-use institutional project located at 175 North Harvard Street in Allston is proposed to consist of a performing arts center that will be the new home for the American Repertory Theater, housing for Harvard affiliates, along with parking. **Highlights:** The BPDA and Shawmut have had six pre-construction meetings to onboard all 11 contractors. Contractors appeared at the meeting they were scheduled to attend and were provided with BRJP Ordinance Documentation and supplemental paperwork (i.e., RVFS, Workforce Request forms); Contractors were reminded of the BRJP goals for this project and were encouraged to send a monthly BFE if they were struggling to meet the diversity goals; Contractors were encouraged to participate in "Hiring Logs" as BFE, which detail all potential applicants, their current location in the hiring process, and whether or not they were hired and why. All 11 Active Contractors comply with the weekly certified payrolls; Apprentice diversity goals exceed the overall project.. This indicates that more women, POC, and Boston residents are entering the trades; All Contractors have submitted the necessary paperwork under the BRJP(QWPF and Questionnaires); GC Concrete 100% women concrete workers and Mason Tenders; Regis Steel and Ostrow Electric Company are the best contractors on site regarding BRJP Standards; Resident Verification is at 86%; Weekly Submission rate: 5 (within 7-day grace period). **Commissioner Watson:** Can someone speak to the numbers for WL French and Starlight? **Brooke Woodson (Shawmut):** Due to a new product being used called Mass Timber which replaces steel and is more sustainable. Unfortunately, there are no contractors trained in New England to perform that work. Starlight's team went to Western MA to learn. Starlight brought on a resident person of color and a woman, recently, which should increase their numbers. They are also partnering with Fisher which is a M/WBE. **Commissioner Watson:** We had this same scenario from a presentation within the past 2 months. As I stated then, typically the carpenters union is ahead of the training mechanism on these things. Thank you for that explanation. It's understandable that trying to do right by the environment has its complexities with the workforce. **Commissioner Green:** Shawmut is a leader in equity. The apprenticeship numbers are awesome (*referenced the displacement presentation*). Your best faith efforts show. **Brooke:** Thank you Commissioner Green. It was good to see you at the headquarters last week. You are a great partner and we will do well on the other project. **Commissioner Watson:** Thank you Shawmut team for the presentation.

### **BEC Commissioners' Follow-up Requests/Concerns**

PJ Kennedy School Addition & Renovation corrective action letters were submitted to the Commission and distributed to the commissioners via email on May 7, 2025. Commissioner Watson requested a copy of the BPDA's 2024 Economic Impact Analysis and a breakdown of individual trades from the Impact Analysis research that would show how much money could have been acquired if in compliance in those individual trades. Jodi will provide a copy and reach out to the BPDA researcher for that additional information.

### **Sanction Recommendation – Nothing Outstanding**

### **DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

**Duration: 6 mins.**

**Jodi Sugarmen-Brozan (Deputy Chief, Worker Empowerment):** Congratulations to our BRJP Construction Monitor, Takara Hamilton for earning her Bachelor's Degree this month! I forgot to mention in my announcements an important Project Labor Agreement signed by Mayor Wu and the Greater Boston Building Trades last week. This will ensure the Boston Public Schools are updated with energy efficient and state of the art facilities. In addition, there's a commitment by the building trades to bring on 50 young people a year from Madison Park Vocational School to Building Pathways and to union apprenticeship programs. For those who didn't receive that information, I will share it. **Compliance Monitoring Snapshot:** Because all projects are not able to be presented before the BEC, we want to share a snapshot of the projects currently monitored by BRJP. There are 172 projects currently being monitored - 57 @ less than 25% complete; 27 @ 25% - 50% complete; 37 @ 50% - 75% complete and 51 @ 75% or more complete (*8 projects were completed this month*). We are also working on a monthly report out of final completion of projects to include those that don't come before the BEC (*working with Salesforce for implementation*). This would also help to produce an annual report (*referenced the economic impact analysis*). Thank you to the BRJP Staff for working with the Salesforce database to better identify late payrolls and setting up a transparent, consistent system to bring recommendations for sanctions and fines to the BEC. Lastly, there's been a lot of publicity around the White Stadium Renovation (WSR) project and there's been a commitment by the City of Boston and the Legacy Football Club to awarding 50% of all contracting dollars across 3 phases (design, construction and operations) of the WSR to M/WBEs. Pamela Ruffo (BRJP Construction Monitor) and Christopher Brown (BRJP Manager) have been participating in the Supplier Diversity Advisory Group and attending the Contracting Opportunity Fairs to provide updates on progress. More information at [boston.gov/white-stadium](https://boston.gov/white-stadium). **Commissioner Watson:** I would like to share some thoughts on the Project Labor Agreement (PLA) with Madison Park High Vocational School. I appreciate that over the years of my being on this commission there's been a space to express my beliefs which may not always be popular. I believe it has made this commission stronger to share our different perspectives, respectfully, and I hope for that today. Having worked with and engaged with those in the M/WBE community and those working to build affordable housing, mostly non-union and mostly black and brown. There's concern that PLA's can and oftentimes do, perpetuate economic segregation and racial exclusion. PLA's are often promoted as engines of opportunity and equity but become barriers locking out the very communities they claim to uplift (*referenced a quote from former President of the National Black Chamber of Commerce, Harry Alford regarding PLA's negative impact and a quote in the press release applauding the positive outcomes of a PLA*). Boston Jobs must belong to Boston workers and this PLA is more like a PR tool. **Commissioner Green:** A quote Commissioner Watson referenced from the press release was my quote. As an alumnae of Madison Park High Vocational School (class of 2005), my vocational time with a non-union shop was a minimum wage experience (*no growth in non-union*). I'm a product of a PLA with the benefits of collective bargaining, debt-free training and a sustainable family income. As a graduate of Building Pathways, I'm speaking from experience. I live in the neighborhood (*questioned where Commissioner Watson "Travis" lives*). I too am a product of Chuck Turner's work (*referenced Commissioner Watson's mention of Chuck Turner*). I believe the narrative Commissioner Watson gives is false. The PLA with Madison is awesome and historic work. **Commissioner Watson:** Personal attacks are unbecoming of a commissioner. What I shared is not a narrative. It is factual information and there are exceptions to the rule. I wish we could have a professional adult conversation (*Commissioner Green interrupted Commissioner Watson's response*). Unfortunately, we must adjourn the meeting.

**Motion to adjourn, Commissioner Watson. So moved, Commissioner Green**

**Meeting adjourned 2:50pm**

**KO/Executive Coordinator**