



City of Somerville

Job Creation & Retention Trust

Vickie Choitz, Managing Trustee
Anika Van Eaton, Co-Manager

Trustees

Thomas Bent
Jesse Clingan
Lisa Cook
Silvana Dinka
Thomas F. Galligani, Jr.
Colleen Moran
Rand Wilson

Meeting Minutes

Location: <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/3682533140442083854>
Date: 10/19/21
Time: 6:02 PM

Attendance

- Trustees: Tom Bent, Vickie Choitz, Colleen Moran, Rand Wilson, Tom Galligani, Jesse Clingan, Anika Van Eaton, Silvana Dinka
- Guests: Francisca Sepulveda, Myrna Morales, Ben Echevarria

Meeting Minutes

1. V. Choitz called meeting to order at 6:02pm. Quorum established.
 - Approval of September 14 Meeting Minutes T. Bent motion to approve. Seconded by T. Galligani. Approved unanimously. R. Wilson abstained as was not in attendance.
2. The Welcome Project Presentation – W. Blackmer introduced F. Sepulveda worker rights organizer from the Somerville Workers Center and the Welcome Project. V. Choitz explained that the Welcome Project has submitted a proposal for a second year of funding. This is an opportunity to understand the work that was completed and what the proposal for the coming year is. F. Sepulveda explained that B. Echevarria the Executive Director of the Welcome Project and Myrna Morales who is a participant was also present. Know your rights workshops, train the trainer and leadership institute, coaching, and wage theft advisory committee. The curriculum covers work place issue, wage lost, OSHA standards, and how to organize workers at the workplace. The original budget was for \$119,000 - \$30,000 to develop a worker rights curriculum and \$89,000 to train 128 workers. The curriculum was updated to include additional topics and leadership training.

With current budget proposed (\$89,000), the Welcome Project will be able to do curriculum revision, implementation of monthly Know Your Rights sessions and Know Your Rights sessions for community partners. The Welcome Project has requested an additional \$30,000 to provide Train the Trainer and the Leadership Institute trainings.

Trainings will also move to a hybrid model. Added a section on heat stress to the curriculum.

M. Morales shared her experience and the impact that it has had on the community. The wage theft advisory group is a really important community safety measure. The leadership engagement program empowers workers and they feel that they are being taken seriously. Gender parity wage gap is huge. The training was powerful and inspiring. Really proud as a Somerville resident to have a Worker's Center. One of two cities in the country that have a wage theft advisory committee. Worker Centers are rarely funded. As a member please fund fully.

F. Sepulveda stated that outreach was difficult, but Leadership allowed for the strengthening of the curriculum.

V. Choitz open up to questions from Board Members.

T. Bent asked will it be 60 minutes of training that will be covered?

F. Sepulveda stated that yes and the sessions will include individual sessions to help individuals with cases, but every week we will have a more in-depth session on a particular topic.

T. Bent how many were Somerville residents and how many work in Somerville?

F. Sepulveda 70-80% Welcome Project constituents who are Somerville residents, but there also workers who are coming from surrounding cities. A total of 25 workers went through the entire curriculum including "Train the Trainer".

T. Bent in the Train the Trainer are they receiving a salary from this budget?

F. Sepulveda \$599 was paid to the first workers and that came from the budget. Would like to shift funds to provide other trainings, but have an idea to provide a transportation stipend.

T. Bent 6 cases of wage theft in Somerville, correct? Were they major violations?

F. Sepulveda a couple of wage theft and a couple of discrimination cases. All were individual cases. A few cases that involved workman's comp.

T. Bent why expand the curriculum, would you want to concentrate on cleaning up the programs that were delivered?

F. Sepulveda the first year was experimental, this year we saw a lot of enthusiasm and a lot were very excited. The evaluation phase had very positive feedback. Originally the train the trainer was 8 sessions. Workers can't commit to that long and we shifted to weekly sessions at a total of 4 session.

J. Clingan are you tracking data in terms of how many work in the City?

F. Sepulveda yes we are tracking, but a lot of workers did not fill out all of the information. So we switched to having a mandatory form, which helped.

T. Galligani does the Worker's Center receive funding from other sources?

F. Sepulveda the first year it came entirely from the Jobs Trust.

B. Echevarria it is the only source. We wanted to research a bit more before writing for other grants. Have started the process, but right now no other funding source has been confirmed.

