



SPOKANE WORKFORCE COUNCIL

MINUTES
FULL COUNCIL MEETING
WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 9, 2020 – 7:30 - 9:30 AM
(Meeting held via Zoom0)

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Alisha Benson	Kelley Charvet	Rebecca Cook	Robert Duron	Dan Evans
Lori Hunley	Dr. Christine Johnson	Machelle Johnson	Commissioner Josh Kerns	Wade Larson
Vicki Leifer	Luis Licea	Tina Morrison	Nancy Nelson	Diane Quincy
Tim Sigler - (designee for Mayor Woodward)	Ben Small	Staci Taylor	Ron Valencia – (designee for Commissioner Kerns)	Christina Vigil Gross
Jennie Weber	Diana Wilhite	Joel White	Laura Wood	

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Dr. David May – Eastern Washington University	Mayor Nadine Woodward
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OTHERS PRESENT:

Mandy Adamson – Talent Solutions	Mark Baldwin – Eastern Washington University	Kevin Brockbank – Community Colleges of Spokane	Rob Crow – Employment Security Department	Yuliya Davis – Volunteers of America
John Dickson – Spokane County	Andy Dwonch – Career Path Services	Cami Eakins – Career Path Services	Tim Henkel – United Way	Richard Hernacki – Providence
Kayci Loftus – WorkSource	Ariel McClair – Talent Solutions	Jen Morris – Spokane Resource Center (CPS)	Andrey Muzychenko – United Way	Terrance Nixon – Open Doors NGZ
Jen Ranney – Next Generation Zone	Stacey Wells – Next Generation Zone	Kevin Williams – WorkSource		

STAFF PRESENT:

Shannon Brundle – Program Manager	Kate Behrmann – Communications Assistant	Jeanette Facer – Finance Director	Andrea Hixson – Program & Operations Manager	Dawn Karber – Chief Operations Officer
Victor Rapez-Betty – Communications Manager	Angela Maioriello – Office Assistant	Mark Mattke – Chief Executive Officer	Mike McBride – Business & Industry Analyst	Tim Robison – Program & Compliance Specialist

Chair Dan Evans called the meeting to order at 7:31 a.m. with a quorum of members present and conducted introductions of members and guests.

Recognition of Success

Mark Mattke, SWC Chief Executive Officer

Mark introduced Jennifer Ranney, Next Generation Zone Director, and Mandy Adamson, Talent Solutions Manager, to highlight two success stories from across our system.

Jennifer invited Richard Hernacki to share his experience with the Next Generation Zone and his current employment with Providence.

Richard is 22 years old and came to the Next Generation Zone at the beginning of this year to obtain his GED. He was homeschooled all his life by his single mother and did not always apply himself while his mother was at work all day.

Richard found the Next Generation Zone and received a lot of help in his first more traditional classroom learning experience. Richard completed his first three GED tests in a month but shortly after had to deal with some financial issues. He went to work full time and when COVID happened, he was able to take a few months off to finish his GED. After talking to a few career specialists, he was introduced to Devina Cunningham at the Next Generation Zone, and she worked with him to explore different training programs and career plan.

Richard applied to Providence's Medical Assistant apprenticeship program in April and was accepted in August. Ever since then he wakes up in the morning excited to go to work and he feels that he has really found his path with Providence. About five weeks in, Richard got a message from the director of the apprenticeship program saying he would receive a \$3/hour raise. Jennifer thanked Richard for sharing his story and being a part of our board meeting.

Mandy Adamson then invited Yuliya Davis, Director of HR for Volunteers of America to share her experience working with the Talent Solutions team. Volunteers of America provides a wide array of services to homeless populations, including via Hope House, the women's crisis shelter, and Crosswalk, the teen shelter.

Other programs provide permanent supportive housing. They find folks on the street and offer them sustainable solutions to continue their lives without being homeless. They help them overcome that first barrier so they can move on and be successful. The work is wonderful, and they love to do it, but it is also very difficult so finding the right folks to help them go forward with their mission is very challenging. As a business that has stayed open during the COVID pandemic and the need for qualified staff members increased, they found themselves in a tight spot where they were not getting candidates with the right background or qualifications to work in their shelters or housing programs.

Yuliya worked with Ariel McClair with Talent Solutions, who immersed herself in understanding what they did in their different programs, the needs for folks in these programs and what sort of person would be most successful in working with our clients. Ariel did a lot of research and helped to condense several long job descriptions that were not really striking a chord with folks and turned them into targeted job postings. They used current labor market information to make sure they offered competitive salaries and started the process of getting feedback from current successful employees to help them target their marketing in the future.

Yuliya gave huge kudos to Ariel for reading through hundreds of pages to distill it down and really understand the feedback from their current workforce then decide what would be important for applicants to see first so they felt comfortable applying for a job working in homeless services during a pandemic. Ariel did a beautiful job helping her come up with a layout and consistent format that she could apply to all their different job postings. She also created email campaigns to job seekers who would be positive and compatible to the positions they had available. Yuliya feels that they got a lot more qualified applicants through that process and they were able to fill the positions that previously had been sitting out in space for several months.

