

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  
Thursday, March 26, 2019, at 5:30PM  
GotoMeeting

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

Meeting started at 5:40pm.

1. Discussion of immediate grant assistance to organizations serving Somerville residents, workers, and businesses economically impacted by COVID-19 related business shutdowns.
  - Vickie Choitz started meeting describing issue we are facing. The idea is to set up a fund to help organizations serve low-income residents. Speed and efficiency will be a priority in the application process. In terms of contracting, a purchase agreement would be the right mechanism, requiring grants to be less than \$10,000.
  - Rand Wilson noted that it's important that when funds are put out into the community that people know the money is coming from the JCRT
  - Tom Bent asked why we were just singling out Somerville non-profits vs. other organizations who are serving Somerville residents.
  - Josh Grehan stated that in a time of crisis the fewer restrictions and more flexibility the better. We have to trust that people looking at the grants have good judgment.
  - Lisa Cook provided some insight on the situation on the ground, sharing that her staff at SCALE had been spending the first three weeks of the crisis doing wellness calls. One of the big issues she has seen is that there is a huge digital divide, not just with students but with teachers well.
  - Silvana expressed that sentiment that having additional people who could help people applying for unemployment is especially important.
  - Jesse Clingan said he is feeling positive about this opportunity and thinks the City Council will feel excited about us getting people help.

- Tom Bent asked if there is the potential to put people's health at risk if we are helping them apply to jobs. A decision was made to add a question in the application form about how services would be delivered in a safe environment.
- The conversation turned to the amount of money the JCRT would put into this emergency pot.
- Josh asked what the percentage of the pot of money would be from the total JCRT pot. It was noted that some previously authorized funding and projects will be interrupted and so would free up funding for this purpose, including the Somerville High School project.
- Rand noted that this is rapid response. With that money coming back since the trust received a grant for rapid response planning, from the schools, he thought \$100,000 would be appropriate.
- Anika highlighted that if folks in the community come to the board with an idea that costs more than \$10,000 that we as a board figure out how to make it happen.
- A subcommittee to review these applications was formed of Tom Bent, Rand Wilson and Anika Van Eaton.

## 2. Vote to approve funding for immediate grant assistance

Vote to establish a fund COVID 19 assistance organizations serving Somerville residents with a priority for Somerville based organizations. The fund would be up to \$100,000. The applications would be reviewed by City staff and a subcommittee of JCRT Board members.

Motion made by Rand Wilson. Seconded by Tom Bent. The motion passed unanimously.

## 3. Adjournment

Anika motion to adjourn. Tom Bent seconded.

Meeting adjourned at 7:30pm