R. Wilson would like to thank Francisca, Myrna and Ben for attending. How do you see things changing now that we are returning to a more in-person presence?

F. Sepulveda it's still hard for people to attend in-person. Online learning will still be used, especially people can return to the Facebook recordings.

B. Echevarria running hybrid. Virtual classes are packed. In-person are nowhere near the goal. Discovering it's easy to take class virtual class on lunch. A lot of the immigrant community is in need of making up for the lost wages, so we are seeing a dip in in-person participation.

J. Clingan this group was tasked with something that was very rooted in the community and they have delivered on it. I would like to put a vote forward to approve the budget right now.

W. Blackmer would need to follow the order of the agenda to review the budget.

A. Van Eaton before we move to item 3, we will be losing a board member who has to leave early. I do want to express concern about votes to be delayed to December.

3. W. Blackmer shared October Memo Re-visiting 2021 JCRT Budget Recommendations. The most significant updated is that the anticipated funds have not been received. This has an impact on the trust to be able to disburse funds. It is recommended that the trust pause on voting on uncommitted investments until December given the uncertainty of the arrival of those funds.

V. Choitz first vote is to reaffirm staff salary commitment for \$47,500.

W. Blackmer yes, the first vote is reaffirming the commitment. It's related to timeline of the funding, not the dollar amount. The other two votes would be on new commitments.

V. Choitz one commitment is the Welcome Project for 88,000 – it should be 89,000 and Just a Start. Are you suggesting that we wait until December?

W. Blackmer suggesting wait on JAS and the Welcome Project.

T. Galligani according to memo \$417,000 in the bank. We are in a position to make a commitment to the Welcome Project \$89,000, the commitment already made to Bunker Hill, the COVID emergency fund, the Forsyth Student Fund, and the staff salary. Are we able to make a vote on the \$89,000 for the Welcome Project.

W. Blackmer yes.

A. Van Eaton does the proposal for the salary reflect two years, changing the timeline from FY22-FY23?

W. Blackmer the \$47,500 is showing the commitment for FY22.

T. Bent if we vote for the \$89,000 can we note vote to get them to full amount?

V. Choitz we would need to invite them back for a proposal for a budget amendment.

T. Bent JAS would not get funded until hopefully December, and that is training for actual jobs?

W. Blackmer JAS trainings will commence in January.

A. Van Eaton we need to think about our present votes. Suggest that we move out any money that we have and as money comes in through the year we should discuss the budget amendment idea for additional Welcome Project funding.

V. Choitz can stay on for a few minutes more. Can we place the votes issues on the table now? and jump to Item 5, the votes before Agenda item 4 "Research Updates".

4. We will proceed with item #5, the votes. First vote is on City Staff commitment. Reaffirm commitment for \$47,500 for FY22 amount in the budget.

T. Bent motion to approve to reaffirm. A. Van Eaton second.

W. Blackmer want to clarify the motion is to approve the \$47,500 for FY22 and FY23 to cover the JCRT's portion instead of the same dollar amount initially allocated for FY21 and FY22.

V. Choitz move forward the motion. A Van Eaton clarified if the \$47,500 was for one or two fiscal years.

W. Blackmer clarified the \$47,500 covers one year.

A. Van Eaton asked if the money was on-hand to dedicate to FY23 at this time?

W. Blackmer asked for T Galligani input, T Galligani did not have anything to add

V. Choitz clarified that we do have the \$47,500 for FY22.

T. Galligani confirmed that we have \$47,500 and can safely vote on this amount for FY22.

W. Blackmer proposed a motion in line with memo to approve \$47,500 to cover Boards portion of the JCRT coordinator position for FY22.

V. Choitz moved to approve \$47,500 to cover Boards portion of the JCRT coordinator position for FY22.

C. Moran seconded the motion. VOTE: T. Galligani abstained in case it was perceived as a conflict of interest. Passed by 6 out of 9 remaining members, therefore the motion passes.

V. Choitz the next fund is to fund the Welcome Project for year 2. The first request was for \$89,000. Is there any discussion?

R. Wilson was impressed by the presentation. It was a good first start. Like T. Bent's idea about revisiting the additional funding in December if we are allowed to do that.