Additionally, Ariel and Yuliya spoke about what hiring events would look like as they are looking to open a new Hope House 2.0 with a lot more beds and there is also the possibility of opening another young adult shelter, so they will need 20 or 30 more staff for each new shelter. With just a few weeks' notice, Yuliya feels confident she can put on a virtual hiring event and campaign. She has learned how to market their positions through targeted emails and make her events a success so they can get some wonderful folks who are going to help further their mission. Yuliya is very grateful to Ariel for all her work and she looks forward to more interactions and collaborations.

Mandy thanked Yuliya for sharing her story with the board and mentioned that Ariel has very much enjoyed working with her, and it has been extremely rewarding for her to be a part of this process. Mark thanked Yuliya for the work that Volunteers of America does for our community. Yuliya thanked the board and said they are very appreciative of all the community support that they have received throughout these difficult times.

Review of Minutes

Review of October 14, 2020 meeting minutes.

Action: Motion and second to approve the October 14, 2020 meeting minutes. Approved unanimously.

CEO Report

Mark Mattke, SWC Chief Executive Officer

Mark gave a brief update to provide some context for the content of the meeting.

- Over the course of last nine months, we have been really hitting the challenges in this economic and health crisis on all fronts from resources to policy and operations.
- We brought in several new resources to serve the needs of workers and businesses and continue to find opportunities to bring in those new resources.
 - This includes funding for rental and housing assistance, as well as for reemployment and training of individuals to get back in the labor market.
- On the policy side we have also worked to ensure that the federal and state rules that govern our system are allowing us the maximum flexibility to better serve the needs of our customers in this unique and changing time.
- On the operations side we have talked a lot about how we retooled our service delivery and transition to virtual services across our entire campus, and we continue to fine tune those efforts.
 - Staff have responded really well with the ability to deliver those services effectively while using new media and technology.
 - We are also expanding the menu of services and online resources over the course of time to better meet the needs.
- As this continues, and we are not really seeing an end in sight yet, we know that many businesses and people will continue to suffer across our community.
- Today we will hear today from Mike McBride a bit more about the more than 15,000 people receiving some form of unemployment insurance in Spokane County.

- More than 90,000 people in Spokane County are receiving some form of food assistance, which is a tremendous number.
- Many households are also facing housing insecurity.
- Folks cannot pay the rent as this continues to persist and income is not coming back to pre-pandemic levels.
- Despite all this economic disruption that we are seeing, this recession is very different than past ones due to the fact that it is COVID caused and not just a regular economic crisis.
 - We are not seeing the volumes of people yet coming into our system seeking services to help them get back into a job, to get some training or to get skills refreshed as we have seen in past recessions.
- We will hear a bit more from Dr. Brockbank about the numbers they are seeing coming into their door at the community college to seek training.
- We think several factors are influencing people to not taking part in thinking about the future and preparing for it.
 - These factors are fear of exposure to the virus, not wanting to be in the workplace and bring that back home or suffer through it themselves.
 - Parents are experiencing challenges having to support their school aged children in the home while doing distance learning or a hybrid model.
 - There is also a lack of access and affordable childcare for working parents and a lot of unknowns still exist around where the economy is going to be heading and when it is coming back.
- Overall, a lot of folks are still thinking that their job will be coming back and that is driving them to sit on the sidelines thinking they can just wait this out and things will be okay once the economy fires back up.
 - They are not recognizing some serious structural differences are occurring in the economy that will not be remedied for a long time, if ever, and jobs are changing.
- To help us overcome a lot of these factors we have been looking at some new strategies, different tools and working in partnership with the state to get better access to data so we know exactly who these people are that have been impacted by this, both the businesses that are impacted and the individuals.
 - We want to know what jobs they were laid off from, what are their current skills, how do those skills translate into jobs available right now, what jobs will be created in the economy that is coming and then the training pathways and credentials that will be needed for success in the economy going forward.
 - We are really looking at what are the quality jobs of the future that offer family sustaining wages and how to get people prepared for those types of jobs.
 - This new data that we are hoping to have access to shortly, will allow us to directly target our outreach efforts more effectively to individuals who are experiencing the impacts of this and businesses as well.
- Many of us have seen the Governor's address yesterday and know the restrictions will persist for at least another three weeks.
- There is also the potential end of unemployment insurance benefits on December 26 to about 5,900 people in Spokane County and 1,000s of others across the state and country.
- A lot is in motion right now that we are tracking, and that will be part of our discussion today as well as to how do we stay nimble and adapt to this changing environment, as it continues to pose challenges for a lot of people.

Asset Limited Income Constrained Employed (ALICE) Report

Mark Mattke, SWC Chief Executive Officer

Time Henkel, President/CEO of Spokane County United Way, thanked Mark, Dan, and rest of the board for the opportunity to be here this morning.

