

Worcester Jobs Fund Oversight Committee

November 18, 2015

10am

IBEW; 240 Mill Street, Worcester, MA

Meeting Notes

Attendees: Leonard Cooper, David Minasian, Leo Miller, Stuart Loosemore, Stephanie Stockwell, Jeff Turgeon, Pat Nixon

Guests: Paul Morano

- At 10:10 D. Minasian called the meeting to order noting a quorum was present. A volunteer was sought to take minutes for this meeting. S. Stockwell agreed, but noted she needed to leave at 11:30 and P. Nixon agreed to finish the minutes after that time.
- With a motion by L. Miller and second by J. Turgeon, the committee voted unanimously to approve the October 14, 2015 Meeting minutes. S. Loosemore noted he would like to be added as an attendee to the 10/14 meeting.
- J. Turgeon spoke about WJF Funding. He discussed the need for a clear process of how to approve expenses needs to be set. The issue arose when P. Nixon wanted to go a conference with a few days' notice but there wasn't a set process to approve the expenses associated with the conference. There was a discussion amongst the committee members on whether to set a monetary threshold where the chair, L. Cooper and vice chair, D. Minasian can approve expenses or to specify what type of spending category could be approved by the chair and vice chair. S. Loosemore stated he would like an amount set for discretionary spending to be approved by L. Cooper and D. Minasian, but pointed out that expenses to be incurred 3 months out should be on the agenda but last minute expenses should be approved by L. Cooper and D. Minasian. After a discussion about the monetary cap approval, J. Turgeon then suggested that the policy be for any unforeseen expenses that the director accrues

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under \$750 between committee meetings, can be approved by L. Cooper and D. Minasian. L. Cooper and D. Minasian will then communicate expense approval to J. Turgeon. J. Turgeon motioned to accept this policy, S. Loosemore seconded the motion and the members unanimously agreed.

This discussion brought up questions on what has already been spent in the budget. J. Turgeon suggested adding an update on finance (expense report) as a standing agenda item. L. Miller thought this was necessary for transparency. L. Miller made the motion to accept this as a standing agenda item, J. Turgeon seconded the motion and the group unanimously agreed. J. Turgeon stated he will seek to have the report developed from the finance department.

P. Nixon asked about travel reimbursement. J. Turgeon says he will get her travel reimbursement forms from City. P. Nixon asked if there is a line item for conferences. J. Turgeon stated there is no specific line item for this. P. Morano suggested that typically City employees do not travel for conferences frequently and this may be something the Committee may wish to consider as it may be a “red flag” for anyone concerned with use of these funds. S. Loosemore asked if the committee should create a detailed budget for resource allocation. J. Turgeon will check to see if unspent funds can be carried over year to year.

P. Morano suggested a conference put on by IEDC on workforce development for P. Nixon to attend.

- P. Morano gave an update to the Committee on City Economic Development projects; Regarding the 520 Park Avenue project, the developer still plans to move forward but the developer was approached by another developer so original developer is deciding whether to keep project the same or expand. The biotech company at Union Street, Biomedical Research Models, is moving forward as a potential 40,000 square feet project. The company has a history of hiring tech students. P. Morano is in the process of drafting a TIF policy. He is hoping to have an

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economic development agenda item for next Tuesday's city council meeting. The TIF policy includes policy, guidelines, process and schedule, it has language about workforce development, local contractors, promotes economic diversity and a quality living wage. The TIF draft will allow for input. P. Morano noted he may need to draft a residential TIF at some time which will delay the draft. He noted he looked at TIF agreements from other communities. The TIF draft does not outline how much relief a company would get based on a number of jobs. L. Miller asked how the election will delay the approval of the TIF document. P. Morano said he is unsure but it will depend who ends up on the ED committee. D. Minasian noted that the Worcester Labor Coalition has been discussing TIF language.

- P. Nixon gave the WJF Director Report. She has been meeting one on one with board members to get up to speed on where we want to be. She has a spreadsheet for her November/December plans and is requesting input from the members. She noted she can be contacted through her gmail email address. P. Nixon proposes a facebook page. J. Turgeon stated city's IT will need to help set up Facebook page but it will need to be actively monitored. She has drafts for two flyers and noted that she has received support from Building Pathways in Boston and Springfield. She tentatively has 5 week training program set to begin April 18. Intensive activities for interviews will be in March. She will send out email next week for activities that need to occur before April 18 apprenticeship program. L. Cooper had questions regarding the advanced outreach strategy. P. Nixon states this is where she needs input. She will hold information sessions but needs assistance from the committee. P. Morano suggests translating flyers into Spanish and getting them into schools to share with families. J. Turgeon states specific schools/grades should be targeted. D. Minasian said P. Nixon will need to meet with S. Stockwell to come up with recruitment strategy to get in touch with parents. L. Cooper said we only have so many slots (20 over a 2 year period) and we should recruit with this number of slots in mind. D. Minasian said we need to recruit, train and employ 20 people and the construction schedule is out of our hands for the summer but at this point looks good. L. Cooper asked if the Building Pathways flyer can be more specific on what we are recruiting for but P. Nixon said she left

