



CITY OF DETROIT MAYOR'S WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

Thursday, March 25, 2021
12:30 pm – 2:30 pm
Location: Virtual Meeting

Proposed Meeting Minutes **Co-Chairs: *Dave Meador (Cindy Pasky is absent)***

Call to Order

Co-Chair Dave Meador called the Mayor's Workforce Development Board Meeting to order.

Approval of Agenda

Co-Chair Dave Meador asked for a motion to approve the Draft Agenda as presented. Moved by Alice Thompson, Supported by Bishop Edgar Vann. Motion Approved.

Approval of December 8, 2020 Meeting Minutes

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

REPORTS

Co-Chair's Report - Dave Meador

Welcome New Members: **Kofi Bonner**, Chief Executive Officer, Bedrock and **Maria Woodruff-Wright**, Interim President and CEO and Vice President of Operations and CFO, the Skillman Foundation

Resident Employment Update: Dave Meador shared that we have made great strides in Resident Employment, springing back from a pandemic-related dive to the most recent measure in December. He continued with mention of the \$28 billion coming to the State of Michigan, suggesting that federal money would 'prime the pump' for economic development and employment.

Executive Director's Report - Nicole Sherard-Freeman

Nicole Sherard-Freeman began her presentation thanking Co-Chair Dave Meador and other board members. She discussed the context that Detroit at Work is using to affirm and reset as it heads into what we hope will soon be post-pandemic conditions, framing where we are positioned from a national and regional recovery, and the strategy moving forward.

Nicole discussed pre-Covid economic conditions in the US, economic and workforce trends accelerated by Covid-19 and projections for US economic recovery and growth. She continued with how work is changing across the US with new hybrid work models and large corporate investments in artificial intelligence and what Detroit's economic development and workforce development response is, including a plan to blend large deals, work with commercial corridors and small to mid-sized businesses.

She completed her presentation with an update on Grow Detroit's Young Talent, citing it is on track to serve 8000 youth again in 2021.

Comments and questions from board members ensued:

- **Alice Thompson** asked about a parking lot issue with entertainment. Question was referred to Bruce Dall for follow up.
- **John James** asked if there is a focused effort on transportation and access to new opportunities and jobs. Nicole responded stating we're leveraging our funding to solve immediate transportation issues. Dave Meador indicated the need to fix transit and that he will keep pressing for reform.
- **Andra Rush** commented that her company formed a partnership with Uber and Lyft. Nicole commented that we also have rideshare partnerships and will explore transportation with other large employers in the city.
- **Alycia Merriweather** commented on Grow Detroit's Young Talent citing it being critically important for young people to be connected to caring adults and other experiences. She indicated DPSCD is expecting the largest summer school attendance this year due to the pandemic and they're working significantly different than in previous years to accommodate the changing needs. She also gave a brief update on the advanced manufacturing academy at Southeastern.

PRESENTATIONS

City of Detroit Office of Disability Affairs – Christopher Samp

Mr. Samp gave a brief description of his background, explaining that he was born deaf and has been advocating for the disability community for his entire life.

He outlined the Office of Disability Affairs and its mission, citing several upcoming projects including improving city services to disabled residents and visitors, providing ADA training to city staff for hiring and working with the disabled as well as its mission to increase employment and accessible housing for people with disabilities in the city, and its plan to address safety, mobility, and other community concerns.

Comments and questions from board members ensued:

- **Dr. Colleen Allen** commented about the rollout of vaccines for the disability community and welcomed Christopher.
- **Chioke Mose-Telesford** indicated she will be working with Christopher as he builds his strategy both internally and externally at the city to hire more folks with disabilities.
- **Dave Meador** reiterated DTE's CEO pledge to make a commitment to employ people with disabilities.

Detroit Means Business – Pierre Batton

Mr. Batton opened his presentation with a brief overview of Detroit Means Business, stating this small business initiative includes 60+ partner organizations that have come together to make Detroit a better place for small businesses.