- The clear, shared goal that we all have is to work in partnerships to stabilize and improve life outcomes for everyone in this community.
- Richard's story this morning absolutely reflects what we are all working on: to try and put all the resources and efforts together to make sure that young people, parents, and others are working to succeed.
- The ALICE report is a report that United Ways across this region (Oregon, Washington, Idaho) put together every couple of years to inform our work.
 - We also know this is a valuable tool that you can and need to use in this community, to do your work and to inform you.
 - It captures information from 2018, which is the most recent data that is solidly available.

Tim introduced Andrey Muzychenko, Director of Partner Relations and Assessment at Spokane County United Way, to walk through this report and answer questions. They would also like to hear any observations or recommendations that they can use to the community's advantage. The ALICE report can be found at: <https://spark.adobe.com/page/q1L6cl8zQ2C4U/>.

Andrey shared that he appreciates all the partnerships they have had over the years with the Next Generation Zone and the Spokane Resource Center.

- ALICE is an acronym for — **A**sset **L**imited, **I**ncome **C**onstrained, **E**mloyed — households that earn more than the Federal Poverty Level, but less than the basic cost of living for the county (the ALICE Threshold), meaning households that have no safety nets in times of crisis. Another name for this population is the working poor.
- ALICE is a report about people experiencing financial hardships in our region for three state region – Oregon, Washington, and Idaho.
 - In each state, the report is also available for each county.
- The ALICE report provides framework language statistics to help understand the growing number of households that are struggling to meet up and afford basic household necessities.
- They believe that the ALICE report can be used to better understand the need in our community, form policy and to drive innovation.
- We are experiencing a big health and economic crisis in in our communities and while conditions have improved for some households, many continue to struggle, especially as wages fail to keep pace with the cost of household essentials (housing, childcare, food, transportation, health care, and a basic smartphone plan).
- In normal times this crisis could be as simple as a car repair that needs to be done or a battery needs to be replaced, under \$50, and assets are limited in that time.
- That is the general theme with this report, it focuses on individuals that are often working as cashiers, office clerks, servers, laborers, childcare providers and so on.
 - We respect that these individuals are contributing to our communities and economy.
 - They are having financial struggles to meet basic household necessities forcing them to make difficult choices and tradeoffs that results in extra stress.
- Here is a quick refresher on the history of the official poverty measure as used by federal and state governments:
 - The Federal Poverty Measure was created in 1963.
 - The USDA has four different plans, they look at the thrifty foot plan and they multiply that by three to determine the federal poverty threshold.
 - Surprisingly, 50 years later that is still how the federal government determines who is in poverty.

TAB 1

- It has been adjusted annually for inflation since 1963, but it does not increase the current cost of basic household necessities.
- Federal Poverty Level is not adjusted to reflect cost of living differences across the U.S., except in Alaska and Hawaii.
- In the 1960s, a household was spending a third of their budget, on average, on food.
- These days, on average, a household spends one seventh of their budget on food, and at the same time other things like rent, have increased more.
- What happens also the federal poverty level is not adjusted to reflect cost of living across the US 48 states?
 - When you look at the map of the United States, Spokane, Seattle, New York, Chicago, the federal poverty level is the same for all 48 states and that creates a bit of a challenge.
- The core aspect of the ALICE report is that it introduces the ALICE monthly household survival budget and the one that we will be looking today at is for Spokane County in 2018.
- First, the ALICE report talks about different type of households: single adult, two adults, household of four (two adults and two kids in school or two adults and two kids in childcare) single seniors and two seniors.
 - On the left side of the chart, you can see we have the different types of household basic necessities which includes housing, childcare, food, transportation, healthcare, miscellaneous and taxes.
 - If we look at single adult and housing, the idea is for it to be no more than 30% of the household budget, which is pretty low.
 - If we look at data in 2018, 48% of those who are renting say they were paying more than 30%.
 - This budget is pretty basic and at the bottom in the third section it includes the monthly total, the annual total and the hourly wage needed to support that type of household.
 - When we compare the federal poverty level to the household survival budget on a monthly cost basis, we look at the one-person household, which needs about \$1,000/month according to the federal poverty level, but the household survival budget is actually \$700 more.
 - When we look at the household of four the federal poverty level is \$2,000/month, but when we look at household with two adults and two kids in childcare, that more than doubles to around \$5,740/month.
- So how has the number of households changed over time in Spokane County?
 - In 2010 there were 187,000 households in Spokane County and 27,134 households were living in poverty.
 - 39,856 households are ALICE, meaning they were struggling to meet that household survival budget.
 - 120,682 are those who are living above the ALICE threshold.
- For households that are above ALICE, we have seen positive trend there from 2014 to 2018, an increase of 20,000 households that were living stable and meeting that budget.
- At the same time, we can see the poverty and ALICE households generally stayed the same.
 - In 2018, there were almost 72,000 households that were still struggling to meet that household survival budget, those living in poverty and ALICE.
- When we look at percentages in 2018, there were 13% living at 100% Federal Poverty Level, 22% struggling to meet that household survival budget, and 65% living and meeting that household survival budget and financially doing well.
- There is the positive news and the reality that we are looking at 35% of folks either living in poverty for the homeless whether we look at ALICE by race or ethnicity, we can see differences there in 2018.

