



Anika Van Eaton, Managing  
Trustee  
Vickie Choitz, Managing Trustee

# City of Somerville Job Creation & Retention Trust Monthly Meeting

Trustees  
Thomas Bent  
Silvana Dinka  
Jim Hachey  
Jacob Luria  
Wilfred Mbah  
Rachel Nadkarni  
Rand Wilson

## Meeting Minutes

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**Location:** Hybrid: Online via Zoom Meeting AND In-Person at Tufts Administration Building  
**Date:** October 27, 2025  
**Time:** 6:30 PM

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### Attendance

- Trustees: Thomas Bent, Vickie Choitz, Silvana Dinka, Jim Hachey, Wilfred Mbah, Rachel Nadkarni, Anika Van Eaton, and Rand Wilson
- Economic Development Staff: William Blackmer and Dana Whiteside

### Meeting Minutes

*A Van Eaton: Meeting called to order at 6:35pm. Quorum established with 8 trustees in attendance.*

*W Blackmer delivered house rules about technology.*

#### 1. Review and Approval of past meeting minutes

- a. Vote to approve September 18<sup>th</sup> meeting minutes

Motion: T Bent makes motion to approve September 18th meeting minutes. S Dinka seconds the motion.

Roll Call Vote: Motion passes by vote of 7-0. A Van Eaton abstained.

#### 2. Review Received and Estimated Linkage Fees for 2025

*W Blackmer: The Job Creation and Retention Trust (i.e. "JCRT", "Trust" or "Board") received \$21,000 in interest. As a result, the current uncommitted balance sits at around \$2.3M. There's approximately \$500,000 we are anticipating from 1 project that is wrapping up. Currently, the Trust isn't projected to receive any funds in the next few years.*

*R Nadkarni clarified that the recent news about the potential leasing of approximately 500,000 square feet at 188 Assembly Park Drive would not result in a linkage payment since linkage payments are made by the developer at building permit and certificate of occupancy; the Trust has already received both linkage payments for this development.*

#### 3. Review and Discussion of Active Programs and Obligations

##### a. Status Update on Current and Recently Concluded Programs

*W Blackmer: One program wrapping up this week is the Post-Secondary Success Program. Program Managers have been working diligently for several months on a transition plan for the youth that they have been supporting and on a best practices manual. In addition, they have put some great thought into considerations that might inform the re-creation of this program in the future once funding sources can be identified and applied accordingly. I am also working closely with the City's Youth Services Division to coordinate workforce*

development services for recent SHS graduates. I will share a memo on the program in an upcoming JCRT meeting.

*W Mbah expressed disappointment that the program was coming to an end given its strong results and asked about the potential for continuing to fund the program.*

*A Van Eaton explained that the program had mostly been funded by the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) and then was continued with some funding from the JCRT, however for the program to continue, a proposal would need to be part of a competitive request for proposals process. No proposal to continue the program was submitted.*

*D Whiteside echoed that the program was a major success and that it coming to an end is not because of a lack of desire from the City. City departments, including Health and Human Services are set to meet to discuss reviving the program, but its continuation is facing challenges related to funding availability.*

*Board members are looking forward to receiving a report and best practices manual about the Post Secondary Success Program and encourage it to be shared with other relevant departments including the school department.*

*W Blackmer: One recently concluded program is the Somerville Center for Adult Learning Experiences (SCALE) Contextualized ESOL and Adult Education Programs. A memo was shared with Board members giving an overview of the project including its successes and challenges.*

*T Bent: Is SCALE continuing to support students in the CNA training program that did not yet pass the state exam and/or did not obtain a job yet?*

*W Blackmer: Yes, they are. We are planning to have speakers from SCALE participating in next month's annual meeting.*

#### **4. Good Municipal Jobs Request for Proposals (RFP) Funding Recommendations**

*A Van Eaton: Ahead of tonight's meeting, a memo was shared with Board members outlining the background, proposals, received, and the subcommittee's funding recommendations for the Good Municipal Jobs request for proposals. Board members were also given access to all proposals. The amount available under this RFP was \$400,000 and the subcommittee of R Wilson, V Choitz, T Bent, and S Dinka has recommended funding two proposals for \$200,000 each. Those recommendations appear as votes on tonight's agenda in alphabetical order by organization name. Are there any questions or comments regarding the memo prior to seeking motions for votes?*

*R Nadkarni asked about the Somerville CDL Training proposal and the subcommittees impressions of it since the community has discussed the need for residents to get commercial driver's licenses to qualify for many vacant municipal decisions.*

*T Bent said all programs received were strong, but the review committee ultimately SCALE and SCC's proposals as the two to recommend for funding.*

*V Choitz shared that the RFP was explicitly soliciting an integrated education and training program that incorporated English language learning and/or Adult Basic Education alongside job training and support services. The Somerville CDL Training proposal was more of a standard job training proposal and was not a good fit for this particular RFP.*

- a. Distribution Vote: To distribute \$200,000 to Somerville Center for Adult Learning Experiences for Creating Workforce Opportunities in Facilities Maintenance.  
Motion: T Bent makes motion. R Wilson seconded the motion.  
Roll Call Vote: Motion passes by a vote of 8-0.
- b. Distribution Vote: To distribute \$200,000 to Somerville Community Corporation for Building Skills, Building Futures.  
Motion: W Mbah makes motion. R Wilson seconded the motion.  
Roll Call Vote: Motion passes by a vote of 8-0.

