

Worcester Jobs Fund Oversight Committee

April 22, 2021

10:00 a.m.

Via WebEx

Meeting Minutes

WJF Oversight Committee Attendance: Karen Pelletier, Fred Taylor, Adrianna Buduski, Jeffrey Turgeon, Maritza Cruz, Janice Ryan Weekes, and Ruth Seward

WJF Staff: Kelsey Lamoureux

Guest: Peter Dunn

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

Approval of March 25, 2021 Meeting Minutes:

- The meeting minutes from the March 25, 2021 virtual meeting were reviewed and J. Ryan Weekes made a motion to approve the minutes. The motion was seconded by F. Taylor and unanimously approved.

Economic Development Updates:

- P. Dunn informed the committee that there are no updates on TIF applications in the near future. F. Taylor inquired about whether or not residency goals are included in TIF agreements. P. Dunn explained that these residency goals are applied to TIF agreements, but not always included in other projects that receive public funds from other sources.

Discussion of Minority Contractor Involvement in TIF Projects:

- K. Lamoureux provided information about recent media coverage regarding the minority contractor involvement on the Polar Park Construction project. P. Dunn explained the monitoring inaccuracies for minority contractors on the project and noted several efforts that will be implemented in the future to prevent this from occurring again. These proposed changes include increasing monitoring activities on tracking business diversity status and separating the tracking of Female, Minority, Veteran and LGBT owned businesses. F. Taylor stated the need to have more diverse contractors register on Worcester's Diverse Business Directory and highlighted that many contractors are unable to bid on jobs because they cannot wait 90 days to be reimbursed for services. M. Cruz explained that if different tasks of the project could be bid on by different contractors, there would be more opportunity for more diverse and smaller businesses. K. Pelletier stated that the Construction Diversity Monitoring Committee members are pursuing the development of a list of diverse building trades contractors. P. Dunn added that Worcester's Diverse Business Directory is accessible to businesses for self-registration so that contractors interested in government or non-government contracts can be added.

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WJF Financial Update:

- K. Lamoureux presented an overview of the financial reports for the Worcester Jobs Fund, Washington Square, and Department of Transportation accounts through March 2021. K. Lamoureux provided updated participant numbers for current and future FY 2021 programming.
- R. Seward announced that Worcester Night Life is planning to implement a reformatted 150 hours Diesel Technician Pre-apprenticeship training program at the new South Community High School.

FY 21 Worcester Jobs Fund Spenddown:

- K. Lamoureux reviewed the remaining funding for the Worcester Jobs Fund account 310 and explained that there is enough funding to accommodate another cycle of Commercial Driver's License Class B training in June of 2021 for 6 Worcester resident participants. F. Taylor made a motion to support a cycle of CDL B training starting in June 2021. The motion was seconded by A. Buduski and unanimously approved.
- K. Lamoureux provided a summary of the Jobs for the Future project with HireMee that is offering up to 350 individuals the opportunity to participate in free, virtual job training a medical office assistants. J. Turgeon noted that the recruitment for this project will be conducted over a short period of time and a timely responses are needed. J. Ryan Weekes explained that the Jobs for the Future project is also going to include the training of 5 individuals to become electric vehicle charging station technicians during fall of 2021.
- M. Cruz made a motion to approve up to \$100 in support services to be offered to eligible City of Worcester residents who participate in the Medical Office Assistant Training program offered virtually by HireMee. The motion was seconded by J. Ryan Weekes and unanimously approved.

WJF Director Report:

- K. Lamoureux provided updates on current programs, completed programs, program in recruitment and SNAP updates. Current programs include IT Support Specialist, Clinical Medical Assistant, School Bus Driver, CDL A and CDL B training provided through the Worcester Job Fund, Donnelly Grant, and Veteran's Grant. Programs currently in recruitment include Building Pathways and Medical Office Assistant. Graduates from completed programs are currently seeking employment or are in the retention phase of employment.
- K. Lamoureux shared that SNAP application assistance will continue in FY2021 and has a goal to support at least 50 households with their applications by September 2022.
- M. Cruz requested that the contact number listed for her be updated.
- K. Lamoureux provided times that Tocci Building Corporation is available to provide a tour of the Courthouse Renovation project and a time on April 28, 2021 was selected.

Other Items/Announcements:

- F. Taylor announced that Worcester Common Ground is looking for a Real Estate Assessment Manager with construction experience and offering a salary of \$55,000 annually. Committee members stated that they would share information about the opportunity to community job seekers.
- K. Pelletier noted that the Worcester Regional Chamber of Commerce is currently accepting applications for the Leadership Worcester until May 28, 2021. K. Pelletier expressed support for

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Worcester Jobs Fund staff to apply for this professional development opportunity. M. Cruz described the importance of equity training being incorporated in the curriculum for Leadership Worcester. K. Pelletier stated that an equity lens is applied to each day of training across the various topics.

- M. Cruz provided details about the Stand Against Racism event hosted virtually by the YWCA of Central MA on April 29, 2021 at 12:00pm. The event is titled: From Declarations to Change: Racism as a Public Health Crisis.

Adjourn:

- A motion to adjourn was made by F. Taylor was seconded J. Turgeon and was unanimously approved.

The next monthly meeting will be Thursday, May 27, 2021, at 10:00 a.m.

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