



## CITY OF DETROIT MAYOR'S WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

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Wednesday, October 6, 2021  
11 a.m. – 1 p.m.  
Location: Virtual Meeting

### **Proposed Meeting Minutes** **Co-Chair: Dave Meador**

#### **Call to Order**

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

#### **Approval of Agenda**

#### **Approval of June 30, 2021 Meeting Minutes**

Co-Chair Dave Meador asked for a motion to approve the Draft Meeting Minutes as presented. Moved by Conrad Mallet, supported by Alice Thompson. Motion Approved.

### **REPORTS**

#### **Co-Chair's Report – Dave Meador**

Co-Chair Dave Meador offered thanks and acknowledgement to retiree Sheilah Clay for her work with the Community Health Corps.

*Questions and comments from board members ensued:*

**Conrad Mallet:** Offered extended thanks and further acknowledgement, noting the number of people served has tripled under the leadership of Ms. Clay.

**Sheilah Clay:** Gave final words and thanked the board, highlighting the many successes of the Community Health Corps. and the impact of that work on the residents in the city.

**Resident Employment Update:** Co-Chair Dave Meador noted the common questions posed during the Mackinac Policy Conference were, "What's going on with workforce?", "What's happening in Detroit?", and "Where are we on economic and workforce development?"

He continued with reviewing the residential employment data, noting the progress we've made with the previous 10-year low at 204,575, the peak pre-Covid-19 at 230,722, the dip during Covid-19 at 162,766 to the rebound in Aug. 2021 at 222,154.

Mr. Meador reviewed a University of Michigan analysis, noting it is projecting we'll advance beyond the pre-Covid-19 numbers. It's not that far out in the future that we'll get back on the track we've been on.

Mr. Meador continued with a review of the North Star Goals, noting the aspirational goal in 2015 to put 100,000 new traders to work long term and 40,000 near term. He praised the tremendous progress we've made with that, citing there's been 26,000 job placements including 4100 at Stellantis, 23,000 Detroiters on the list for Stellantis, 30,000 young adults into the talent pipeline and we've expanded from 3-9 neighborhood career centers. Mr. Meador noted what a gamechanger that was thanks to the mayor's negotiation and the work of Nicole Sherard-Freeman and team.

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

Ms. Sherard-Freeman began by acknowledging a promise the mayor made to take the old Cadillac Stamping plant down and to use Detroit-based talent to do so. She continued by highlighting an announcement the mayor recently made of two important points: First, Lear Corp. in their contract to support seating for GM Factory Zero with construction of a \$48 million complex on the old Cadillac Stamping site, and second, acknowledging Lear Corp., as the eighth fully executed priority hiring agreement for Detroit at Work candidates.

She continued, "if you haven't tied economic development together with workforce development then you're missing the mark. We're very excited about Lear Corp.'s 450 jobs, very excited about any potential expansion that could happen on that site and very excited about the good paying middle-class jobs that that Lear will put here."

Ms. Sherard-Freeman continued with a review of the Mackinac Policy Conference, echoing some of co-chair Dave Meador's early comments, lifting topics important to this board such as economic development, workforce development, closing the racial wealth gap, building, and supporting Detroit's black-owned and other small businesses and focusing on what we do to bolster K-12 education. She continued by highlighting some of the many great panels and interviews that took place at MPC.

Ms. Sherard-Freeman gave an update on the American Rescue Plan Act, highlighting the mayor's strategy to isolate five major areas of investment, and the 65 community meetings that the administration, and others, held across a 28-day period, resulting in a set of 15 appropriations for the full 826 million that City Council approved on July 26.

She noted our consulting partners have boasted they're hard pressed to find another city that is being as diligent about the compliance function of ARPA dollars as we are, and we're using external guidance from experts on these Department of Treasury rules to be sure that every dollar allowable is appropriately spent.

Ms. Sherard-Freeman informed that we are measuring ourselves against the metrics for this investment that the Federal Government expects and more importantly, our own metrics which are a much higher bar.

*Questions and comments from board members ensued:*

**Conrad Mallet:** Requested that Ms. Sherard-Freeman elaborate on the metrics and how they're different than those we've used in the past, more outcome based as opposed to productivity based.

**Nicole Sherard-Freeman:** Explained that we're not just tracking the number of people enrolled or participants in classes, but what's more important is what the mayor and deputy mayor and others have been pushing us on is how all of this work and investment will move the needle on equity. As a result of the American Rescue Plan funding, you will see a Detroit that is dramatically different in terms of beauty, inclusivity, and opportunity.

Dana Williams gave an update on workforce in the city, citing the request for workers is quite high and there are more job openings than people unemployed. However, while employers are eager to hire, only about 10% of workers reported that they were actively and urgently looking for work, resulting in the unemployment numbers we're seeing today.

Many employers today are responding to pay demands, they're increasing wages, offering signing bonuses, presenting flexible schedules and they're very open in terms of accommodating employees, but with all that, there's still a shortage of roles with speedy growth potential.