V. Choitz when there is more funding would like the Welcome Project to come back to us to discuss a budget amendment.

R. Wilson motion to fund at Welcome Project at \$89,000 with a commitment to revisit this topic in Dec. contingent upon the budget. T Galligani seconded.

T. Bent they would have to submit a new proposal for an amended budget, correct? Would like the administration to return to them on the point about business outreach? Suggest that they reach out and engage in conversation with businesses before walking in with flyers.

V. Choitz Economic Development Department can also help reach with outreach as well.

Roll call passed by unanimous vote 7-0.

Third vote we had scheduled was Just A Start and since we don't have ample funds, the staff suggestion is to delay vote until December meeting when funding may be available. The Trust will delay the vote as a result.

A. Van Eaton took over facilitation duties as V. Choitz excused herself from the meeting at this time.

5. A. Van Eaton we will loop back to Research Updates from J Mancia.

J. Mancia regarding Rapid Response we do have internal mechanisms in place and an operating manual is being established so we do not anticipate needing JCRT funding for this.

R Wilson clarified for attendees that this was an early priority of the JCRT and it is good to hear a plan is being worked on. This has been informed public concern over Royal Hospitality

J Mancía more information on this plan in December.

J Mancía scholarship internal discussion with CFO about whether we will be able to move forward with this idea, but will provide updates in coming months.

J Mancía municipal apprenticeship program I had the chance to meet with R Wilson. It is a massive plan but am working on internal research and will provide updates shortly.

J Mancía met with childcare working group and they have seen a great shift in needs, so they need time to revamp their proposal and get back to us in Spring.

R. Wilson, what is the major change or shift?

J. Mancía afterschool programming. Kids are far behind so they cannot use traditional childcare that exists for afterschool programming. Recreational activities are not the need right now—instead students need more academic support after school. They are determining what would be the appropriate system to fund and then they will reach out to us.

T. Bent the funding is for training people to go into the childcare.

A. Van Eaton can you tell us more about research for regarding municipal apprenticeship

J. Mancía I am circling back with colleagues in HR about what the current skills gaps or shortages are.

T. Bent one area to look at may be proposal that work through CTE programs at Somerville High School. Maybe we should look for a funding proposal through CTE or SCALE to facilitate a trades training. Can we utilize or formalize existing mechanisms?

J. Mancía meeting monthly with internship coordinator at high school and HR to keep conversation moving forward.

6. J Mancía share economic development city marketing plan. We have received positive feedback from L. Cook about SCALE receiving additional walk-ins due to our promotion of their programs.

T. Galligani this is our approach to connect residents to training opportunities.

C. Moran this is such a comprehensive list.

W. Blackmer our pages on the City of Somerville website are now up-to-date.

J. Mancía today's explanation of funding has determined that staff need to reevaluate RFP and Reporting Calendar and will provide an update in December's meeting.

7. W. Blackmer 2020-2021 Annual Report summarizes the activities of the Trust from August 2020-September 2021. Within this report we see the addition of Colleen, the four strategies mentioned in the Talent Equity Playbook, funding allocations, continuation of year one funding and budget information. Continued adaptation of grantees this year in response to COVID.

A. Van Eaton the public meeting is required in our bylaws to ensure committing to regularly sharing information. Want to summarize the work that we are doing. Welcome and intro., overview, history, update on investments and processes, get into what actually funded. Suggest follow similar line up as last time. Would be worth including some things. For example; rapid response, leveraging programming without funding. General ideas about public meeting?

R. Wilson will take on any assignments.

T. Bent set up had last year worked well. Unfortunately, because waiting on funding we may have to discuss that. Can help with sharing ed and training investments.

C. Moran would be happy to take a role. Will do whatever makes sense.

A. Van Eaton on the public discussion, will open for general feedback, set up some specific questions. Will convene with William and get slides up.

W. Blackmer around the 1st would be a good date to aim for.

T. Bent will they be draft slides?

A. Van Eaton yes.

8. Other Business Not Reasonably Anticipated by the Chair.

None.

9. Adjournment. Remaining attendees to decided to end meeting via consensus at 7:50.

Meeting Documents

- Draft JCRT Meeting Minutes from 09.14.2021
- Somerville Worker Center/Welcome Project Presentation
- October Memo Revisiting 2021 JCRT Budget Recommendations
- City Marketing Plan
- JCRT Annual Report 2020-2021

Meeting minutes approved on 12/14/2021.