TAB 1

- When we looked at households that are American Indian and Black, those living in ALICE or poverty, the likelihood was much larger.
- As we think about providing services and about households building their wealth and assets in our community, there are programs that are specifically focused on targeted populations in in our community.
- Andrey shared a little bit about COVID analyses that are not necessarily from the ALICE report but affects the ALICE population.
 - In September of 2020 NPR, Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and Harvard released a study in which they found out that 46% of US households report serious financial problems, quite a large percentage.
 - Those financial problems included depleting household savings, difficulty paying credit card bills, paying mortgage, or rent, paying for utilities, food, medical care, making car payments.
 - Those are examples of potential problems that are most likely experienced by folks who live in poverty or ALICE.
- A chart was shared for Washington State.
 - This is by Opportunity Insights, the economic tracker percent change in employment.
 - We can see low wage workers and the impact of change in employment as of October 1, they were still 11% down compared to those high wage worker or middle wage workers.
 - This is data to explore, to think about the impacts of COVID on different types of households with different types of jobs.
- Data was presented by the United States Census.
 - This is the household pulse survey for Washington State with three different data points for the end of November 20:
 - Almost 28% of adults were facing some foreclosure or eviction likelihood in the next two months.
 - 30% of adults, expected loss in employment income in the next four weeks.
 - Almost 30% of adults were having difficulty paying usual household expenses during the COVID 19 pandemic.
 - And again, household expenses as presented by ALICE is something for us to think about as folks are struggling to meet those needs.
- Another chart shared real poverty estimates at a national level, done by national organizations, and shows the stark difference between folks that had a high school degree or less, or some college and above.
 - In October 50% of individuals that were below 200% federal poverty level had a high school degree or below.
 - In October 20% of individuals that were below 200% federal poverty level had some college or above.
 - Again, these tools are available and out there for us to think about who is experiencing financial hardship.
 - Also, on the United Way website we can find many resources, including county profiles for data, we can see lots of data fall together but we can also see COVID related resources available related to housing and food.
 - Reports are being constantly updated.

- United Way Spokane County has also provided some funding to the Next Generation Zone and the Spokane Resource Center.
 - The Spokane Resource Center was a perfectly aligned investment program for us in the community.
 - We believe that building financial stability and resilience is important for ALICE households and that is why we are happy to partner together.
 - We also provide funding for Eastern Washington 211, which is a free number to call for information and referral to services.
 - In the last 365 days they processed more than 90,000 calls.
 - They also have a website, Washington.211counseling.org that has live data as folks call, and you can drill down that data by dates, by counties, by zip codes, and see what the needs of the community are.
 - At the conclusion of this report Andrey reminded us that there are 35% of households that were in either poverty or ALICE in 2018, and as these households go through crisis that their experience might be different.
 - Andrey thanked the SWC and the board for working in our community to create financial resilience.
- Mark thanked Tim and Andrey for their work and their partnership to help move people up and out of poverty in Spokane.

Regional Economic Update

Mike McBride, SWC Business & Industry Analyst

Mike reported out on the most recent labor market data and shared the results of initial changes to this year's Occupations in Demand list.

County Unemployment Rates

- Spokane County unemployment rate down from the all-time high of 16.7% in April 2020.
 - Unemployment rate in October 2020 was 6.0%.
 - Note that October rates capture the time before the new economic restrictions were announced.

Unemployment Rate Over Time

- January 2020 saw the largest spike in unemployment rate at almost 17%.
 - The Great Recession saw about 9% unemployment in January 2009.
 - The highest unemployment from the Great Recession came in January 2010 at around 12%.
 - It was a long, slow increase in unemployment and a long, slow recovery.
 - In the current recession, impacts were felt instantaneously, and it is coming down a lot faster, but we are not out of the woods yet.

Continued Claims by Occupation and Type

- Continued claims are starting to creep back up over time.
- Since September 12th, the PUA (federal gig, part-time, and contract worker) claims have stayed flat for a very long time and the PEUC (federal extended) claims have increased.
 - This is indicating that people are not able to get back to their working situation prior to the pandemic.
 - Food Preparation and Serving continues to have the highest level of regular and PEUC UI claims.

- Management and Office/Administrative Support come in second for regular UI claims.
- Personal Care and Service have the highest PUA claims.
- Construction and Transportation have quite a lot of regular claims.

