



# City of Milwaukee

200 E. Wells Street  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53202

## Meeting Minutes

### MILLENNIAL TASK FORCE

**CHAIR: MARQUAYLA ELLISON**

*Jezamil Arroyo-Vega, Nick Carnahan, Angela Damiani, Jordan Donald, Tenia Fisher, Jeremy Fojut, Adam Gabornitz, Michael Hostad, Amelia Kegel, Noel Kegel, Elizabeth McLaren, Kacee Ochalek, Jason Rae, Ger Thao, and Tiffany Henry*

**Staff Assistant: Chris Lee, 414-286-2232**

**Legislative Liaison: Alex Highley, 414-286-8661**

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Tuesday, May 26, 2020

8:00 AM

Virtual

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This will be a virtual meeting conducted via Go To Meeting. Should you wish to join this meeting from your phone, tablet, or computer you may go to <https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/726682309>. You can also dial in using your phone United States: +1 (872) 240-3412 and Access Code: 726-682-309.

**1. Call to order.**

*Meeting called to order at 8:04 a.m.*

**2. Roll call.**

**Present** 12 - Rae, Fojut, Arroyo-Vega, Damiani, Donald, Ellison, Fisher, Gabornitz, Kegel, Kegel, McLaren and Ochalek

**Absent** 2 - Carnahan and Thao

**Excused** 2 - Hostead and Henry

**Also present:**

*Alex Highley, Legislative Reference Bureau  
Bernadette Karanja, Workforce Development Section*

**3. Review and approval of the previous meeting minutes.**

*Meeting minutes from the May 12, 2020 were approved without objection.*

**4. Discussion with interested parties and members from the public.**

*A. Department of Employee Relations*

*Appearing:*

*Emily Keeley, Dept. of Employee Relations (DER)*

*Ms. Keeley provided some insight and data from her office. She does workforce planning with City departments concerning recruitment, retention, and data analysis. Overall, City workforce data show that Millennials represent 53% of new City hires, 30% of the overall workforce, 48% of separations, and have on average less than 2 years of service. For example, there is an 85% turnover rate for City Public Health Nurse positions. Millennials have not been the most diverse generation for the City workforce but are incrementally becoming more diverse over the last 5 years. Retention and not attraction seem to be the issue. The skills gap is widening between Baby Boomers and Millennials. DER has been engaged in retention measures, such as having stay interviews to find out what is important to City employees. DER is still developing exit interviews, which will be key to find out the reasons why City employee separate from the City. DER does not know the reasons, and some reasons could possibly be tied to compensation, values, and culture. There have been other ongoing City strategies such as the City's management training program and various departmental internship and apprenticeship initiatives. For example, the Department of Public Works - Urban Forestry Division has an arborist apprenticeship program that recruits high school students to become certified arborists and eventually transition into forestry entry level positions.*

*Members questioned Gen Z City employment, City turnover for all generations, career and non-career ladder positions, fields with consistent separations, educated opinion for reasons why people separate, and demographics of City Millennials.*

*Ms. Keeley replied. Turnover is between 3 to 8 years across the City as a whole. She can follow-up with data on turnover numbers for career and non-career ladder positions. Gen Z represent a very small percentage (12% to 14%) of the City workforce population and not much data exists for them. In her opinion, some reasons for turnover may include lesser compensation (especially for STEM positions) when compared to the higher, competing compensation of other jurisdictions (especially the suburbs), bad workplace culture, no sense of community, lack of a formal mentorship program, and no core City value or mission. For example, suburbs pay \$58,000 for civil engineers compared to \$51,000 for Milwaukee. Non-STEM fields retain more employees for the City, such as human resources. A mentorship program is lacking for the City with no follow-up with new hires after they are sent to their respective departments after their orientation.*

*City-employed Millennials approximately show the following makeup: 56% Caucasian, 30% African American, 11% Hispanic, 3% Asian, less than 1% American Indian, and 0% Pacific Islander. Caucasian is still the majority race group. The percentage for African Americans is increasing while the percentage for Hispanics has decreased slightly. She can provide further Millennial demographics based on gender. She will follow-up and provide additional data points, as discussed, to the task force.*

*Member Ochalek said that she is working with the Common Council President's office to develop an ERG career development program to provide mentorship to City employee.*

*B. Other*

*There was no other discussion.*

## **5. Discussion, review or recommendations on data, priority items, and tasks.**

### A. Data

Chair Ellison directed members to provide their takeaways, insights, or data on the following topics.

#### 1). Generation Iowa Commission

Member Gabornitz said that perhaps the task force should not duplicate what the commission had done since the commission's recommendations did not make much impact.

#### 2). Milwaukee Tech Hub Coalition

Member Gabornitz said the coalition is new, different, a unified effort from both the private and public sectors; however, it is more top heavy with big corporations and needs more inclusion from smaller firms.

Chair Ellison said that she liked the different components of the coalition and its focus on youths.

