



**PLANNING/CAREER CENTER COMMITTEE MEETING
Minutes**

Tuesday,

December 20, 2016

8:00 a.m.

439 South Union Street

Lawrence, MA 01843

Members Present: Juan Yepez, Chairman
Rosalin Acosta, Ron Contrado, Andrew Herlihy, Mike Munday, Abel Vargas,
Bob Westcott

Members Absent: None

Staff Present: Rafael Abislaiman, Susan Almono, Mary Kivell

Others: Dawn Beati, Amy Weatherbee

I. Approval of Minutes of November 15, 2016

A quorum being present, Juan Yepez called the meeting to order at 8:10 a.m. Juan then called for a motion on the minutes of the November 15, 2016 meeting.

Rosalin Acosta asked for a clarification on page four, the third paragraph, regarding which site was being referenced. Amy Weatherbee explained that she was referring to a credit for \$700 with the Little Deli from our current landlord due to the breakdown of the air conditioning this past summer. Amy said that she was thinking of using the credit to provide lunch for staff when they visit the new site at 255 Essex Street.

Motion by Bob Westcott, seconded by Mike Munday, to approve the minutes of the November 15, 2016 meeting as submitted. Motion passed.

II. Performance Summary as of November 30, 2016

Rafael Abislaiman said that we had checked on our past numbers and found that we were not consistently counting carry-in trainees but only new one. We have changed the performance report to capture the two numbers. He explained that in some instances we are ahead of schedule with the

exception of dislocated workers. He said that the number of exiters would increase toward the end of the fiscal year.

Bob Westcott wondered about the difference in the employers served and where the 875 number came from. Amy said the difference is repeat vs. actual plan. She said that any customer served in the prior year who comes in for services is counted as a repeat. Rafael added that he is more surprised at the carry in youth number of 105 which may have been miscounted in prior years. Amy and her staff are doing a better job of getting youth in here. Rafael said that the out of school youth group program is still having difficulty recruiting but will be there by June 30th.

Bob asked about the entered employment wage for dislocated workers and Amy said that they are required to shoot for 80% of the workers prior wage.

III. Budget Update as of November 30, 2016

Rafael said that we are ahead of schedule 5/12th into the fiscal year. The accrual of \$195,000 is vendor fees for estimated move related costs. Juan asked when we would know the exact costs and Rafael said that we'll get a clearer picture when we get RFP proposals. He noted that the telephone RFP resulted in a decision to transfer over our current phone system at a lower cost. We have some extra telephone equipment from prior sites that can be used for repair parts.

Rosalin asked is there has been a public notification of the move. Rafael said that we have been notifying vendors. He said that we have RFPd for the phones, an architectural space design, cubicle design and later, cubicles. We will also RFP for the move. Rafael said that new cubicles would cost in the neighborhood of \$100,000. Juan asked if that was new or refurbished and if we could sell the old cubicles. Rafael said that they are for new, smaller ones. We decided it would be the responsibility of the mover to decide whether to resell or dispose of cubicles. We will be taking three or four. Susan Almono said that she did a walk through with the prospective movers who said they can't even sell newer cubicles. Our current landlord said the same to Rafael. Mike Munday mentioned that he had some cubicles to dispose of and couldn't even get rid of them. He ended up stacking them in a dumpster. Juan suggested checking with Tracy on the whole process.

IV. Career Center Report

Career Center Director Amy Weatherbee said that she gave a tour of the Career Center after last month's meeting. There was a Veteran's Event planned for November 15, 2016 and Amy distributed a copy of the flyer used for the event. She reported that ValleyWorks usually does an event for veterans in the month of November and this year they had an employer panel comprised of representatives from Raytheon, the Department of Homeland Security (Border Patrol), V.A. Human Resources (Bedford V.A.) and Hanscom Air Force Base HR. Amy said that the VWCC Veteran Employment Representative also spoke and provided an overview of the way to apply for federal jobs and also provided each attendee with a flash drive that had information and tips about the federal hiring process.

Amy continued stating that they also invited partner agencies to participate in the networking component of the evening. Those partner agencies included our regional Veterans Service Officers, a V.A. Housing Representative, V.A for Healthcare Registration support staff and the VWCC Veteran Employment Representatives attended. The event was attended by forty-seven (47) veterans and

spouses; five (5) speakers and seven (7) guests. At the end of the event attendees participated in a spaghetti dinner provided by the Little Deli downstairs.

Amy said that we have had very positive feedback and people liked the networking component. She said that they may implement this for job seekers on a quarterly basis. Bob Westcott asked if it was done quarterly would they be targeting specific industries. He said that perhaps they could get someone to sponsor providing the food as Amy said that they couldn't fund providing food for each event.

