



SPOKANE WORKFORCE COUNCIL

MINUTES

SPOKANE WORKFORCE COUNCIL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

November 19, 2020 – 12:00-1:09 PM

Meeting held via Zoom

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Kelley Charvet	Robert Duron	Dan Evans	Machelle Johnson
Commissioner Josh Kerns	Tina Morrison	Tim Sigler, designee for Mayor Woodward	Staci Taylor
Ron Valencia, designee for Commissioner Kerns			

MEMBERS ABSENT

Diana Wilhite	Mayor Nadine Woodward
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GUESTS PRESENT

John Dickson	Cupid Alexander – City of Spokane
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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 12:02 PM with a quorum of members present.

ITEM #1 – REVIEW OF MEETING MINUTES

Review of September 24 and October 14 meeting minutes.

Action: Motion and Second to approve the September 24, 2020 and October 14, 2020 meeting minutes. Approved Unanimously.

ITEM #2 – 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.
- Many 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: \$9,896,888
- Total from all funding sources is \$9,996,888

SWC Statement of All Funding Sources – Actual PY20

- WIOA Formula Grants: \$1,277,880, 58% of funding
- WIOA Competitive Grants: \$214,868, 10%
- COVID Specific: \$606,429, 28%
- Other Grants: \$105,058, 5%
- Total Grant Funding: \$2,204,235

SWC PY20 Active Grants Under Management

- WIOA Formula Grants: \$7,145,868, 53%
- WIOA Competitive Grants: \$4,018,088, 29%
- Other Grants: \$2,424,743, 18%
- Total Funds Under Management: \$13,588,699

ITEM #3 – GRANTS AND CONTRACTS

Dawn Karber, COO - SWC

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 the 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, staff proposed a new model for the project by offering services virtually.
 - Identify which industries this year's OPP students are training to enter and businesses from those industries that are interested in connecting with students
 - Create business tour videos through the Career Explore NW project and businesses will 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.
- 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, staff have:
 - Received over 120 applications for assistance
 - Paid out over \$50,000 in rental payments to over 25 households
 - 40% are BIPOC households
 - 20% are Hispanic/Latinx

- This program is on track to be fully spent out by Thanksgiving and the City has awarded additional funds to support more rental payments to young adults.

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 anticipates 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.
 - Funds 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.

ITEM #4 – TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM POLICY

Mark Mattke, CEO – SWC

- Staff and board executive and Services and Oversight Committee leadership have been developing a model for consulting services offered by the SWC in order 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.
 - This was created for our organization based upon our current staff and technical competencies.
 - Staff consulted with an attorney to ensure it addressed all the legal ramifications and tax issues relating to our 501(C)3 status.
 - Staff researched for similar policies throughout the country but were unable to find a local workforce board that is a nonprofit in a state that has similar regulations and is also interested in providing technical assistance.

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

ITEM #5 – WIOA PERFORMANCE

Mark Mattke, CEO – SWC

- Our WIOA Formula contracts (Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth funding streams) include performance targets for the number of individuals to be served and types of services.
- This year, performance was difficult to anticipate due to changing economic and public health conditions.
- Staff requested that the Employment Security Department allow us to re-visit targets after the first quarter (July-September) and modify, if necessary.
- SWC WIOA programs are meeting or exceeding performance targets for intensive and training-level services.
 - However, basic-level services, which traditionally capture customers that come into the center to use the computer lab for self-directed employment search, are very low.
 - This is not a surprise since the center is closed and most of the Home Team was also working for the Unemployment Insurance Division rather than helping WorkSource provide virtual services until mid-September.
- Staff requested to modify our performance targets to lower basic-level service targets for this Program Year but keep Individualized and Training services the same.
 - ESD approved this request, and contracts will be modified accordingly.