Timeline: CARES Act Benefits Running Out

- Regular unemployment claims run for 26 weeks, PUA claims run for 39 weeks and PEUC run for 13 weeks.
- The CARES Act is set to expire December 26, 2020.
 - Because PUA workers do not pay into the unemployment Trust Fund they will have no unemployment after December 26th unless Congress acts.
 - That represents 5,700 people that will stop receiving unemployment compensation.
- People on PEUC claims have had their regular claim extended and will be eligible for extended benefits from the state, due to the economic crisis.
 - Because the state's unemployment rate dropped, extended benefits have been shortened from 20 weeks to 13 weeks.
- The most recent data shows that 37% of all people on unemployment have already been on a claim for 27 weeks or longer.
- These deadlines are going to be very impactful for people in this situation.
- Mark shared that if Congress does not act, the Governor announced he is going to stand up a state program to help the 100,000 plus households who are on this form of unemployment assistance, but no details have been shared as to how much the benefit would be or how long it would last.
 - This has been a huge driver for us to activate around reaching those people and letting them know that we are here for them.

Which Jobs Are Being Impacted Most?

- Regular Claims
 - Food Prep and Serving (21% of all regular continued claims)
 - Construction and Extraction (11%)
 - Management (10%)
 - Office and Admin Support (10%)
- PUA Claims
 - Food Prep and Serving (12% of all PUA continued claims)
 - Personal Care and Service (11%)
 - Sales and Related (10%)
 - Management (10%)
- PEUC Claims
 - Food Prep and Serving (20% of all PEUC continued claims)
 - Management (12%)
 - Office and Admin Support (10%)
 - Sales and Related (9%)

Food Insecurity

- In Spokane County, there were approximately 90,500 residents receiving SNAP basic food assistance in September.
 - That is over 10,000 basic food recipients more than compared to the same month last year.

New Monthly Job Postings in Spokane

- New postings as of November 2020 – 5,005

- This is a decrease of 14.18% from October – November 2020.

New Online Job Postings in Spokane County by Industry – November 2020

- Healthcare and Social Assistance (1,480 new online job postings)
- Retail Trade (564)
- Transportation and Warehousing (346)
- Finance and Insurance (258)
- Manufacturing (208)

Occupations in Demand List

- Thank you for all the feedback from workforce board members, college advisories, and community partners. As a result, 85 occupation classification changes were submitted:
 - 44 In Demand
 - 41 Balanced
- 22 in Construction/Production/Repair
- 17 in Healthcare Practitioners and Support
- 8 in Community and Social Service
- 7 in Management

COVID Response – Housing Assistance

Dawn Karber, SWC Chief Operations Officer

Dawn thanked Mike, Andre, and Tim for painting a clear picture on the state of Spokane and why the Spokane Resource Center is so critically important right now. She thanked the city of Spokane and Spokane County, together with the city and the county and Career Path Services and all our partners, we have been able to quickly adapt to the needs of the community.

Great job by the Spokane Resource Center, we have been able to quickly adapt to the economic impact of the pandemic. They have been helping with housing assistance, both rental assistance and mortgage assistance. They have applied for and received two and a half million dollars in grant funding and quickly disbursed those funds. They have also quickly adjusted to other community needs such as access to food. We have the food bank providing boxes of food which are handed out of the front door here on campus at WorkSource. The staff of the Spokane Resource Center are now experts in technology access, internet access, and financial supports available throughout the community, and it is absolutely critical that we have the service in Spokane so thank you to Jen and Shannon and everyone who has made this possible.

Shannon Brundle, SWC Program Manager, shared what we are seeing with renters throughout our community.

- Housing insecurity is not a new issue in our region, but the impacts and conditions of the pandemic have heightened the experience for many households, in particularly renting households which are much more likely to be a part of the industries that are the most impacted by the pandemic.
- In general, renters have a lot less net worth so there is not as much of a safety net there.
 - Homeowners have 41 times the net worth of renters nationally.
 - About 48.4% of renters pay over 30% of total income on shelter and 23.8% of renters pay over 50% on shelter in Spokane County.
 - The COVID-19 housing crisis has disproportionately affected people of color.

- The Spokane Resource Center has been able to quickly step into this critical need in our community. This says a lot about the importance of the Spokane Resource Center to the community, its responsiveness, and its ability to set up programs to respond to the crisis.
- This has been really valuable for our customers and we offer a suite of resources through all of our partners at the Spokane Resource Center.
- We now have a contact list for all of these households that have reached out and indicated a need for rental support.
 - Staff have been focusing on outreaching to all those households and inquiring with them if they are interested in participating in any of our programs so that we can start to connect them with career opportunities, trainings, and other resources to help prepare for what their next stage of development is going to be.

Jen Morris, Director of the Spokane Resource Center, thanked the staff at the Spokane Resource Center that are doing an excellent job at providing services to the folks of Spokane County.

