



SPOKANE WORKFORCE COUNCIL

MINUTES SPOKANE WORKFORCE COUNCIL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

January 21, 2021 – 1:00-2:00 PM
Meeting held via Zoom

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Kelley Charvet	Robert Duron	Dan Evans	Machelle Johnson
Tina Morrison	Staci Taylor	Ron Valencia, designee for Commissioner Kerns	Diana Wilhite

MEMBERS ABSENT

Commissioner Josh Kerns	Tim Sigler, designee for Mayor Woodward	Mayor Nadine Woodward
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OTHERS PRESENT

Mandy Adamson – Talent Solutions Manager	Kevin Williams – One Stop Operator, WorkSource
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STAFF PRESENT:

Jeanette Facer – Finance Director	Dawn Karber – Chief Operations Officer	Angela Maioriello – Office Assistant	Mark Mattke – Chief Executive Officer
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Chair Dan Evans called the meeting to order at 12:00 PM with a quorum of members present.

ITEM #1 – REVIEW OF MEETING MINUTES

Review of December 17th meeting minutes.

Action: Motion and Second to approve the December 17, 2020 meeting minutes. Approved Unanimously.

ITEM #2 – TALENT SOLUTIONS TEAM

Mandy Adamson, Talent Solutions Team Manager

The Talent Solutions Team has been adapting its service strategies to the new environment over the past 10 months. Mandy Adamson, TST manager provided an update on how their team is responding to effectively meet our regional businesses' needs.

Business Engagement

- Since July they have met with over 1,788 businesses, including 113 new businesses seeking services due to the impacts of COVID-19.
- The Talent Solution Team has hosted seven different hiring events.
 - They have served over 300 job seekers and over 50 employers participated in these events.
 - This is a combination of large virtual hiring events with numerous employers represented and smaller ones where a single employer is being featured.
 - The Employer Showcases are running virtually now.
 - They partner with a local business and help them identify the candidates they are looking for, help create job postings and marketing material, and host them via Zoom.
 - The employer shares a presentation on company culture and what they are really looking for in the hiring process.
 - Then it is open for job seekers to engage into further questions about working for the company and their hiring process.
 - They have had a lot of good feedback from businesses on their ability to fill positions.

COVID-19 Response & Services

- Early outreach to impacted businesses.
 - Financial resources including information regarding COVID-19 loans and grants, alternatives to layoffs such as the Shared Work program, and conducting business in a virtual world from creating a virtual presence to leaning teams in a remote environment.
 - The Talent Solutions Team is serving as a point of contact & communication for businesses.
 - Publishing a monthly newsletter and email campaigns for employers.
 - They are helping to coordinate efforts with the Greater Spokane Incorporated and sharing each other's events.
- Competitive advantage to help businesses determine if their salary and starting wages are competitive for both their industry for this area, what their wage progression looks like as well as benefits packages so they can attract the right candidates who are able and willing to work.
- Created a Return to Work Resource Guide to have one place employers can go when they are ready to reopen or have employees return to work.

New Services & Events

- The first Apprenticeship Forum was hosted this month and will continue quarterly.
 - Apprenticeship, pre-apprenticeship, businesses, and the community come together to share their challenges and successes while also discussing the future of apprenticeships.
- They started an Employer Roundtable that will convene monthly to strategize, share ideas and connect with each other especially around hiring and recruiting.