ITEM #6 – SPOKANE RESOURCE CENTER LEASE

Mark Mattke, CEO – SWC

- The Spokane Resource Center lease expired on September 30th and needs to be renewed to support our tenancy.
- The initial two-year lease was held and funded by the city of Spokane as the partnership between the City, Spokane Workforce Council, and Spokane Housing Authority established the SRC as a HUD-designated EnVision Center, providing a range of much-needed services to the community both before and since the pandemic hit.
- The Spokane Resource Center has been recognized as a national model for collaboration by the U.S. Housing and Urban Development as well as U.S. Department of Labor and U.S. Department of Education, and hosted HUD Secretary Ben Carson, U.S. DOL Assistant Secretary John Pallasch, and U.S. Department of Education Deputy Assistant Secretary Casey Sacks, at a series of meetings in 2019 and 2020 to discuss how the SWC assembled and sustained this innovative and effective center.
- Since its inception in April of 2019, the SRC and its government and community-based agency partners have served over 6250 customers and brought in more than \$7.6 million in grant funds to support operations and it has become a cornerstone of our community's social services infrastructure.
- So far during the pandemic, the SRC has distributed over \$1.6 million in rental, mortgage, and utility assistance and more funding is in the pipeline for disbursement as this need persists and we move through the economic crisis and towards recovery.
- Upon its expiration, the SRC lease was modified to a month-to-month term and the city of Spokane has agreed to cover costs for October and November.
- A new source of funds from the City has not been identified and they have indicated that per the terms of their lease, they will need to provide a 30-day notice to vacate the premises to the landlord and building owner.
- The SWC is seeking to work with our partners in local government and across our community to immediately enter into negotiations on a new lease for this facility.

- The SWC is also actively working to identify funding from available grants, including WIOA formula funds, WIOA discretionary grants, federal CARES Act, CDBG, and other fund sources through the city of Spokane and Spokane County, and from other community partners in order to secure the resources necessary to sustain the SRC for the next several years.
- Tim Sigler shared that the SRC has been a huge success in the last two years and it has really turned into exactly what we need.
 - Creating an environment with a one-stop shop where social services can intervene when there is a need and employment can be available when a person is ready for it has been great.
 - Their investment was for a two-year pilot project for the previous mayor and his priorities.
 - The city invested over \$400,000 into this and he absolutely wants to see this program continue moving forward, however, they are in a budget crisis as a result of the pandemic.
 - It was Tim's understanding that the council president was seeking to place funds for the SRC into next year's budget and the negotiations are still going on.
 - The city has CDBG funds coming in and some of that will go to support our shelter systems as a COVID response.
 - The Community Housing and Human Services board and one of the subcommittees are putting together a priority list that they vote on and Tim is guessing that many of the services that the SRC provides would be something that could be applied for.
 - Moving forward the city will continue to partner in every way possible.
- Dawn Karber shared that the building owner has declined to lease the SRC space to the SWC in past negotiations.
 - The SWC has \$60,000 set aside just in case the city ever found themselves in a position that they needed rent dollars.
 - The SWC will work to identify a few other funding streams to support this if the city can maintain the lease.
- Tim indicated that he believes the city is open to the discussion about maintaining the lease, but he does not have that decision-making authority.
 - He will have to bring this back to the city's legal team and make sure there are no issues with the city maintaining a lease and doing a sublease or MOU with the SWC.
- Dawn shared that her concern is that we may end up in a 30 day vacate situation and would quickly need to find somewhere else when we could remain and come up with the money.
- Tim mentioned when he had spoken to the property manager, they were able to extend the lease for October and November, but beyond that we have not discussed what will happen December moving forward.
 - He thinks if we could get the property manager to agree to extending it a bit longer then and start there.
 - He understands the property manager wants a long-term lease and will not want to do month to month for a long time.
- Dawn mentioned we have four fund sources that we can bring to bear, but federal policy may require that other partners on site also cover part of the costs.
 - If the city could contribute a portion via CDBG or other funds through the Council, we could bring in the balance.
- Tim suggested that all parties follow up with City Council and he will connect with Dawn and Mark.
- Dawn thanked Tim and shared that it has been a very successful partnership and provided a lot of value for the community.