V. Report on 255 Essex Street

Rafael Abislaiman said that he would give the 255 Essex Street update and after that those who are career center operator bidders should leave. Rafael said that things are progressing nicely at the new site with delays still possible the big stuff is done. That includes the roof, most heating and cooling equipment, and elevators. A few ADA doors, painting rooms, installing rugs and a couple space separators still need to be done. Part of the heating and cooling system for one room may have to wait because of part delays. The plan is to move the end of January and to be up and running February 1st unless unforeseen issues arise that affect the move date.

Abel Vargas explained that some delays were caused by delivery times but the wiring is moving along and the issues with asbestos which stalled the HVAC work is resolved. Rafael reported that IT wiring is more expensive than predicted with the cheapest current bid being about \$70,000. The city will cover up to \$50,000. Abel said that they will cover the overage beginning July 1st. Increasing the cost of wiring may be arranged. The city may also pick up more of the holdover if there are delays. This is an opportunity to upgrade. There was discussion on wireless access and Governor Baker's joke that the State House doesn't have wireless access so they use Suffolk University's.

Juan asked about security and Amy said that access control is part of a RFP proposal to the Department of Industrial Accidents. The stairwell doors will be alarmed, there will be a panic button and cameras. Susan Almono of the MVWIB prepared the grant.

Abel said that there are still a lot of moving parts and occupancy could stretch out to March 1st. Rafael said that the height of the ceilings is restricting divider walls on the third and fourth floors. There are also concerns with security and storage for files housed without doors. Trying to create walls and install doors would interfere with the sprinkler system. There are privacy issues with fiscal and also with client information so there is minimally a need for locked files. Amy said that currently we have storage downstairs with elevator access at our current site. The new site doesn't have an elevator that goes to the basement. Rosalin Acosta mentioned Iron Mountain but Amy said that is very expensive and Mike Munday suggested scanning documents or having a college/summer intern scan them as his company is doing. Rafael said that the feds and the state sometime want paper copies when conducting monitoring. Amy Weatherbee and Dawn Beati from ValleyWorks Career Center then left the meeting.

VI. WIOA Update

Rafael said that folks may recall that there was some criticism on the short turn around on the Youth RFP when the MVWIB gave vendors six (6) weeks to respond. He said that he wanted to share that the Worcester WIB issued a Career Center RFP on December 5th that is due on January 6th. A Career

Center proposal is much more difficult than a small youth training proposal. Rosalin asked about the due date of our career center RFP and Rafael said January 21st. Rosalin asked who the bidders are and Rafael said that there were three and named them. He then said that something has come up and the state is looking to make our RFP invalid. They are challenging our indemnification clause for moving from 255 Essex Street to wherever. The issue of invalidation could get to court and the career center award would be delayed but it won't interfere with the move.

Juan asked if the state is alone in this decision or whether others are involved. Rafael said that the state was given a draft RFP and it is unclear who they have reached out to. The city is self-insured and the RFP states a maximum of a 30% lay off will be allowed in year one. The 255 Essex Street site is a public, tax-payer funded investment where the city has spent \$3.5 million to purchase the site and \$2.5 million to redevelop it. Juan said that if a lease is with the city or state it usually contains a standard clause that says if there is a loss of funding the occupant can shrink or vacate the lease. Rafael said that something related to that was included in the RFP. It required one year's notice. The state's biggest complaint is that, in their opinion, the indemnification provision goes against federal law because it effects who can apply and that a specific site preference is unfair and uncompetitive. Andrew said that of the thirty plus career centers being chartered, many would end up in court if and when they privatize. Susan mentioned that one bidder has a building. Juan said that 255 Essex Street is designed for the Career Center and WIB and can't easily fit another tenant.

Rafael said that he is tentatively proposing to the state removing indemnification but lowering space cost to \$7 per square foot for two years and then to \$11.92 including utilities if a move is proposed. Abel said the challenge with the state is figuring out how to accommodate them. Rafael noted that the state received an advance copy of the RFP that included the indemnification clause. He continued stating that the Proposal Review Team consists of the members of the Executive Committee and said that we need three more board members from the private sector on the team. Andy wondered when we are required to designate the career center and Rafael said by July 1st.

Rafael said that we could give more points to the space portion and Juan said if vacated in the first three years the rent would accelerate due to the license agreement with the city. Mike Munday said that a solution may be having a successful bidder take over the lease and then sublease it subject to the approval. Bob Westcott said there should be some different wording so the operator has an agreement with the city. Rafael also said that, according to WIOA, career centers need to be rebid every four (4) years so this could be a recurring issue.

VII. Other Business

There was no other business.

VIII. Adjourn

Having no further business Andrew Herlihy made a motion to adjourn the meeting seconded by Bob Westcott, and the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Kivell,

Recorder