

**ECONOMIC AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
COUNCIL COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
TUESDAY, AUGUST 17, 2021 10:00 AM
VIDEOCONFERENCE**

Members Present:	Councilmember Manny Pelaez, <i>Chair, District 8</i> Councilmember Phyllis Viagran, <i>District 3</i> Councilmember Adriana Rocha Garcia, <i>District 4</i> Councilmember Teri Castillo, <i>District 5</i> Councilmember John Courage, <i>District 9</i>
Staff Present:	Alex Lopez, <i>Assistant City Manager</i> ; Christina Ramirez, <i>Assistant City Attorney</i> ; Jennifer Guerrero, <i>Assistant City Attorney</i> ; Tina J. Flores, <i>City Clerk</i> ; Aurora Perkins, <i>Deputy City Clerk</i> ; Michael Ramsey, <i>Director, Workforce Development Department</i> ; Brenda Hicks-Sorenson, <i>Director, Economic Development Department</i> ; Christina Reck-Guerra, <i>Assistant Director, Workforce Development Department</i> ; Ana Bradshaw, <i>Assistant Director, Economic Development Department</i>
Others Present:	None

Call to Order

Chair Pelaez called the meeting to order.

Public Comment

None.

1. Approval of the minutes from the Economic and Workforce Development Committee meeting on April 22, 2021.

Councilmember Rocha Garcia moved to approve the minutes of the Economic and Workforce Development Committee on April 22, 2021. Councilmember Courage seconded the motion. The motion prevailed unanimously.

2. Update on the Train for Jobs SA and SA: Ready to Work workforce development programs. [Alejandra Lopez; Assistant City Manager and Michael Ramsey, Director, Workforce Development]

Ms. Christina Reck-Guerra stated that the Train for Jobs SA and SA: Ready to Work workforce development programs were created to assist with the increase in unemployment resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic and highlighted success stories. She reported that the Train for Jobs SA Program had 6,325 enrollees as of October 2020 and that an additional 1,761 participants were pending the completion of the intake process. Ms. Reck-Guerra provided a demographic overview of program participants to include gender, race, educational attainment, income, and work history and noted that more than 50% of participants did not have college experience, 61% lived in poverty and 41% had been

previously employed in the service industry. She stated that 7% of participants had been previously incarcerated, 7% were disabled and 3% were veterans.

Ms. Reck-Guerra noted that case managers had assisted 1,653 participants identify career and training paths and that 2,050 participants were enrolled in a training program. She mentioned that 584 participants were seeking employment and that 434 were already employed. Ms. Reck-Guerra reported that 1,516 participants no longer were enrolled in the training program and that 66 dropped out while in training. She noted that 99% of enrollees completed the Train for Jobs SA Program and that 2,112 enrollees received stipends.

Ms. Reck-Guerra reported that the goal was to have 5,973 individuals complete the Train for Jobs SA Program by the end of September 2021 and that 3,018 participants were enrolled in a short or long-term industry specific training program as of August 11, 2021. She stated that the number of participants employed would increase from the current total of 434 as enrollee information was still being updated.

Ms. Reck-Guerra stated that Train for Jobs SA participants would be able to access training materials, identify job opportunities and track course completion status using the San Antonio Workforce Database. She stated that the database was created to assist participants identify industry specific career and training opportunities as well as for partners to identify prospective job candidates. Ms. Reck-Guerra reported that the City would be amending partner contracts to reflect the extension of the enrollment period to December 2021 and requirement that partners make updates in real-time.

Mr. Ramsey highlighted SA: Ready to Work Symposium program events and noted that over 200 industry leaders discussed workforce development best practices. He addressed the importance of employer engagement and provided an overview of media outreach efforts used to increase partnerships as well as participant employment and training opportunities. Mr. Ramsey reported on the three workforce development solicitations and stated that the Request for Proposal (RFP) for Intake, Initial Assessment and Case Management had been released and that the RFPs for Community Outreach and Marketing and Program Evaluation would be released soon.