- We appreciate the opportunity to go before the Mayor and the Council to talk about what we have done thus far and plans for going forward.
- Robert shared that he has seen the effort that goes into getting these leases done and he hopes Mark and Dawn can get an afternoon meeting with Tim to expedite this process.
- Mark shared that the “secret sauce” to the success of the SRC is the fact that it is co-located with WorkSource Spokane.
 - We are not sending people across the city to different offices and providers to obtain needed services, but they all occur in one place.
 - This model has made the SRC so successful compared to other Envision Centers across the country.
 - We really do want to retain that if possible as it is central to what makes this function so well both in the virtual environment and as we get back to in-person services.
- Dawn shared that one of the other advantages of being located here on site is that we have been able to bring in about \$6 million in workforce funding because the site is on the workforce campus.
 - Should it move offsite, the majority of the funding cannot follow.
 - Moving off site is not an option if we want the center to retain the value that it currently brings to customers.
- Mark pointed out that this was a tentative action item and at this point it sounds like, pending more discussion, the city would be willing to remain the lease holder so we may not need to try and position the SWC as the lease holder, but if that changes substantially before the next time the board meets we might need to schedule a special meeting to talk about our next steps with the Executive Committee.
 - If the city does maintain this position then we would need to commit resources to that, as Dawn pointed out we have several grants that have some funding we could repurpose and dedicate to facilities costs.
 - We may need to take action on that once we see what the funds look like and the amount of the funds required, which may be the subject of a special meeting between now and the end of the year, and we appreciate your availability for that should it occur.

ITEM #7 – ACTIVITIES AND UPDATES

Mark Mattke, CEO – SWC

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

- The Executive Committee welcomed Mr. Cupid Alexander from the city of Spokane. He was appointed by Mayor Woodward as the director of the Neighborhoods, Housing, and Human Services Division. He previously had responsibility for policy development, engagement, and oversight and implementation for housing and economic development in the City of Portland. Mr. Alexander also has experience with local workforce development boards, having served as the Mayor of Portland’s liaison to the local board for Multnomah and Washington counties in Oregon.
- Facilities Reopening Plans/Impacts of new statewide restrictions
 - Many of the customers seeking services do not have access to technology or digital fluency and cannot avail themselves of resources online.
 - Staff have been trying to figure out the best course of action is to open on a limited basis for some level of face-to-face or face-to-computer for customers.
 - There are plans in place for developing PPE and safety protocols to bring people in and have webcams at workstations inside the WorkSource Center so a customer could talk to a career coach and engage to help them navigate their next steps forward.

- Staff are now reassessing what that looks like given the new restrictions the Governor imposed on Saturday that went into effect this week.
- It is a very dynamic environment, and we recognize the gap in services, and we are trying to respond appropriately and with safety in mind for both the customers and our staff.
- At this point we are back in a holding pattern, purchasing equipment such as no-touch temperature scanners to ensure we can keep people safe when it is deemed safe to open.
- Dawn shared that we did have a plan in place to do a soft, very limited reopening December 1st and all by appointment only with increases on December 15th and January 1st.
 - One of the challenges is that the WorkSource Center is leased by the Employment Security Department who is obligated to follow the Governor's orders.
 - Most of the staff that work in the front end are familiar with serving customers, especially those seeking unemployment insurance assistance, are all employed by ESD.
 - More people need access to computers and technology to file their unemployment claims.
 - Planning is directed to a model where we provide access safely with the fewest staff possible.
- Mark asked if any board members would like to share input from their sector and the impacts on business or any advice you can give us with regards to possibly reopening.
 - Staci Taylor shared from the healthcare sector that they have had to scale back and make some decisions, while not mandated, to not allow visitors effective Tuesday.
 - There have been no changes to the services, just a significant decrease in the number of individuals allowed in their facilities.
 - They have been seeing a spike in COVID cases confirmed and hospitals are pretty much at max capacity right now.
 - They are starting to experience quite a few staffing shortages throughout all their campuses.
- State Monitoring preliminary results and State Auditor's Office upcoming Annual Audit
 - Staff are waiting for the management letter to arrive and it will be a clean monitoring visit this year again.
 - Many thanks to our program and fiscal staff for an amazing job.
 - There were several things identified and tweaks to make as usual, but nothing that rose to the level of a finding, so we are proud of the work of our team accomplishing that.
 - Our annual visit from the State Auditor's office will be coming and given the impact of COVID, may not be on site directly but choose to do it all remotely.
 - This causes no end of challenges getting all the documentation scanned and sent into their office.
 - It is another big part of the process for everyone to learn how to operate virtually, including for our audits, and Jeanette has been very busy preparing those packages and getting to them.
 - We will be engaging remotely with the State Auditor's office over the last couple weeks in December.
- Employee Handbook revisions (attached)
- Journal of Business Workforce Summit