- Partnering with others in the community to make sure they provide support for businesses by sharing their events.
- Website Additions:
 - COVID-19 Business Resources website tab to keep businesses updated.
 - Immediate Hiring Board was opened shortly after the shelter in place order and updated weekly so those who want to work know it is an active position and the employer is currently hiring.
 - Weekly Hot Jobs email that features employers that are actively hiring and need a little extra promotion.
- Question regarding how they are marketing their Immediate Hiring Board and Weekly Hot Jobs email.
 - Mandy shared that the Immediate Hiring Board website link and Weekly Hot Jobs email goes out to candidates that are on the Unemployment Insurance list who have signed up for that information, career coaches, community partners and they are starting to get out via social media.
 - They are also addressing ghosting, when there is a lack of response once an employer reaches out to a candidate, at their Employer Roundtables.
- Question regarding candidate screening to try and make that better match on the front end, so employers do not end up getting ghosted or wasting folks' time.
 - Mandy shared they are recommending employers have an employee referral program in place.
 - When an employee refers a friend, they are usually pickier about who they refer because it may impact their reputation at work.
 - They are also working with employers to look at their job posting to make sure it is written in a way that is going to connect with the ideal candidate then really target where that posting getting out.
 - They have had some employers who have only posted jobs to Craigslist, which really limits who sees it.
 - They are working with the colleges and universities to create pipelines there as well.
 - The WorkSource website also has screening tools that can be easily used if a company does not have that type of software platform.
- Mark thanked Mandy and her team for all their work to continue to find new ways to bring value to businesses and offer in demand services to our community throughout a changing environment.
- Dawn thanked Mandy for her tireless work and doing a fantastic job.

ITEM #3 – MONTHLY FISCAL REPORT

Jeanette Facer, Finance Director – SWC

Jeanette reviewed the SWC Statement of All Funding Sources & Costs, Actual vs Budget for PY20.

- The budget is approved in May and the program year starts in July and existing grants are incorporated into the approved budget starting in the new program year.
- The updated budget includes the COVID-19 funding received to date.
 - Total grant funding: \$10,635,504
 - Total from all funding sources: \$10,735,504

SWC All Grant Funding Sources – PY20

- WIOA Formula Grants: \$2,071,848, 46%
- WIOA Competitive Grants: \$408,197, 9%
- COVID Specific Grants: \$1,874,365, 42%
- Other Grants: \$116,800, 3%
- Total Grant Funding: \$4,471,210

SWC PY20 Active Grants Under Management

- WIOA Formula Grants: \$7,145,868, 48%
- WIOA Competitive Grants: \$4,018,088, 27%
- Other Grants: \$3,630,155, 25%
- Total Funds Under Management: \$14,794,111

Subcontracted Services July – November 2020

- Rental Assistance - \$1,392,639, 42%
- Salaries & Benefits - \$1,327,620, 41%
- Operating Direct - \$135,306, 4%
- Training Services - \$282,654, 9%
- Support Services - \$133,292, 4%

- Mark mentioned that the State Auditor’s Office has been in our shop over the last couple weeks and thanked Jeanette for the amazing work that she is doing.
- Mabelle Johnson congratulated our team for the grant writing as that is always a challenge to secure the grants and put that money to work.
 - As an employer she really appreciates the excellent job we are doing to help our community and those impacted by the pandemic.

ITEM #4 – GRANTS AND CONTRACTS

Mark Mattke, CEO – SWC

COVID-19 Employment Recovery Dislocated Worker Grant

- The SWC has received two National Dislocated Worker grants from the U.S. Department of Labor – a disaster-focused and employment recovery-focused grant – to help serve workers who have been dislocated as a result of the pandemic.
- For the Employment Recovery grant, a portion of funding was reserved at the SWC level to support staff time for program oversight.
- As the program has been implemented over the past several months, there is an identified need for additional oversight of and support for our operators across our campus.
- Staff are requesting to move \$123,899 from the SWC level to the subcontract with Career Path Services so that they can hire a Director of WorkSource Services.
- This position will be in a supervisory and coordination role above the site operators, as well as filling additional need for general campus oversight, increasing capacity to organize, coordinate, and market our services.
- SWC program management staff roles are fully covered by other grant resources.
- This grant funding expires in March of 2022.

Action: Motion and second to Approve increasing the award to Career Path Services for the Employment Recovery Dislocated Worker Disaster Grant by \$123,899 to a total of \$844,904. Approved Unanimously.