#### 3). LRB research

Mr. Highley gave an overview on the task force research topics document, which was forwarded to all members for their review. The document serves to give the task force baseline information on what the City has done, has information on peer cities, is tailored towards task force priority items, helps to lessen the burden for the task force, and can transition into a final report. It lists many programs and initiatives that the task force can take from or build upon rather than start from scratch. The information covers all age groups, is not specific to Millennials, but includes Millennials. Some takeaways from the research on peer cities include that funding new programs may not work or be feasible, economic development organizations such as in Nashville have played key roles for local governments, and expanding apprenticeship programs both public and private have been compelling. It may be more feasible for cities to build upon efforts that already exist.

Ms. Karanja added comments. Best practices should be looked at. Wisconsin has great standards. The black and brown community has low knowledge of apprenticeship opportunities. Government and the private sector should work more hand-in-hand with a common vision such as the case with the Milwaukee Tech Hub. The City's Compete Milwaukee program, WRTP, and Employ Milwaukee have been successful public-private partners to build, provide, and develop workforce, skills training, placement, and pipelines.

Members further commented. The task force should consider different solutions and provide different recommendations for people who are on different career paths. While apprenticeship and internship solutions may attract or apply to younger people, they may not work for older Millennials. Promotions, as an example, could be more important for older Millennials. Millennials like to be tied to a concrete city vision. Retention solutions are important. Police brutality seem to be an issue for City youths. Proper training, such as the Blueprint for Peace, should be incorporated as part of police training. Task force recommendations have to be feasible since City government has the responsibility to implement them. Funds or endorsement should be given towards internships and apprenticeships.

#### 4). Population migration

Member Fojut provided insight on "Metro-to-Metro by Age 2011-2015" population migration data, which was forwarded to members. Although important, task force discussions have been most been mostly about personal experiences. When looking at mobility, more Millennials come to the proper metro area than leave it, especially from Chicago. Data showed that the 18-19 years of age group was the highest group (2412 on average) to leave the City metro area with half going to Dane County (Madison). Also, the City metro area lost people to Minnesota. Many other age groups, including older ones, do leave to non-metro areas locally and other out-of-state metro cities in smaller numbers. Overall, younger people (Gen Z) are leaving the Milwaukee metro area and going to college elsewhere, especially to Madison. There may be a university and higher education issue for Milwaukee, especially for the University of Wisconsin - Milwaukee. Milwaukee universities may be a fallback and not a first option for prospective students. Madison's recruitment is more global. It appear that less people are going to universities. Online classes may negatively impact Milwaukee. The data does not support the assumption that people with families come back to Milwaukee. The Milwaukee metro area migration numbers are not good, but even with poorer numbers is the City of Milwaukee.

Members further commented. The brain drain issue should be a metro issue with Milwaukee being a big component. The City metro area is a net outflow except for the foreign born citizen (immigration) population and the rising Hispanic birth rate, which has kept Milwaukee afloat. Efforts should be targeted towards immigration and the foreign born population, such as extending work VISAs. To entice students to attend Milwaukee colleges, tuition should be discounted for both out-of-state and local students. There should be more scholarships given and a city pool discount rate for local students. Minnesota has tuition reciprocity with Wisconsin. There should be a HBC in Milwaukee. Milwaukee colleges may have the label of being community colleges, which may be a stigma for people. Pre-college programs play an important role to recruit and support students. More data or insight should be sought from them such as from UW-Milwaukee and Marquette University. A local recruiter should come to the task force. A sense of pride and good narrative is lacking for Milwaukee, and people seem to go elsewhere to get them. Milwaukee's narrative needs to change. More connections should be made between high schools and local colleges for which there seems to be an overall disconnect. Of importance is to attract and retain young college students. The reality is that there is no control to make older folks stay in the City area; however, efforts should be made to attract them back or retain them.

Mr. Highley added that on a policy perspective, the Common Council has the ability to legislatively and via the City's Intergovernmental Relations Division (lobbyist department) support tuition change at the state level.

Members discussed that despite being tasked to address the brain drain for Millennials, of equal importance is for the task force to address youths and young adults (Gen Z and early Millennials) to make an impact.

Members agreed that the task force should focus equally on both the different age groups of 15-25 (pre-college/education) years of age and 25-35 (early workforce) years of age.

#### 5). Wisconsin Student Deb Task Force

There was no insight from members.

6). *Other*

*There was no other discussion.*

*B. Tasks and priority items*

*There was no discussion for these items.*

- 1). *Assess the major reasons Millennials leave Milwaukee after college graduation.*
- 2). *Assess the major reasons Millennials stay in Milwaukee after college graduation.*
- 3). *Analyze programs and policies, including peer city models, designed to attract and retain talented, young individuals.*
- 4). *Propose measures to attract and retain Millennials.*

- a. *Apprenticeships*
- b. *Talent pipelines*
- c. *City identity and narrative*
- d. *Government support, promotion, or assistance*
  - i. *Startups*
  - ii. *Community initiatives*
  - iii. *Inclusion of all neighborhoods*
- e. *Education*

- 5). *Make recommendations to the Common Council regarding potential legislative changes and other measures needed to address the Brain Drain problem.*

**6. Agenda items for the next meeting.**

*To be determined.*

**7. Set next meeting dates and times.**

*To be determined.*

**8. Adjournment.**

*Meeting adjourned at 10:00 a.m.*

*Chris Lee, Staff Assistant  
Council Records Section  
City Clerk's Office*