Mr. Batton discussed how small and mid-size businesses are the backbone to Detroit's economy and how Detroit Means Business helped them during the pandemic by providing a playbook on how to reopen, assisting with procuring PPE resources, and building its website as a trusted source of information for COVID-recovery information.

Mr. Batton indicated through the DEGC and other partners, that Detroit Means Business was able to push out about \$18 million worth of cash grants last year to small business owners across the city of Detroit.

He finished his presentation with a list of what he described as aggressive yet obtainable goals for DMB which included job creation, access to new contracts, creating new small business sectors, digital access, injecting new capital, coaching & mentoring, and removing policy barriers, among others.

Comments and questions from board members ensued:

- **Nicole Sherard-Freeman** thanked Pierre for his leadership, looping in Dave Meador and Deputy Mayor Conrad Mallet for their work.
- **Conrad Mallet** stated that starting in May 2021, the City will get the first installment of \$896 million dollars, indicating this opportunity is very different than anything we've ever had before. He continued about the reality of the money coming to us and the potential to realize this opportunity.
- **Dave Meador** suggested he's seeing more workforce development working with economic development on common goals, indicating that by working together we can achieve the multiplier effect.
- **Andra Rush** asked if we have an understanding as to why we are hitting below our punch rate with participation? What can we do as a Board and business owners to increase participation with small businesses?

- **Dave Meador** followed by providing more details about the Detroit Means Business website explaining how the site is the entry point for small business to get financial assistance, help with return-to-work safety protocol and more. He talked about a new call center, and the marketing efforts to inform small businesses about these services.
- **Nicole Sherard-Freeman** added to Mr. Meador's response echoing the need to inform to the small business community of the resources and services available to them, indicating the need to get in the trenches and stay with folks until they get through the solution. Nicole compared this to the challenges that Deputy Mayor Conrad Mallet is solving through the Community Health Corps.
- **Conrad Mallet** added that not only do we have to be intentional about getting the message out, we simply have to go to where the people are, particularly around our strategic neighborhood initiatives and around the commercial corridors.

State of the City and City Council Budget Hearing Highlights – Nicole Sherard-Freeman

Nicole Sherard-Freeman gave a recap of the Mayor's State of the City address pointing out several highlights including new priority hiring agreements, the work with returning citizens, the People Plan, the Community Health Corps and DTE's new Tree Trim Training program. Nicole finished by echoing the Mayor's offer of thanks to the early funding partners for the People Plan and the Community Health Corps including General Motors, the Kellogg Foundation, United Way and others. In closing, Nicole offered a moment of silence for the victims we've lost to COVID-19 and encouraged participation in the city's vaccination efforts.

Public Comment

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

Adjournment

Co-Chair Dave Meador asked for a motion to adjourn. Moved by Alice Thompson, Supported by Bishop Edgar Vann. Motion Approved.

Attendees

Dana Williams, Nicole Sherard-Freeman, Dave Meador, Michelle Rafferty, Alice Thompson, Bishop Edgar Vann, Calvin Sharp, Conrad Mallet, M. Roy Wilson, Mark Gaffney, Jan Harrington-Davis, John James, Lori Wingerter, Maria Woodruff-Wright, Marie Hocker, Mike McLaughlan, Pierre Batton, Sheilah Clay, Stephanie Nixon, Terri Weems, Tonya Adair, Angela Polk, Ashley Blake, Brianna Brazell, Diana Marx-Prosi, Elizabeth Hennessey, Emily Thompson, Greg Anderson, Joann Barber, Kevin Naud, Megan Kusulas, Omar Hasan, Spencer Lucker, Robin Johnston, Alycia Meriweather, Andra Rush, Bill Robinson, Bruce Dall, Chioke Mose-Telesford, Christopher Samp, Dr. Colleen Allen, Dr. Curtis Ivery, Faye Nelson, Heaster Wheeler, Jason Tinsley, Rick Blocker.