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it general because she wants input. L. Cooper wants specific language notifying people this is for an apprenticeship program. P. Nixon asked if we know what unions have signed on. L. Miller asked D. Minasian what unions have committed. D. Minasian said someone has MOAs and a formal report needs to be done but noted several unions off the top of his head. L. Miller expressed concern that there is a lot that needs to be done before 4/18 start date. D. Minasian said we have a curriculum. L. Miller suggested meeting with President of the Building trades to see the feasibility of getting this done for 4/18 and noted it may happen with only a few trades. P. Nixon said she would like to firm up what unions are on board within next 6-10 days. D. Minasian said we need building blocks of training program. The point of the 5 weeks is to have a good idea of who wants to do what areas/where strengths lie and work with labor unions for proper placements. The recruitment process will go from the outreach flyer to informational sessions then interviews to shrink a pool of hundreds down to 10 apprentices. J. Turgeon noted that outreach is one component and WIB person can help with that as P. Nixon should concentrate on building the apprenticeship program. P. Nixon stated she has spoken with Liz and Mary to lead apprenticeship program and the availability of instructors. She reiterated she will send out her timeline from now to 4/18 via email. L. Cooper noted he wants to see women and people of color in program. D. Minasian suggested emailing names of specific organizations for recruitment to Pat and board members can join her in outreach if appropriate. L. Cooper would like to see Worcester Jobs Fund noted on outreach materials. L. Miller asked where the apprenticeship program will take place and reiterated the need to get moving. D. Minasian said we need to set up a program to assess skills and attitudes of the apprentices and Building Pathways has emphasized that by getting the right class through outreach, everything else will fall into place. P. Nixon said she will see who is committed for next meeting, flesh out outreach and identify where help is needed. D. Minasian said we need to work with Building Pathways curriculum and tailor it to the apprentices. J. Turgeon noted that the apprentices will have to go through Workforce Center with Janice Weeks for official placement. L. Miller suggested bringing P. Nixon to a trade meeting so she can meet the union leaders and they can be notified

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that P. Nixon will be calling them with questions. P. Nixon closed her report by reiterating to email/call her with changes/thoughts.

- The Committee then discussed the Federal and State Dept. of Transportation Projects, & pre-apprenticeship programming and noted that this has already been discussed via the WJF director update. However, the board has not heard whether the 5 year plan is a go or not. J. Turgeon is working on state project to count for the match and noted the secretary of labor is handling the match for implementation. J. Turgeon noted Mary Keefe wants to see CDL training which can tie in with DPW union jobs and he asked state if funds could be used for CDL/DPW jobs. The Metrowest Regional Transit Authority has 4 slots for a 12/5 and 12/12 CDL class C training session, but this may be pushed back to January if local residents cannot be recruited in time. L. Cooper asked what the intent was when legislation was written. J. Turgeon stated it was to create a pre-apprentice program. He also stated DPW needs to hire a lot of people with their Class B CDL but they need to be on the civil service list, and this requires the class B CDL. The cost for training is about \$1200/person which is a third of what it normally is. S. Loosemore asked if DPW could sponsor training to be connected with the union job. J. Turgeon said we need an employer sponsor so why not use union. D. Minasian sees a short term need to fill the slots through recruitment and a long-term process for pre-apprenticeship. L. Miller said he would coordinate a meeting with the DPW union to look at apprenticeship/pre-apprenticeship sponsorship options. J. Turgeon asked if we can pay through WJF or if person should pay. (S. Stockwell excuses herself from meeting). After further discussion about CDL training costs, L. Miller made a motion seconded by S. Loosemore that up to \$7,000 from the Worcester Jobs Fund be used to sponsor the four participants in the CDL Class C and Class B trainings, and it was approved unanimously. J. Turgeon will send out information
- The committee discussed the need to publicize the WJF and P. Nixon's hiring. J. Turgeon said he has a new staff person coming on board soon that will be handling communications and will have him help draft a press release.

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- D. Minasian made a motion to adjourn. It was seconded by S. Loosemoore and approved unanimously.

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