

## Worcester Jobs Fund Oversight Committee

October 1, 2018

10:00 am

MCRWB, 340 Main Street Suite 400 Worcester, MA 01608

### Meeting Minutes

WJF Oversight Committee Attendance: David Minasian, Maritza Cruz, Janice Ryan Weekes, Karen King, and Jeffrey Turgeon.

WJF Program Director: Kelsey Lamoureux

Guest: Suja Chacko

- The meeting was called to order after a quorum was established.

#### Welcome and Introductions:

- All attendees introduced themselves, their positions and their organizations.

#### History and Mission of the Worcester Jobs Fund:

- D. Minasian provided a brief overview of the history of the Worcester Jobs Fund over the past few years including a description of the mission and partner organizations of the Oversight Committee. K. Lamoureux summarized current and previous programming offered by the Worcester Jobs Fund.

#### Previous Collaborations:

- K. Lamoureux highlighted that the Worcester Jobs Fund has previously collaborated with the Human Resources Department for the City of Worcester in efforts to connect local residents with local municipal employment opportunities. Previous activities have included K. Lamoureux attending Opportunity Fairs to share information about upcoming job training programs and job search services available to local clients as well as the creation of the Commercial Driver's License Class B training program that has helped expand the local labor market pool for trained CDL drivers. K. Lamoureux explained that a representative from the Department of Public Works has made presentations to the Commercial Driver's License and the Worcester Building Pathways Pre-Apprenticeship training programs about available openings with the Department of Public Works as well.

#### Additional Areas of Collaboration:

- S. Chacko described her role as the Chief Diversity Officer for the City of Worcester and summarized some of the initiatives she is leading. Initiatives included continuing to provide Opportunity Fairs within the community, promoting the hiring and promotion of

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underrepresented populations within the City of Worcester employee pool, collaborating with the Worcester Community Labor Coalition to begin work for the disparity study in the construction labor market, as well as working with each department to discuss their diversity and inclusion planning and implementation.

- J. Turgeon suggested that available positions for the City of Worcester be shared with staff at the MassHire Worcester Career Center to assist in outreach to local and underrepresented populations. J. Weekes noted that adding a step in the hiring process to include sending the job description to one of the Business Service Representatives would allow staff to make a recruitment job order for the position.
- M. Cruz inquired about current outreach strategies and S. Chacko described activities completed by the members of the Diversity Committee, including Opportunity Fairs in addition to other activities. J. Turgeon suggested advertising openings through the list serve managed by Worcester Community Connections. K. King and M. Cruz. noted that perceptions about diversity within the City staff may be a contributing factor to the limited number of underrepresented applicants. S. Chacko highlighted that there are efforts to build recruitment, retainment and promotion strategies with all departments across the City to support underrepresented employees.
- D. Minasian inquired about diversity as a hiring consideration by the School Department. S. Chacko noted that even though the School Department is a separate entity from the City of Worcester Human Resources Department and manages their own hiring and retention strategies, there is a strong partnership between the School Department and the Human Resources Department for the City to collaborate on different initiatives and to share resources and best practices. One area of collaboration is the focus on increasing the applicant pool of diverse candidates for the substitute teacher positions in the district. J. Turgeon noted that there may be professionals of color interested in becoming teachers who might benefit from a training program that assists individuals looking to make a career change. J. Weekes explained that she recently spoke with a job seeker living in Worcester who, despite strong qualifications, has been having difficulty securing an interview for a teacher position in the district. S. Chacko stated that she would be interested in developing a teacher pipeline for underrepresented populations and learning more from individuals with diverse backgrounds who have been unsuccessful in attaining employment with the City. K. King noted that Worcester is developing economically and attracting a lot of attention from individuals interested in moving to Worcester; thus, strengthening diversity and inclusion strategies will help prospective residents know that Worcester is a City that hires individuals reflective of the local population.
- K. Lamoureux inquired about openings for various volunteer committees and suggested that the partners of the Worcester Jobs Fund assist in spreading information about these volunteer opportunities with community members.
- D. Minasian inquired about strategies to fill the openings for the Department of Public Works. S. Chacko highlighted that she is working with the Department of Public Works staff on their efforts to fill a non-civil service position and looking to explore implementing techniques to recruit underrepresented populations for the civil service positions as well.
- D. Minasian stated that Providence has a mandate for Providence based companies to all Providence jobs with only Providence residents for a short period of time before opening the opportunity up to the public and that this could be something for Worcester to explore.

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Next Steps:

- K. Lamoureux and S. Chacko agreed that they would remain in contact to further develop topics discussed in the meeting and report back to the Worcester Jobs Fund Oversight Committee.

The next monthly meeting will be held Wednesday October 10, 2018 at 10:00 a.m.

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