



## CITY OF DETROIT MAYOR'S WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

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Wednesday, June 30, 2021  
11 a.m. – 1 p.m.  
Location: Virtual Meeting

### **Proposed Meeting Minutes** ***Co-Chairs: Dave Meador & Cindy Pasky***

#### **Call to Order**

Co-Chair Cindy Pasky called the Mayor's Workforce Development Board Meeting to order.

#### **Approval of Agenda**

Co-Chair Cindy Pasky asked for a motion to approve the Draft Agenda as presented. Moved by Bill Robinson, supported by Bishop Edgar Vann. Motion Approved.

#### **Approval of March 25, 2021 Meeting Minutes**

Co-Chair Cindy Pasky asked for a motion to approve the Draft Meeting Minutes as presented. Moved by Bishop Edgar Vann, supported by Alice Thompson. Motion Approved.

### **REPORTS**

#### **Co-Chair's Report – Cindy Pasky**

**Resident Employment Update:** Co-Chair Cindy Pasky discussed the change in unemployment numbers for May 2021 (214,530), noting that during the pandemic we lost almost 64,000 jobs, but have since recovered 50,000, showing a steady increase in Detroiters employed in May 2021 over April 2021. She indicated that we continue to see steady increases and stressed the importance in tracking these numbers. The co-chair noted that while businesses are still challenged in finding employees, we can't overlook the number of Detroiters that

The co-chair concluded by citing the average wage for Detroiters employed through Detroit at Work is \$15.37/hr., noting that it exceeds what the 2021 Alice Report sites as a living wage for single adults in Michigan at \$11.25/hr. She attributed that number to the work of the Detroit at Work team, the partnerships and contributions of board members and the training in place to prepare Detroiters for the workforce.

## **Executive Director's Report - Nicole Sherard-Freeman**

Nicole Sherard-Freeman began her presentation lifting the 10.4% unemployment rate for May, acknowledging the increase from 8.4% in April. She discussed the two reasons for this increase can be either Detroiters losing jobs or more Detroiters entering the workforce. In this case, the data shows more Detroiters entered the workforce and they did so because they saw opportunity. She attributed those numbers to work of this board, the leadership of the mayor and the good partnerships with Detroit at Work and the Detroit Economic Growth Corporation.

The Executive Director then paused for remarks from the Deputy Mayor, Conrad Mallet, on the current flood situation. Mr. Mallet indicated that the city received seven inches of rain that arrived over a span of five hours. He noted 20,000 homes have suffered damage, with 2,000 claims filed with the water department. He indicated that the Department of Public Works (DPW) mobilized 15 crews and would increase that to 35 crews to remove storm debris. A call center was established and is managing about 7,000 phone calls a day with an average wait of five minutes. Mr. Mallet continued by acknowledging that most claims filed would not receive a cash settlement but that it's important for residents to document the damage and costs associated with cleanup to support the city's FEMA application. He concluded by noting the Duggan administration has proved it knows how to manage in a crisis while recognizing members of the administration for their profound expertise and integrity.

Comments and questions from board members ensued:

- **Bill Robinson:** Referenced a report in the Detroit News indicating there was intentional flooding of the highways because of failing pumps and overfull reservoirs. He inquired if there was a long-term plan for fixing that.
- **Conrad Mallet:** Indicated the pumps were not shut down but rather overwhelmed and that the Governor reported that the City, State and Federal governments need to create opportunities for the water that collects on the freeway to be directed elsewhere. He referenced a \$30 million environmentally appropriate reservoir project at River Rouge Park that once complete would remove 100 million gallons.
- **Bishop Edgar Vann:** Asked the Deputy Mayor to address complaints he hears from residents in the Jefferson/Chalmers, Jefferson Village, Victoria Park and other neighborhoods on the East side about problems with the Connor Creek Station and the Freud Pumping Station.
- **Conrad Mallet:** Acknowledged that the pumps went down and were back in service within 2 hours.
- **M. Roy Wilson:** Estimated the financial impact to the Wayne State Campus at \$24 million.
- **Cindy Pasky:** Stressed the importance of reporting and documenting flood damage to support the city's FEMA application.

**Nicole Sherard-Freeman** continued her Executive Director's Report, with an update on the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) noting that ARPA is a \$1.9 trillion federal stimulus bill and Detroit is receiving the 5<sup>th</sup> largest amount of any city in America at \$826 million. She noted four categories to be funded outside of the City's primary ARPA allocation: Affordable Housing, Health, Transit & Lead Replacement, while highlighting that roughly half of the ARPA funding will be spent to plan for and help offset the budget shortfalls related to the negative impacts caused by Covid. She indicated we cannot use this funding for pension fund payments or to pay

off debt. As part of the Detroit Future Fund, half of the \$826 million will fall into six buckets: Fight Intergenerational Poverty, Restore Neighborhoods, Support Parks, Recreation & Cultural Facilities, Improve Public Safety, Reduce the Digital Divide and Small Business Assistance.