- Mark reported they had a very successful event, and it is their third straight year of holding it and the first time as a virtual event.
- Paul Reid is great about organizing and creating a venue in our community where businesses, educators and others can get together and talk about how K-12 education, post-secondary education and businesses are all working to address workforce development issues. This year responding to COVID-19 took center stage and discussion included what the future may look like for our area's educational institutions and businesses.
- Mark moderated two panels where participants offered their insights on how we can work together as a community to ensure that we understand what the changing needs are and then align educations around meeting those needs all the way from pre-kindergarten up through graduate education.
- Spokane has an amazing community of people that work together on these things to develop a single unified vision for how we accomplish this.
- It is a great chance to have that conversation with the community at large and look at the path forward to set and achieve some good goals in the months to come.
- SWC-GSI Planning
 - Mark and Dawn have been working with leadership from GSI – Alicia Benson, Gary Ballew vice president of Economic Development, and Cassie Peterson on their Talent and Education team – to plan out how we can ensure that workforce and economic development are working in a very tightly linked fashion.
 - To make sure we are communicating effectively and leveraging both our assets in support of businesses, job seekers and workers in our community is a critical part of the all the work we do and it is a big part of our strategic plan that we put out earlier this year.
 - We have set up a cadence of meetings every month or so together as a leadership team to have discussions about what we are doing programmatically, where we have overlap, and where we can achieve greater synergies around this work.
- Virtual Job Fair platform
 - Mark has been supporting the movement into the realm of delivering services virtually and having a platform that allows businesses to conduct interviews with job seekers across the area.
 - We have been successful in acquiring a statewide license for a platform and we will be able to have a couple of events per month on that platform, or more if we choose to.
 - It will be a common platform that businesses use across the state.
 - This is a good demonstration of how we are trying to become more sophisticated in the use of technology and succeed in the virtual world because that is not going to go away when things go back to whatever normal looks like.
 - When that happens, we are going to have this as a permanent element of our workforce system and we need to make sure we are really good at it and it has been successful for the customers of our system.
- SWC Technical Assistance
 - Staff were able to secure the \$50,000 contract from Montana which will provide training to 200 individuals from across their workforce system – staff and leadership.
 - We are finding that Zoom may not be the best virtual platform for a group that size in a learning environment.
 - Staff are exploring other virtual platforms and may use to provide training to our entire staff of about 115 on our campus.

- We may publish a Request for Information (RFI) to collect information from potential vendors in the coming weeks.
- The SWC issued a \$9,500 subcontract to Career Path Services so they could charge time to it when working for us on technical assistance projects.
- Dawn thanked Robert and the Services & Oversight Committee for their support to get this new line of business going.

OTHER BUSINESS

- Mark shared that we have yet to see the numbers for how many employees were laid off as a result of the most recent closures.
 - We are going to carefully go through the data that we obtain regarding the impact to businesses in our community and how many workers are going back on an unemployment insurance claim so that our system can direct resources where needed.
 - We are still not seeing an uptick in the number of people that are coming to us seeking retraining and upskilling.
 - We thought we may see that when the extra \$600 a week of unemployment insurance benefits went away or when people got closer to the end of their claim.
 - We have yet to see that and the new restrictions may be another impetus or a bump that causes folks to rethink what their plan is, then ask for some extra help.
 - We continue to do outreach to the community and are getting closer to being able to actually see who these people are that are impacted by these layoffs and get their contact info.
 - The next step is to execute an agreement with the state of Washington that allows us to know exactly who comprises the ranks of the unemployed, what job they had, what industry they came from, how long they have been on a claim and what type, and then we can do more effective targeted outreach.
 - As closure orders roll through and the economy is further impacted by this, we are really working hard to figure out what we can do to ensure that people are connected to what they need to make their way through this.
- Tina Morrison mentioned that with this uptick in COVID cases and the way this is impacting our community, the musicians and stagehands have been hit hard.
 - These are highly trained people that are probably not going to change careers at this point as it would be difficult if you have a master's degree as a cellist and you own an \$80,000 instrument, it is not something you're going to switch out of easily.
 - Anything we can do as community leaders to get the word out for people to wear masks would be very helpful.
 - The reason we have this uptick in cases is because there are so many people in our community who are not observing the social distancing and they are not wearing masks.
 - We have got to get the message out that it can really make a big difference to people, our small businesses, and our workplaces.
 - The Spokane Symphony is doing their first performance via streaming tonight. It is not too late to buy a ticket at \$75/person or \$150 for a household.
 - This fundraiser is to save our symphony so anyone and everyone are welcome.

Meeting adjourned at 1:09 PM.