Ms. Williams continued with talk about the Great Resignation, where workers are resigning from jobs at high rates, especially in the Midwest, where 4 million workers have quit their jobs. She continued by noting as the pandemic recedes, it's likely that workers reevaluations of their career goals and their workplace conditions will change. Some of the reason for this might be that people are exploring entrepreneurship, as there has been a 25% increase in new business applications comparing 2019 to 2020. In Wayne County, we saw a 74% increase in business applications comparing 2019 to 2020. And as a state, we saw 125% increase in applications to open new businesses between 2020 and 2021.

*Questions and comments from board members ensued with further discussion of the topics above from Mark Gaffney, Bishop Edgar Vann, Scott Thiele, Alice Thompson, and Kofi Bonner.*

Chioke Mose-Telesford gave a quick update on supporting Detroit's homeless and housing-insecure residents, noting the Rapid Jobs Program, which connects people facing eviction with jobs that have a quick hiring process at two weeks or less. She also noted the work we've been doing with emergency shelter access and the distribution of technology to make sure that the residents in these programs have the technology to apply for jobs, attend virtual interviews, connect to their career coach and more. Ms. Mose-Telesford closed with an update on the Employer Toolkit which supports hiring residents with disabilities.

## **PRESENTATIONS**

**Skills for Life – Michelle Rafferty, Chief Strategy & Operating Officer, DAW; Carmen Bender, Project Manager – Strategic Operations, DAW; Sam Marvin, Project Manager, Strategic Initiatives, DAW**

Michelle Rafferty provided an update on Skills for Life, a public workstyle program that not just helps people in poverty get the type of training and credentials they need to move into the middle class but also address our other ARPA-funded major effort in the city which is to remove

blight across the city in order to provide and expand services to Detroit residents. Using one of the key concepts of 2020's People Plan, Skills for Life goals are to expand and accelerate the city's blight removal, remove primary barrier to higher education and to create a pathway to middle-class careers.

### **DPSCD – Alycia Meriweather, Deputy Superintendent**

Alycia Meriweather provided an update that focused on enrollment, Covid-19 and the safety strategies that the district has put in place this fall, including opening a virtual school with virtual teachers and a principal, with 1900 students, K-12, enrolled in the virtual school and about 48,000 students enrolled in brick and mortar. Ms. Meriweather continued with an overview on Covid-19 protocol and how the district is handling testing, mask requirements, social distancing, sanitizing, and the extensive tracking of Covid-19 cases. She provided an update on the career technical schools, noting the struggles with virtual training as compared to hands-on training, as well as the shortage of bus drivers. She closed by highlighting the continued efforts for enrollment and recruitment and the pathways they're creating for students and training.

### **Detroit Economic Forecast 2021-2024 – Gabriel Ehrlich, Ph.D., Director, Research Seminar in Quantitative Economics, University of Michigan**

Gabriel Ehrlich, explained this forecast comes out of a partnership with City of Detroit and the state's three major research universities: University of Michigan, Michigan State University and Wayne State University. Mr. Ehrlich's extensive report highlighted that Detroit and Michigan both lost about 90% of their payroll jobs at the start of the pandemic but that we expect employment in the city of Detroit to recover to the pre-pandemic level in the second half of 2021. As we get beyond 2023 we expect our employment in the city of Detroit to grow to about 6500 jobs above where it was before the pandemic.

*Questions and comments from board members ensued, including comments by Kofi Bonner, Dave Meador and Nicole Sherard-Freeman*

### **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 moved to adjourn. Meeting adjourned at 1 p.m.

### **Attendees**

Alice Thompson, Andra Rush, Calvin Sharp, Carla Walker-Miller, Colleen Allen, Conrad Mallett, Curtis Ivery, Darienne Driver-Hudson, Dave Meador, Bishop Edgar Vann, Faye Nelson, Jeff Donofrio, John James, Kofi Bonner, M. Roy Wilson, Maria Woodruff-Wright, Mark Gaffney, Mike McLauchlan, Scott Thiele, Heaster Wheeler, Alycia Meriweather, Jan Harrington-Davis, John Matton, Laurie Wingerter, Chioke Mose-Telesford, Becky Christensen, Chanelle Manus, David Bowser, Dee Prosi, Greg Anderson, Hachem Ossieran, Jeff Donofrio, Karolina Ana Ramos, Kelsey Roberts, Kenyetta Bridges, Kevin Johnson, Kumar Raj, Luke Polcyn, Robin Johnston, Robert Shimkoski, Sara Azu, Stephanie Nixon, Teri Braddock, Terri Weems, Chevetta Henry, Rachel May, Nicole Sherard-Freeman, Dana Williams, Sheilah Clay, Byron Osbern, Carmen Bender, Gabriel Ehrlich, Michelle Rafferty, Sam Marvin, Amanda Hanlin