

Worcester Jobs Fund Oversight Committee

February 27, 2020

10:00 a.m.

IBEW Local 96, 242 Mill St. Worcester, MA 01602

Meeting Minutes

WJF Oversight Committee Attendance: Karen Pelletier, Maritza Cruz, Fred Taylor, James Chabot (proxy), Kristin Bafaro (proxy), Adrianna Buduski and Tommy Maloney.

WJF Staff: Kelsey Lamoureux and Theodora Appiah.

Guests: Peter Dunn, Ethan Brown, Shawn Fitzpatrick, Maureen Hart, Bill Riordan, Brian Cohen, David Cullinane, Erick Lacy, Robert E. Longden, and Jie Chen (call-in).

- The meeting was called to order after a quorum was established.
- All attendees introduced themselves, their positions and their organizations.

Approval of January 23, 2020 Meeting Minutes:

- The meeting minutes from January 23, 2020 at 242 Mill Street were reviewed and F. Taylor made a motion to approve the minutes. The motion was seconded by T. Maloney and unanimously approved.

Economic Development Updates:

- K. Lamoureux opened a discussion on the current format for TIF applicant meetings and invited committee members to provide suggestions on new meeting format and guidelines. M. Cruz shared the goal associated with the TIF applicant meetings and the impact of information shared to the public. F. Taylor provided information about the community response to Table Talk Pie's TIF application and explained that the Worcester Community Labor Coalition is having discussions with its membership around organizational and individual advocacy campaigns. P. Dunn highlighted a few false rumors that had arisen within the community and expressed the need for promoting accurate information to the community. P. Dunn provided information on the wage standards for all future TIF projects.
- T. Maloney shared concerns Table Talk Pies receiving an additional TIF despite a history of OSHA violations. P. Dunn explained that history of worker safety is considered during the review process and that the new Table Talk facility is expected to improve efficiency and employee safety through modern equipment and design.
- E. Brown provided updates on the work of the Construction Diversity Monitoring Committee to build procedures and resources for contractors working to meet or exceed diversity goals.

Discussion with TIF Applicant, Wuxi:

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

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- K. Lamoureux provided a summary of the mission, purpose, goals, and trainings of the Worcester Job Fund.
- P. Dunn provided an overview of the area proposed in the project and noted that the new facility would be an economic boost for Worcester. P. Dunn highlighted that the City of Worcester is honored to be the location for WuXi's first United States biomanufacturing facility.
- S. Fitzpatrick distributed a packet of information on the project and summarized the mission, partners, production, staffing/hiring plan, location, and a timeline for completion of the facility.
- K. Lamoureux explained that there is a grant opportunity currently being pursued by Worcester Night Life to purchase biomanufacturing equipment and that WuXi could be a key employer partner on the project. This collaboration would promote alignment between local training equipment and WuXi's hiring needs. S. Fitzpatrick offered to be the one connected to that project.
- F. Taylor expressed appreciation for WuXi's commitment to coming in Worcester and inquired about their workforce needs. S. Fitzpatrick explained that positions require credentials from certificate level through advanced professional degrees. B. Riordan and M. Hart shared basic information about entry-level positions and cross-functional skills that can be utilized in different areas of the company.
- M. Cruz inquired about salaries for WuXi employees and M. Hart stated salary ranges have not been finalized, but are being developed to be highly competitive with local comparable positions. F. Taylor requested that wage information be shared after it is finalized and M. Hart agreed to provide this information to the Worcester Jobs Fund Oversight Committee when it becomes available.
- T. Maloney explained the importance of WuXi hiring local residents for their manufacturing and construction positions. E. Lacy detailed WuXi's current status in pre-construction and agreed that their goal is to hire local companies when possible.
- D. Cullinane provided Consigli Construction's history meeting workforce diversity goals and highlighted their standing partnerships with pre-apprenticeship training programs, local unions, and local contractors
- K. Lamoureux suggested continued communication and collaboration with WuXi project partners and the Worcester Jobs Fund Oversight Committee as position details develop and grants become available.

WJF Financial Update:

- K. Lamoureux presented financial updates on the Worcester Jobs Fund, Washington Square, and Department of Transportation (DOT) Funding and as well as updates on the overall FY 20 Budget.

WJF Director Report:

- K. Lamoureux provided updates on recruitment for current programs including Clinical Medical Assistant and Building Pathways Pre-Apprenticeship program. K. Lamoureux shared information about Table Talk Pies invitation to tour their facility and discuss direct hire recruitment strategies on March 12th.
- K. Lamoureux shared information about a re-entry grant through Commonwealth Corporation to support returning citizens reintegrate into the community and secure gainful employment. F.

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Taylor and M. Cruz inquired more information about the grant and K. Lamoureux provided detailed information about the collaboration between the proposed partners including Worcester County Sheriff's Office, MassHire Central Region Workforce Board, MassHire Worcester Career Center, New England Tractor Trailer Training School and the Worcester Job Fund.

Other Items/Announcements:

- F. Taylor shared information about the upcoming Black Heritage Festival fundraiser event that will take place next Sunday, March 8th at 290 Millbury St. Worcester.

Adjourn:

- A motion to adjourn was made by K. Pelletier, was seconded by M. Cruz, and was unanimously approved.

The next monthly meeting will be April 23, 2020, at 10:00 a.m.