

City of Somerville, Massachusetts
Job Creation and Retention Trust

Trustees

Thomas Bent
Vickie Choitz
Lisa Cook
Silvana Dinka
Thomas Galligani
Anika Van Eaton
Rand Wilson
Josh Grehan
Jesse Clingan

Minutes

Somerville Job Creation and Retention Trust
Tuesday, November 10th, 2020, at 6:00PM
Zoom Meeting

In attendance: Vickie Choitz, Anika Van Eaton, Thomas Bent, Rand Wilson, Thomas Galligani, Silvana Dinka, Lisa Cook, Jesse Clingan

Staff Present: Ben Sommer

Meeting commenced at 6:06pm.

1. Approve September 15th and October 13th meeting minutes

- Vickie Choitz made motion to approve September 15th minutes. Anika Van Eaton seconded. Motion was approved unanimously by roll call vote.
- Tom Bent made a motion to approve October 13th minutes. Vickie seconded. Motion was approved unanimously by roll call vote.

2. Updates

- Workforce Development Coordinator position
 - Ben Sommer gave an update on the hiring of the new workforce development position. He estimated that a job description would be advertised likely in the next few weeks. Anika Van Eaton asked if the JCRT would be able to help advertise. Ben confirmed that all assistance and spreading the word about the position would be helpful.
- Business Representative seat
 - Ben Sommer gave an update on the business representative seat vacancy. He has received one application and is hopeful to have a new board member approved before the end of the year.
- Program updates

- Ben Sommer briefly noted the first program report from the new JCRT funded programs. Bunker Hill Community College had submitted their first report and Ben had shared it with the JCRT Board of Trustees.
 - Emergency Fund update
 - Ben Sommer communicated that the City has started the contracting process with CAAS to manage this process.
3. Vote: Dedicate \$47,500 towards Workforce Development Coordinator position for first half of 2021.
- This item was taken out of order.
 - Vickie Choitz made a motion to approve. Anika Van Eaton seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved by roll call vote.
4. Discussion of public meeting and comments
- Thomas Bent asked if the JCRT would go to RFP for any investments they vote on. Ben Sommer confirmed that that would likely be the path forward.
 - Rand Wilson said that the October public meeting had less energy than the 2019 meeting, most likely because of the virtual setting. He did see a strong affirmation of JCRT investments on wage theft and worker' rights.
 - Thomas Bent agreed with affirmation on Wage Theft training. He noted that there was also support for HR training for small businesses.
 - Silvana Dinka expressed that she liked the feel of the meeting. It felt like people trusted the board. Vickie Choitz agreed that it seemed like people appreciated and felt warmth towards the board. Lisa Cook noted that there has been a lot of work done by this board over the past year. This board set targeted and goals and met them.
 - Vickie Choitz, following up on small business support, brought up that Union Square Main Streets is hiring a small business liaison. The JCRT could provide more resources to USMS to focus on job quality.
 - Vickie Choitz noticed that there was support for workers coops as well. Rand Wilson mentioned that the ICA group in Somerville has provided seminars in the past. Anika Van Eaton asked about existing technical assistance programs for entrepreneurs in Somerville. Thomas Galligani responded that the economic development office currently offers technical assistance programs for small businesses. Anika Van Eaton mentioned a survey conducted in California on succession planning for small businesses. Wanted to think about providing resources beyond seminars.
 - Thomas Bent asked how this fits into the mission of the JCRT. Anika Van Eaton said that she interprets the mandate as broader than just job training.
 - Ben Sommer suggested that a sub-committee could research opportunities for coops in more detail. Vickie Choitz said this could be discussed in the December meeting.
 - Ben Sommer will create a google doc summarizing investment ideas and will share prior to the next meeting on December 8th.
5. Adjournment
- Vickie Choitz made a motion to adjourn. Lisa Cook seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved by roll call vote.
 - The meeting was adjourned at 7:15pm.