ITEM #5 – SPOKANE RESOURCE CENTER LEASE UPDATE

Dawn Karber, COO – SWC

- The SWC has been working with the City of Spokane to create a plan to cover the costs for the Spokane Resource Center lease.
- The City is the current leaseholder but due to the pandemic, was not able to secure funding to cover lease costs, at least in the short-term.
- They agreed to extend the lease, which expired in November 2020, through at least May 2021, if the SWC could secure funding to pay lease costs.
- Funding has been identified, and we are currently working with the City to finalize a Memorandum of Understanding that will allow us to pay them or the building owner through May.
 - A draft of the document was provided to committee members for their review.
- The City continues to look for funding to match the SWC, as the plan is to remain in the current location.

ITEM #7 – ACTIVITIES AND UPDATES

Dan Evans, Chair – SWC Board

Information from around the table – all board members and staff.

- (re)Employ Spokane campaign:
 - Mark thanked the businesses on the committee that participated in this campaign and video that has been going strong since the last week of December through our social media channels and out to the community.
 - We have created a new website landing page for this campaign.
 - Mark has met with community college and university leadership to talk about how we can align their programs around this campaign.
 - They reached out to us to figure out how to better promote this campaign, so more students are aware of the retraining opportunities out there.
 - Congress did extend unemployment insurance benefits at the end of the year, so the urgency was taken off folks worrying about that income source going away until they end in the middle of March.
 - We will share the video and an update at the Full Council meeting in February.
- Performance letter from ESD:
 - The letter highlights the outstanding performance of our programs and our partners doing this work during a time when it has been incredibly challenging.
 - Mark gave kudos to everyone in the system for the great work they are doing and for the recognition from ESD as that grant manager for the state, that Spokane is doing really good work in that respect.
 - Dawn shared that the staff has done a great job of being creative, engaging customers and doing things like helping walk individuals through how to use a smartphone to job search or fill out an application.
 - This letter precludes our having to make any contract modifications.
 - Robert Duron congratulated the team for the heartfelt letter and recognition of all special, extra work they do.
- Spokane County CDBG-CV grant for rent, utility, and food assistance:
 - Mark gave a shout out to Ron Valencia and thanked the county for this program that just started and runs until the end of November.

- They county has provided this resource to help with housing and food insecurity that is in demand across the region.
- This is money we can use to match and earn money back to reinvest in our system.
- Staff expressed gratitude for the partnership with Spokane County.
 - As more resources come down through the State Department of Commerce and Federal government, we are hopeful that we will again be a trusted partner for both the City and the County to put these dollars into use in our community.
- Racial Equity work:
 - We have undertaken this work internally with some consultants around better understanding racial inequities as they exist in our community and within our workforce system.
 - We are looking to mitigate and eliminate any structural problems that we may have in our workforce system policies and the service delivery system then measure what that outcome and impact looks like for these communities.
 - Many businesses and communities are doing this across the country, and we want to be sure we are doing our part in this work.
 - SWC staff are performing a number of assessments internally to examine where we are in specific domains such as budget and contracting processes, communications, staff training and professional development.
 - Mark brought up the board retreat in April and asked for some guidance from the Executive Committee around what the shape of the event might look like, what the topic might be and the duration.
 - Four hours on Zoom is a long time as we may not be able to meet in person by April.
 - We could bring in a moderator to have a conversation about racial equity and how it is impacting our system in our community.
 - This would allow the board to have a better understanding around racial equity and work towards laying the groundwork for new statements or updating policies.
 - Later in the year, we will also need to develop a new Local Integrated Workforce Plan, our strategic plan, in response to COVID.
 - We did create a new plan last year, but it was prior to the pandemic and things have changed quite a bit.
 - We need to adapt our plan, however, there has not been any guidance issued from the state yet as to when it is due or what the criteria is.
 - Staci Taylor voiced support for considering having a two-hour Zoom retreat with racial equity as the topic.
 - Ron Valencia mentioned that the County has pushed their big GSI event that normally happens in March to late September in hopes of meeting in person.
 - Mark responded that moving the retreat to later in the year makes sense as getting together face-to-face on these important topics makes for a more robust conversation.
 - Machel also likes the idea of moving the retreat out since April can be hard with kids on Spring break and agrees that we are all missing the face-to-face interaction.
 - The only downside to moving the retreat to later in the year is discussing the strategic plan prior to the new program year beginning in July.

