

Worcester Jobs Fund Oversight Committee

March 23, 2023

10:00 a.m.

Via WebEx

Meeting Minutes

WJF Oversight Committee Attendance: Karen Pelletier, Fred Taylor, Ruth Seward, Janice Ryan Weekes, Jeff Turgeon, Roberto Diaz

WJF Guest Attendance: Victoria Porteiro-Cejas

WJF Staff Attendance: Arianna Drummy, Anh Dao

- The meeting was called to order after a quorum was established at 10:03 am.

Approval of February 23, 2023 Meeting Minutes:

The meeting minutes from February 23, 2023 virtual meeting were reviewed. A motion to approve the minutes and second were made and the motion was passed.

ARPA Applications Update:

J Turgeon prefaced discussion to remind committee of existing conflicts of interest, hence the reason for a separate committee reviewing applications. There is just under \$1 million available to authorize, with 19 applications, so some applications will have to be rejected entirely or only funded partially. J Turgeon reviewed the process each application will have to go through, from committee review to city manager approval. F Taylor raised the two WPS applications who have the same contact person listed and whether an entity applying for funding for several programs would have that factored into its evaluation. A Dao clarified that to her knowledge the WPS contact person is the official grant writer but the actual administrative party would be separate entities within the Worcester Public Schools. K Pelletier expressed concern that if the parties applying for funding were excluded from voting, that would only leave 2 committee members to partake in the evaluations. The committee members discussed who would be considered part of the reviewing party. J Turgeon recommended we open up the reviewing committee to individuals not already a part of the Worcester Jobs Fund. A Drummy reviewed the committee members or past committee members that would be invited to be a part of this process.

WJF Financial Update:

A Drummy reviewed the remaining budget for the 310 Worcester Jobs Fund Account, which has approximately \$40,000 remaining. Invoices are expected from the Worcester Public Schools for our CCMA and Phlebotomy programs and from NETTTS for the CDL B trainings. The Worcester Jobs Fund budget is on track to be spent down. She then reviewed the remaining budget for the DOT Building Pathways grant which is expected to have about \$10,000 remaining once the final invoice from Building Pathways Boston is reviewed. The DOT grant has been renewed so any remaining funds will be rolled over to fiscal year 2024. A Drummy proposed recruiting 12 participants for the next cohort starting in October. F Taylor reiterated concerns about sending students to NETTTS in the future considering their low pass rates. A Drummy reviewed the plan moving forward which is to wait and see how students

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perform and if they continue to fail, the NETTTS contract will be revisited. A Dao noted that while we tend to lose School Bus Driver participants early on the process, students are usually able to pass the road test on the first or second try once they complete the behind the wheel training. J Turgeon added that staff has seen better success rates from other training providers so if NETTTS continues to show poor success rates, a corrective action plan will be devised and ultimately if there is no improvement, the contract will be given to the Parker School instead. A Drummy then reviewed the Washington Square fund, which should have \$16,000 remaining once the NETTTS invoice is paid.

WJF Program Update:

A Drummy then reviewed the program enrollments. Currently 89 students are enrolled. The annual enrollment goal is 100. She then reviewed the student demographics and the pre- and post-training job placement statistics. There are currently 9 CCMA trainees, 9 Phlebotomy trainees, 20 School Bus trainees, 4 CDL A trainees and 5 CDL B trainees. There are 8 CCMA graduates, 7 Phlebotomy graduates, 10 Building Pathways graduates and 1 CDL A graduate. Out of the graduates, 6 from CCMA have been placed, 2 from Phlebotomy, 2 from Building Pathways and 1 from CDL A.

A Drummy reviewed current programs starting with the ongoing CDL A cohort. We will continue supporting those who are still going through the training but do not plan on sending any students to NETTTS for CDL A in the foreseeable future considering how this training has panned out. CCMA students graduated and most are placed at their externship sites. Four students will take the CCMA test in April. The Phlebotomy Fall cohort graduated as well, with one student failing the national exam and will retake it in April. Phlebotomists have been more difficult to place since UMass does not have any openings for Phlebotomists but several of them were offered positions at Family Health who also had a recruiter attended graduation. She then reviewed CDL B and shared that most of the students failed their second attempt for CDL B. Four of them are going for their third attempt on April 3rd. She reviewed the CCMA Spring cohort. There are 7 participants and they've received good feedback from the new instructor. There are 7 students in the Phlebotomy cohort and they've also received good feedback from their instructor. Externships for both programs will start in June.

The first cohort of School Bus Training started in February with four days of permit prep from 8 AM to 2 PM. 6 students passed their permit tests and started behind the wheel training. 3 are completing their permits. The second cohort is ongoing and is scheduled on Tuesday and Thursday nights from 5:30 to 7:30 PM.

She announced staff are currently recruiting for the next CDL B cohort starting in May.

She reviewed projections for fiscal year 2023. We are on track to have enrolled 96 participants.

Other Items/Announcements:

F Taylor announced that Rachel Rollins will be speaking at a virtual NAACP meeting next week on Monday at 6:30PM. In addition, the national NAACP conference will be held in Boston this year. F Taylor invited financial sponsors to help send delegates to the conference.

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R Seward announced that her welding program has expanded but her instructors are feeling burnt out so she is looking for potential instructors who could teach even just one night a week.

J Turgeon announced there is a career training fair coming up on April 5, 2023 at the Career Center.

Adjourn:

- A motion to adjourn was made and the committee adjourned at 10:51 A.M.

The next monthly meeting will be Thursday, April 27 2023, at 10:00 a.m.

Respectfully submitted by Anh Dao

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