- Jen shared data on the rental assistance programs for the CARES Act and Tenant-Based Rental Assistance (TBRA) funds that we received through the city.
 - For CARES Act funds, the white racial representation is about 64% of the total and TBRA is at 59% roughly.
 - With CARES Act we helped 441 households and most of the households were in the 99207 and 99201 zip codes.
 - With TBRA our two main zip codes served were 99207 and 99205.
 - Households in those zip codes were really impacted and helped by what we had in the two and a half million that we have been able to get out into the community.
 - The folks that are receiving the funding:
 - 59% of the folks in TBRA make under \$20,000 a year.
 - 58% of the CARES Act recipients' income is \$20,000 or less per year.
 - There is a large number of individuals earning \$20,000/year or less and many are in the hospitality field which has been and continues to take a hit and with the new orders limiting activities extending until January 4th, it is more important than ever that we get this funding out into the community.
 - For the household sizes:
 - Serving about 30% of customers from households of one in both CARES Act and TBRA.
 - It jumps up to 17% and 18% for two and three member households.
 - Households of one to four folks is the majority of those being impacted.
 - For TBRA, we served 275 households and CARES Act 441 households – this has been a huge impact across the community with the amount of funding that we received, and folks have been very grateful for the assistance.
 - The SRC staff that are working in the housing programs are constantly receiving calls from folks that are not able to pay.
 - People report that they cannot go to work, some have COVID, or their family members have COVID, so they must be quarantined.
 - It is a daily battle for the staff to hear these, and especially now because we are in between funding sources for rent.
 - We have ended TBRA and CARES Act programs and are getting ready to start another funding source.
 - During this time, we have been able to refer to SNAP but now that is expended, and we are not able to refer to anyone. There is no rent assistance available, so it is a tough environment for the staff right now.

- Jen shared a couple of quotes from some of the folks they have helped:
 - “Without the help of the Spokane Resource Center rent assistance, I would not have been able to pay other bills I have, I would have lost my car and car insurance, without my car I would be unable to work a little bit of hours I am getting.”
 - Another person said, “The food, rental systems, and utility assistance I have received from the Spokane Resource Center really helped me get through this gap of not being able to work and the weeks of my unemployment being held up.”
- We are seeing that for a lot of folks their unemployment claim is still being held up, so they are unable to pay anything.
 - They do not have money for food, rent, utilities, and we are able to connect to those resources for folks.
- Lastly, this gentleman called and told us that his wife had died due to COVID, and he was left with nine kids, including a newborn, who was struggling at home and, and without a source of income.
 - We helped him pay five months of rent and he was so gracious and so grateful that we were able to help him to get back on his feet.
- We do not always hear a lot of the stories, so we wanted to point out that we are making a difference. The staff are making a huge impact and are constantly in the trenches with everyone.
- We are also providing employment services to the folks to whom we have given rent assistance.
- We are also giving that option to anyone who calls and is unemployed or needs help with income.
- Thank you to everyone who supported the Spokane Resource Center, who has been supporting the staff and supporting the customers that have been coming in getting food, blankets, and many other resources.
- Dawn shared that the Resource Center has served thousands and thousands of customers since the pandemic began.
 - It is a very difficult job, particularly when you do not get to see the customers face to face.
 - We have also had staff battle with COVID and still wanting to work and serve customers, even though they were terribly sick.
- Dan thanked Dawn for all of her efforts and the efforts of Jen, Shannon, and our staff, particularly in light of a very challenging year.

Workforce Education – Adapting to Meet Student Needs

Mark Mattke, SWC Chief Executive Officer

Mark introduced Dr. Kevin Brockbank, President of Spokane Community College (SCC), who provided an update on how SCC has adapted to the crisis and highlighted the importance of educational attainment in getting people good jobs, so they are insulated from some of the economic ups and downs.

Dr. Brockbank thanked Mark for the opportunity to talk with the board about long tradition of workforce development in the region and partnership with the Spokane Workforce Council along with some exciting stories about what the college has been doing.

- Governor Inslee’s Stay Home Order Announcement on March 23, 2020 meant that everyone moved off campus at the end of winter quarter.