- Mark thinks the racial equity piece is one that is front and center for so many of us, particularly in workforce, but we can address it at regular meetings and not have to wait for a retreat around it.
- Dan is in favor to keeping a virtual meeting around two hours but would rather push out the retreat and do it in person.
- The committee agreed to move the retreat to October and bringing in someone to set the groundwork and educate the board on racial equity in our regular meetings so we can continue to think about working on our own policies and service strategies.
- New policy addendum RE: COVID coverage:
 - We have elected to extend COVID coverage to our staff in the event they contract it.
- Technical Assistance update:
 - Dawn shared that our first contract was for \$50,000 with the state of Montana's workforce system; they are about halfway through and it is going very well.
 - Montana may have additional work we can do for them in the future.
 - We have been contacted by the local workforce board in Wichita, KS and we are working through a proposal with them.
 - We also bid on a contract for Chicago and although we did not receive that contract, the individual that was selected has opted to subcontract with us for a portion of the work.
 - We are negotiating a contract with her that is about \$8,000 so far.
 - Our current goal is generating \$100,000 or more a year from providing technical assistance.
- SNAP E&T – National Policy Focus Group:
 - Dawn and Mark were invited to take part in a national policy conversation seeking to expand the number of local boards that offer this program as we do at the Spokane Resource Center.
 - They participated in a focus group to help shape policy on a national level and provide technical assistance for local boards to roll this out.
- Washington State Commerce CDBG funding for services to food insecure families:
 - This is a new funding stream from the Department of Commerce for hunger relief organizations like Second Harvest.
 - They are rolling out about \$10.4 million statewide to help support those organizations meet the food insecurity issues in their communities.
 - The National Guard has been doing a lot of this work, but they will pull back eventually leaving a gap in volunteers.
 - They are looking to have us serve as intermediaries to place individuals in jobs at food banks and other hunger relief organizations.
 - The funds we earn are eligible for match, so this is potentially meaningful and impactful relationship with Commerce around delivery of services under the auspices of this new grant.
 - Dawn has been instrumental in helping to design the contract with Commerce and have it meet our needs instead of being fraught with all kinds of administrative barriers.
- Request for Quotes – Virtual Job Fair and Customer Relations Management
 - During 2020, our local system shifted an ever-growing library of services to online, virtual, and remote.
 - The SWC is issuing a Request for Quotes to identify a platform or platforms that can enhance our ability to serve our customers, both job seekers and businesses, in a virtual environment.

- We are seeking to procure access to a web-based platform or platforms for virtual job fairs (VJF) and customer relations management (CRM).
 - VJF: Staff have been involved since early in the pandemic with a statewide project, led by ESD, to identify a platform for virtual job fairs.
 - The Brazen platform is the current option available through the state, but ESD is conducting a more thorough procurement process over the next few months.
 - Staff are not assured that the statewide option will fit our local needs, so we are conducting our own procurement to identify a platform that we can utilize locally, both during the pandemic and long-term.
 - We may still decide to continue with the state's option, but this process will allow us the flexibility to choose our own platform, if necessary.
 - The Talent Solutions team has been utilizing the EZIQ platform for several years to meet their CRM needs.
 - We are at the point where we need to do a new formal procurement for these services.
 - We may continue with EZIQ, but this is an opportunity for us to see what other products are available and potentially switch to a different platform that offers additional functionality.

OTHER BUSINESS

None.

Meeting adjourned at 2:00 PM.