Councilmember Viagran requested that partners collect and track data on the number of women enrolled in the Train for Jobs SA program over the age of 40, were heads of households and had children and that the Committee be provided with updated program timelines.

Councilmember Castillo requested to be provided with the number of individuals that were ineligible to receive workforce program assistance due to findings from a criminal background check or drug test and asked if the impacted individuals would be assisted in getting criminal records expunged. Mr. Ramsey stated that staff would identify solutions for assisting with expungement and reported that staff had discussed offering this service in the SA: Ready to Work training program. Ms. Alex Lopez addressed the importance of identifying barriers in order to better assist participants select a training program that allowed for them to be successful.

Councilmember Courage requested a breakdown of the number of participants enrolled in each training program, the length of time it took participants to identify a training program and the length of time it took to find employment after program completion. Mr. Ramsey stated that the goal of the SA: Ready to Work Program was to match participant skills, interests, and aptitudes with available jobs. Ms. Reck-Guerra stated that the Committee would be provided with the requested data and addressed the balance

needed between encouraging participants to enroll in specific training programs while ensuring that an industry was not oversaturated.

Councilmember Courage asked about stipends and Ms. Reck-Guerra reported that Train for Jobs SA participants received stipends once training started. Councilmember Courage requested information on the strategy for enrolling participants in industries with an immediate need. Ms. Lopez clarified that the intent of the program was to offer participants opportunities for career growth and advancement regardless of industry and skill level and that employer partners informed staff of immediate need.

Chair Pelaez stated that the role of the Committee was to provide management and oversight of the workforce development programs and to assist with marketing and recruitment.

Councilmember Rocha Garcia recommended the development of an Employer Committee. She requested to be provided with a breakdown of participants enrolled and trained in the Train for Jobs SA program and the length of time the 434 individuals had been employed. She also requested clarification on the issuance of stipends. Ms. Lopez clarified that a significant number of participants declined the stipend as it could compromise receipt of other benefits. She noted that participant enrollment data was collected at different times resulting in minor discrepancies in information and that staff was identifying a solution on how to reflect data consistently while being dynamic.

Councilmember Rocha Garcia asked about partnerships with small businesses, specifically with them offering participants on-the-job training. Ms. Lopez clarified that all employer partners could offer on-the-job-training and noted that staff was assisting small businesses identify solutions to challenges encountered.

Councilmember Rocha Garcia recommended that the Workforce Development Department launch a media campaign in order to inform the public that Train for Jobs SA and SA: Ready to Work were two separate and distinct workforce development programs.

Councilmember Castillo requested a list of District 5 primary employers for Train for Jobs SA and a benefits summary to include base salary. She also requested a program budget report. Ms. Lopez stated that the information would be provided and mentioned that financial data was available on the City's website.

3. A briefing and possible action regarding the status of the Interlocal Agreement relating to a prior utility escrow settlement between the City of San Antonio and the Alamo Colleges District. [Alejandra Lopez; Assistant City Manager]

Ms. Lopez provided a history of the City's partnership with the Alamo Colleges District and noted that the current two-year Interlocal Agreement (ILA) was scheduled to expire August 31, 2021. She highlighted annual funding allocations in support of the Alamo Academies, Training for City Employees, Mentor-Protégé Program, and Training for Job Success and stated that staff was recommending that the FY 2022 and FY 2023 ILA fund three of the four programs.

Councilmember Viagran exited the meeting at this time.

Ms. Lopez explained that Training for Job Success was a grant funded job training program managed by the Department of Human Services (DHS) and reported that staff was recommending for DHS to

continue offering case management services using grant funds and that Train for Jobs SA incur the cost for tuition assistance.

Councilmember Courage asked if Alamo Colleges District had been informed of the funding change. Ms. Lopez stated that school administrators were aware of the proposed decrease in funding.

Councilmember Rocha Garcia moved to send the item to City Council for consideration.

Councilmember Courage seconded the motion. The motion prevailed unanimously by those present.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 11:20 AM.

Manny Pelaez, Chairman

Respectfully Submitted,

*Melinda Uriegas, TRMC
Assistant City Clerk
Office of the City Clerk*