## 5. Fall 2025 JCRT RFP Funding Recommendations

*A Van Eaton: Ahead of tonight's meeting, a memo was shared with Board members outlining the background, proposals, received, and the subcommittee's funding recommendations for the Fall 2025 JCRT request for proposals. Board members were also given access to all proposals. The amount available under this RFP was \$1,000,000 and the subcommittee has recommended funding eight proposals totaling \$950,414. Those recommendations appear as votes on tonight's agenda in alphabetical order by organization name. Are there any questions or comments regarding the memo prior to seeking motions for votes?*

*W Blackmer noted that there was an error in the memo and agenda regarding the request and recommendation for Tech Goes Home. All references to this proposal should read \$50,414.40, not \$50,414.00.*

*R Wilson supports all funding recommendations and asked whether the Board can vote on all 8 recommended distribution votes at one time.*

*W Blackmer stated that if a single motion is made to fund all 8 recommended proposals then Board members should vote in favor if they support funding all 8 proposals, but that they should vote in opposition if they do not support funding even one of the 8 recommended proposals.*

*D Whiteside confirmed that a single motion can be made on all 8 proposals.*

- a. Distribution Vote: To distribute \$100,000 to Asian American Civic Association for Workforce Development and Training.
- b. Distribution Vote: To distribute \$100,000 to Bunker Hill Community College for Somerville English for Language Learners.
- c. Distribution Vote: To distribute \$200,000 to Community Action Agency of Somerville for Development and Launch of a Workforce Development Program Tailored to Somerville Residents.
- d. Distribution Vote: To distribute \$200,000 to MassHire Metro North Workforce Board for Pathways to STEM Careers.
- e. Distribution Vote: To distribute \$50,000 to Per Scholas for Workforce Development Through Technology Training.
- f. Distribution Vote: To distribute \$50,000 to Somerville Arts Council for Nibble.
- g. Distribution Vote: To distribute \$200,000 to Somerville Center for Adult Learning Experience's Contextualized ESOL with Certified Nursing Assistant Training Program.

h. Distribution Vote: To distribute \$50,414.40 to Tech Goes Home for Workforce Readiness for Somerville Housing Authority Residents.

Motion: R Wilson makes motion to distribute \$950,414.40 to the 8 recommended proposals. T Bent seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote: Motion passes by a vote of 8-0.

## 6. Review Annual Meeting Plan

*A Van Eaton: Our annual meeting will be on Thursday, November 20<sup>th</sup> at 6:30PM. We will be holding it as a hybrid meeting with a Zoom Webinar option for virtual attendees.*

*W Blackmer: The meeting will be similar in structure to the past few years. We will take roll and welcome everyone and then dive into our presentation which will cover:*

- Who is the Job Creation and Retention Trust Board?
  - All Board members will have a chance to introduce themselves and their Board seat
- What is jobs linkage funding? /Current funding picture
- Implementation of Investment Priorities
  - Including a timeline between last year's annual meeting and this year's
- Overview of past years' investments
  - From 2020-Present
- Current Investments and Upcoming Programs
- Clarifying Questions
- Community Discussion on Sustaining JCRT Investments

*A Van Eaton: It is important to share that the Trust is not anticipating the arrival of many funds soon and as a result, we are not soliciting ideas for many new programs. We are seeking the public's help on creative ideas for potential partnerships.*

*R Nadkarni: I'm particularly interested in hearing about low or no-cost partnership opportunities; ideas on how the Trust can amplify programs and organizations whether or not the JCRT is awarding them a large amount.*

*A Van Eaton: I want to clarify the Board's role. It is to fund programs, not to broker collaboration opportunities, so I want us to be aware that the Board is gathering ideas but might not be the appropriate body to actualize these collaborations.*

*S Dinka: I would like to hear from a participant who benefitted from the programs during the annual meeting.*

*W Blackmer took names of Board members who would be interested in presenting slides during the annual meeting and will reshare the flyer with Board members so they can invite additional groups.*

*The Board agreed to hold its meetings virtually from December 2025 through March 2026.*

## 7. Adjournment

Motion: R Wilson makes motion to adjourn. S Dinka seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote: Motion passes by vote of 8-0.

**Meeting Materials:**

- 10/27/25 Mtg Notice and Agenda
- draft 9/18/25 Mtg Minutes
- JCRT Received and Estimated Linkage Fees
- JCRT Investment Priority Tracker
- October 2025 Memo Re: SCALE Program Conclusion
- October 2025 Memo Re: Good Municipal Jobs RFP Funding Recommendations
- October 2025 Memo Re: Fall 2025 RFP Funding Recommendations

***Approved 12/18/2025***