

Worcester Jobs Fund Oversight Committee

June 25, 2020

10:00 a.m.

Conducted Via WebEx

Join by phone: +1-415-655-0001 US Toll

Meeting number (access code): 160 250 7986; Meeting password: r5BJkhPes27

Meeting Minutes

WJF Oversight Committee Attendance: Karen Pelletier, Fred Taylor, Janice Ryan Weekes, Maritza Cruz, Adrianna Buduski, and Jeff Turgeon.

WJF Staff: Kelsey Lamoureux and Theodora Appiah.

Guests: Peter Dunn

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

Approval of May 28, 2020 Meeting Minutes:

- The meeting minutes from the May 28, 2020 virtual meeting were reviewed and F. Taylor made a motion to approve the minutes. The motion was seconded by J. Ryan Weekes and unanimously approved.

Economic Development Updates:

- P. Dunn provided updates on current TIF Projects throughout the City of Worcester. P. Dunn noted that workforce diversity data will be available for the next Construction Diversity Monitoring Committee meeting. P. Dunn also noted that the WuXi is project is scheduled to begin construction in July 2020.
- J. Turgeon inquired about the employment needs for WuXi and K. Lamoureux noted that WuXi's human resource staff is open to collaborate with the Worcester Jobs Fund when the project is closer to hiring. K. Lamoureux also noted that Worcester Night Life applied for biomanufacturing equipment through the Capital Skills Grant, which could increase access to relevant equipment for training.
- P. Dunn described the Mayor's Economic Recovery Committee meetings which are held on Friday afternoons at 2:00 p.m. across a variety of industries including business, education, healthcare, workforce development, restaurants, etc. as well as the Worcester Together meetings held Thursday mornings at 8:30 a.m. to bring together community serving organizations across the City.

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 final spending of FY 20 funds.

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- M. Cruz requested clarification on Washington Square funding and F. Taylor inquired about salary charges across the accounts. K. Lamoureux further explained the Washington Square funding as well as how salaries are charged to the different accounts.

WJF Director Report:

- K. Lamoureux provided updates on current distance learning programming for CDL Class B, Clinical Medical Assistant, and Building Pathways Pre-apprenticeship participants. K. Lamoureux provided a summary of the CDL Class B June cohort. The 12 participants began the blended program (online and in-person) on June 16th and are completing training. K. Lamoureux noted that the 12 CDL B students and 9 Clinical Medical students completed the Bounce USA online curriculum. K. Lamoureux noted that the Clinical Medical Assistant students need access to a building to resume clinical training and since Worcester Technical High School remains closed, a local medical training school, the Fieldstone School could be rented for this use. In order to rent the space for the needed 32 hours, it would cost \$2,000. J. Turgeon proposed a motion for up to \$2,000 to be used to rent a space for the Clinical Medical Assistant students to use to complete training. The motion was seconded by F. Taylor and unanimously approved. K. Lamoureux shared that the Building Pathways Program has still not reopened due to apprenticeship training centers continue to remain closed to outside groups. Due to the hands-on visits to the centers being a critical component of the exploratory nature of the program, the program is currently suspended. The tentative plan is to resume training in Phase 4 when more training centers reopen.

FY 21 Planning:

- K. Lamoureux provided an overview of FY 2021 planning for different training programs including proposals for School Bus, CDL Class A, CDL Class B, and Clinical Medical Assisting trainings. K. Lamoureux described the costs, schedule, training providers, and student capacity across the different programs.
- K. Lamoureux explained that the Worcester Public Schools has offered to partner with the Worcester Jobs Fund for the School Bus training and is willing to provide training free of charge to the project. J. Ryan Weekes inquired about starting salary for School Bus drivers, summer employment for drivers, and unemployment eligibility. K. Lamoureux explained that average starting wages for school bus drivers are approximately \$17.00 per hour with options for summer employment and offered to look into whether or not drivers are eligible for unemployment. F. Taylor made a motion to support 10 students participating in the School Bus program. The motion was seconded by M. Cruz and unanimously approved.
- K. Lamoureux shared further information about the CDL A and CDL B classes offered through New England Tractor Trailer Training School (NETTTS) and respective wages for the two levels. F. Taylor shared concerns about the difference in training lengths and necessary level of commitment for the two programs. K. Pelletier noted that offering the CDL Class A training to Worcester residents is aligned with the mission of the Worcester Job Fund and supports offering some students the longer training, even though it is more expensive. M. Cruz inquired about the full commitment expected from CDL A students and K. Lamoureux provided detailed information including the expectations of the CDL A program. J. Ryan Weekes inquired about an increase in the number of participants for CDL Class B, if CDL A is not approved. K. Lamoureux noted that

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the choice for distribution between the two trainings is the decision of the committee. F. Taylor made a motion to approve 8 participants to complete CDL B training. The motion was seconded by J. Turgeon and unanimously approved. M. Cruz made a motion to support 2 students in completing CDL A training. The motion was seconded by F. Taylor and unanimously approved.

- K. Lamoureux opened a discussion regarding purchasing 20 Chromebooks for students to use in order to access online programming. M. Cruz acknowledged her support in purchasing the Chromebooks and expressed its benefits for students who do not have access to devices in their household. A. Buduski shared that accessibility to internet can also be a challenge for students. F. Taylor made a motion to approve up to \$10,000 to be used to purchase approximately 20 Chromebooks for students to access online learning. The motion was seconded by A. Buduski and unanimously approved.
- K. Lamoureux opened a discussion around funding another cycle Clinical Medical Assistant through the Nightlife program for Fall 2020 and noted that the training is expected to be offered in-person as evening classes for 13 weeks. F. Taylor inquired about the participation and placements of students for the current Clinical Medical Assistant cohort. K. Lamoureux explained that current students have not yet completed the hands-on component because they are waiting to have access to the clinical space in the fall. M. Cruz shared concerns about availability of student externship and placement opportunities during the COVID-19 pandemic. K. Pelletier suggested offering scholarships for a few students across Nightlife programming for the fall.

Other Items/Announcements:

- J. Ryan Weekes shared that K. Lamoureux was selected for the Worcester Business Journal's 40 Under 40 Award. The committee congratulated K. Lamoureux for her accomplishment.

Adjourn:

- A motion to adjourn was made by F. Taylor, was seconded by A. Buduski, and was unanimously approved.

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