- They moved to fully online operations for Spring quarter.
 - That worked really well in arts and sciences.
 - They have about 4000 students that are transfer students from those classes.
- Those of you who are familiar with the college know that their larger portion of students participate in those professional-technical programs with specialized labs.
 - Things like aviation maintenance, cosmetology, baking and culinary but more importantly at this point was allied health: nursing, respiratory care technicians.
 - Those programs do not get taught online because nobody wants a nurse who has never touched a patient before or an aviation mechanic who has never touched an airplane before, so they were really in a tight spot.
- They were able to get some relief from the Governor, who allowed a partial restart on May 5th.
 - They compared the essential occupations in the Governor's plan with their programs at the college and were able to bring back students in those specialized labs and service areas.
 - That meant they brought 26 programs back on campus for Spring and Summer 2020.
 - They are following prescribed protocols and have had virtually no exposures.
- Next, they needed to develop a long-term strategy since the pandemic was going to last for a while.
 - They have discussed how the college will operate for fall quarter and beyond.
 - They take their role very seriously in consideration of workforce development need, critical occupations, and economic recovery.
 - During economic downturns, SCC has been a very critical component of recovery, and tended to experience high enrollments with students seeking retraining.
 - They need to continue to provide a constant workforce to our manufacturers.
 - They cannot afford to stop the pipeline of qualified health care workers.
 - They have over 30 Allied Health programs
 - It is their social and public health responsibility to figure out how to make their programs work.
 - Some students do not do well in the virtual environment. Many students are vulnerable and fit into the ALICE category who are struggling with income, housing, and food insecurities.
- SCC made a very strong commitment to providing in person instruction as much as possible.
- The Governor worked with the State Board of Community and Technical Colleges to come up with the Smart Start Plan, which revised guidelines and protocols to begin instruction.
- Currently 65% of instruction is delivered on-ground or in-person.
- SCC has 800+ classes this fall (including Tech Ed and Transfer) that meet face to face and between 3500-4000 faculty, staff and students accessing campus locations and centers.
- There are hundreds of operational decisions that have had to make that are new and challenging but have been worth it.
- This required a very serious institutional commitment to safety protocols and enforcement.
 - They have experienced only 48 COVID positive cases of the 4,000 people who access their facility over 11 weeks.
 - There have been only two cases of suspected virus transmission that may have occurred at SCC.
 - Building operations around following protocols has been 100% successful.
- Enrollment for spring quarter was down 20% and fall was down 15%.
 - Regular program enrollments were down 9%.
 - ABE/GED/ESL were down 40%.
 - Running start was up about 20%.
 - Winter enrollments are down 9% from the same time last year.

- Those enrollments are better than what we see across the state.
- The decision to provide in-person instruction changed their enrollment numbers drastically.
- The general, almost overwhelming sentiment is appreciation from students for being able to continue their education.
- Going forward they know that there is a wave of individuals that will need their services.
 - As the economy comes back, we are going to need training for our workforce.
 - They are excited to be part of the community effort to bring back instruction that is efficient and effective.
- Staci Taylor gave Dr. Brockbank a huge thanks for all his vigilance, leadership and matriculating out health care workers, which are in dire need right now.

Outreach Campaign

Mark Mattke, SWC Chief Executive Officer

Mark introduced Victor Rapez-Betty, SWC Communications Manager, who shared the campaign that we are starting up and work done to date. The goal is to get people aware of available jobs and growing careers and to take action. Now is the time as many laid off workers are still getting unemployment insurance benefits and have the income support while they attend training and update their skills. We also encourage people seeking employment now to engage with our system as there are many open jobs across our economy that we can help connect them to. We are excited to launch this campaign and we want business leaders from our board to help message to the community rather than our staff.

Victor shared that the concept is threefold: to transfer your skills to jobs currently available, to obtain short term training and earn a credential to return to work quickly, and to seek longer term training that positions workers for new jobs as the economy opens back up.

- The campaign will leverage social media campaign and banner ads.
- The video will feature businesses leaders that are speaking directly to job seekers, telling them their skills are in demand and jobs are available.
- Mark shared that we will be focusing on the sectors that drive the regional economy and where jobs will continue to rebound as the recovery starts to occur.
- The goal is to intrigue people to come in and talk to us about getting the skill development and credentials that they need to be successful in the future.
 - It is a comprehensive approach to meet immediate job needs and also prepare for the future by accessing and completing training.
- Our system has not seen a very big uptake rate of individuals seeking services yet, despite the high numbers of people unemployed, so we need to take action to spur their engagement and we are hoping this is a tool that will successfully resonate with them.
- We are going to focus on outreach to specific individuals once we get access to more detailed data from the state – including workers laid off from leisure and hospitality, food service and accommodations, or retail industries – and message directly to them that we understand what they are going through and can offer direct services to help them transition back into jobs.
- The overarching intent of this is to broadcast it community wide and to use all of our partner networks to get the word out.
- Mark thanked Victor, Kate, and the team for working to put this together.

Standing Committee Reports

Services and Oversight Committee – Robert Duron, Chair

- The SOC has been keeping up to date with monitoring the operation of the workforce campus and the Spokane Resource Center particularly, in response to the COVID services that include rental support for customers.

- The WorkSource remodel is complete.
- The Spokane Workforce Council has been applying for and received several million dollars in grants since the pandemic began.
 - We are managing the largest budget ever as an organization, approximately \$14 million.
 - In 2009 we were managing about \$4 million.
- Additionally, Dawn and Kevin have been providing other workforce areas with technical assistance on topics such as integrated service delivery and career coaching.
 - This is generating extra revenue for the workforce system.
- Robert thanked all the partners that have worked with us for being as nimble as they can and helping as we innovate and transform our system.

Youth Career Readiness Network – Staci Taylor, Youth Career Readiness Network Chair

- Staci thanked everyone who came out to participate in the two community events held in November at Second Harvest food bank.