Ms. Sherard-Freeman stressed the inter-departmental, cross-agency planning that went into being sure that these funds were structured in a way that would bring immediate, significant, and long-term benefits. She noted a series of 16 meetings over 28 days where more than 3000 residents provided input, suggesting that community engagement along with their exceptional working relationship with City Council, drove the expansion of that initial six buckets, to a set of appropriation categories all reflecting what the community had to say.

Comments and questions from board members ensued:

- **Cindy Pasky:** Noted that type of community outreach sets us in a position where we make a difference for the individuals who need us to.
- **Dave Meador:** Cited it was a bit confusing to digest the available funds with relation to ARPA, State and Federal, noting additional funding available for childcare, health, mental health, energy assistance, etc. He stressed the importance of making sure that money is allocated appropriately and with a good equity lens.
- **Cindy Pasky:** Noted the success we've had thus far shows in the job numbers, retention rate and it shows in having an intimate understanding of what jobs we have. She closed by indicating we'd work closely with the State to ensure that they have an opportunity to learn from what's been accomplished here in Detroit.

## PRESENTATIONS

### **Joe Louis Greenway – Brad Dick, Group Executive, General Services Department, City of Detroit & Meagan Elliott, Deputy CFO Development & Grants, City of Detroit**

Brad Dick explained the Joe Louis Greenway (JLG) is a 27.5 mile greenway that extends through the City of Detroit, starting at the river at the Dequindre Cut, looping through Hamtramck, Highland Park and down to the West side of Detroit and linking back to Southwest by the new Gordie Howe bridge. He considers it a big neighborhood builder, jobs creator, and economic generator for the city.

Meagan Elliott broadened the discussion by noting the JLG is a \$240 million project that will run through every single type of land use that the city has to offer including industrial, commercial and both dense and vacant neighborhoods. She discussed the history of the project including its initial community outreach, which included over 200 meetings, noting the work being done has been heavily driven by residents and what they want to see in this process. She closed the presentation citing the JLG mission statement noting the JLG provides connected equitable and engaging spaces throughout our city and region where we offer opportunities for empowerment unification and healing for our neighborhoods and people.

Comments and questions from board members ensued:

- **Nicole Sherard-Freeman:** Expressed how projects like the Joe Louis Greenway, ARPA, Community Health Corps and other initiatives are among the strongest opportunities that we have for economic and workforce development, explaining this type of work will strengthen our commercial corridors, making us a more attractive place for developers.
- **Faye Nelson:** Questioned the governance structure, funding and sustainability.
- **Meagan Elliot:** Followed with noting the close work with Bloomberg, the Riverfront Conservancy and stakeholders.

### **Grow Detroit's Young Talent Update – Stephanie Nixon, Chief Programs Officer, Detroit at Work**

Stephanie opened the presentation with highlights from the 2020 program noting what a devastating year 2020 was due to the pandemic with many cities canceling their programs. That wasn't an option for Detroit, with their team quickly pivoting to a virtual platform. As a result, they served over 8,000 young people, exceeding their goal and their fundraising target, and they secured and delivered over 3,200 digital devices with the help of the philanthropic community.

Stephanie continued to highlight the program noting three important ways they prepare young people for work: The application process an interviewing, virtual etiquette, and financial literacy. For 2021, they've expanded their industry-led opportunities to pre-apprenticeship including carpentry, renewable energy and new opportunities in healthcare.

### **Public Comment**

Co-Chair Cindy Pasky asked for public comment. No hands were raised. Cindy concluded by thanking members for their attendance and participation.

### **Adjournment**

Co-Chair Cindy Pasky asked for a motion to adjourn. Moved by Alice Thompson, supported by Carla Walker-Miller. Motion Approved.

### **Attendees**

Alice Thompson, Bill Robinson, Bishop Edgar Vann, Bruce Dall, Calvin Sharp, Carla Walker-Miller, Cindy Pasky, Conrad Mallett, Dave Meador, Dr. Colleen Allen, Dr. Curtis Ivery, Dr. Darienne Driver -Hudson, Faye Nelson, John James, M.Roy Wilson, Mark Gaffney, Mike Haller, Scott Thiele, Heaster Wheeler, Alycia Meriweather, John Matton, Lori Wingerter, Dana Williams, Rachel May, Meagan Elliott, Brad Dick, Stephanie Nixon, Kevin Johnson, Spencer Lucker, Omar Hasan, Brianna Brazell, Luke Polcyn.