Executive Committee – Dan Evans, Chair

Review of Action Items

At its October 14 Special meeting and November 19 meeting, the Executive Committee took action on the following items:

Additional CARES Act Rental Assistance Funding

The SWC has been awarded an additional \$200,000 in city of Spokane CARES Act funding for rental assistance to be delivered via the Spokane Resource Center. The SWC will subcontract \$199,000 of the award to Career Path Services to continue the current rental assistance program maintaining the 4 staff members plus adding one additional part-time position to collect applications at WorkSource. The current contract will be extended from October 15th, 2020 to November 15th, 2020 to deliver the services. This additional award brings the total city of Spokane CARES Act award to \$1,022,000.

Action: Motion and second to authorize the SWC to accept \$200,000 in new funding and subcontract \$199,000 to Career Path Services. Approved Unanimously.

Opportunity Partnership Program (OPP)

The SWC has been awarded \$42,500 from the Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board for the Opportunity Partnership Program (OPP). This will be our eighth year receiving these funds to support first-generation students at the Community Colleges of Spokane in completing their course of study by providing mentorship and other quality employment connections prior to graduation. This year, we proposed a new model for the project by offering services virtually. Kate Behrmann, our SWC Communications Assistant, will be working with the Talent Solutions Team and KSPS to identify which industries this year's OPP students are training to enter, identify businesses from those industries that are interested in connecting with those students, and create business tour videos through the Career Explore NW project. Businesses will agree to participate in additional virtual mentorship activities in exchange for video production being paid for out of this grant.

Action: Motion and Second to accept \$42,500 from the WTECB and subcontract \$15,000 to Career Path Services for the Talent Solutions Team. Approved Unanimously.

Eviction Rent Assistance Program for Young Adults – Additional Funds

The Eviction Rent Assistance Program (ERAP) for Young Adults is funded through the federal CARES Act from the Washington State Department of Commerce funds passed through the City of Spokane to assist young adults who have had their housing impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. As we are on track

to be fully spent out by Thanksgiving, the City has awarded us \$45,000 additional funds to support more rental payments to young adults. The grant allows the SWC to pay past due, current due, and future rent with a focus on equitable distribution of resources to disadvantaged populations. This program is being administered by the Office of Homeless Youth and the Office of Family and Adult Homelessness at the WA Department of Commerce. In the first three weeks of administering this grant program, we have received over 120 applications for assistance and paid out over \$50,000 in rental payments to over 25 households.

- 40% are BIPOC households.
- 20% are Hispanic/Latinx.

Action: Motion and Second to accept \$45,000 in additional funds and subcontract up to \$45,000 to Career Path Services. Approved Unanimously.

Spokane County CARES CDBG CV3 Rent and Utility Assistance

The Spokane Workforce Council anticipated being awarded \$857,912 of Spokane County CARES CDBG CV3 funding for rental and utility assistance to be utilized at the Spokane Resource Center. The Community Development Block CARES Act (CDBG CV3) funds are from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). This CARES CDBG CV3 funding follows HUD eligibility requirements serving customers with household incomes at or below 80% (MFI) and living within Spokane County limits, excluding the City of Spokane. The funding is available to COVID-19 impacted residents for utility and rental assistance for up to 6 months and are intended to prevent, prepare for, and respond to COVID-19.

- The housing assistance team at the Spokane Resource Center has provided \$1,572,000 in direct rental payments to date with funds awarded by the City of Spokane and Spokane County.
- The Tenant-Based Rental Assistance and CARES Act programs, both initiatives of the City of Spokane, and the HHAA grant from Spokane County have served a combined 616 households with rental assistance since September 1st, 2020.
- The Spokane Resource Center has successfully implemented multiple housing programs simultaneously, each having their own unique requirements, and have efficiently connected customers to the program for which they qualify.
- The Spokane Resource Center has been a large part of disseminating these essential resources to our COVID-19 impacted communities throughout Spokane County.

Action: Motion and Second to accept \$857,912 in CARES CDBG funds upon award from Spokane County and subcontract \$822,912 to Career Path Services. Approved Unanimously.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

Addition of \$1,145,412 to the operating budget.

Technical Assistance Program Policy.

Staff and board executive and Services and Oversight Committee leadership have been developing a model for consulting services offered by the SWC to leverage the expertise of our staff and increase the amount of unrestricted funds available for use in our local system. The Technical Assistance Program Policy outlines how the SWC will structure its delivery of technical assistance and compensate staff while ensuring we maintain the integrity of our primary operations and our nonprofit status.

Action: Motion and Second to approve Policy#: G115. Approved Unanimously.

Other Business

Dan recognized and thanked Laura Wood for her participation on the board and congratulated her on her retirement at STCU. In recognition for her contributions, we will donate \$100 in her name to the organization of her choice.

TAB 1

Laura thanked the Spokane Workforce Council and board for the experience. She said it is been one of the best board experiences she has had in her career. It is a great group, the work we are doing is amazing and she has loved being a part of it.

Meeting adjourned at 9:29 AM.