

# City of San Antonio



## Minutes

### Economic and Workforce Development Committee

#### 2021 – 2023 Council Members

Manny Pelaez, Dist. 8

Phyllis Viagran, Dist. 3 | Dr. Adriana Rocha Garcia, Dist. 4

Teri Castillo, Dist. 5 | John Courage, Dist. 9

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**Friday, June 24, 2022**

**10:00 AM**

**City Hall Building**

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The Economic and Workforce Development Committee convened a regular meeting in the Norma S. Rodriguez Council Chamber in the Municipal Plaza Building beginning at 10:11 AM. Deputy City Clerk Aurora Perkins took the Roll Call noting a quorum with the following Committee Members present:

**Members Present:** Manny Pelaez, *Chair*  
Phyllis Viagran, *Member*  
Dr. Adriana Rocha Garcia, *Member*  
Teri Castillo, *Member*  
John Courage, *Member*

**Members Absent:** None

#### Approval of Minutes

**1. Approval of the minutes from the Economic and Workforce Development Committee meetings on June 10, 2022 and June 15, 2022.**

Councilmember Rocha Garcia moved to Approve the minutes from the Economic and Workforce Development Committee meetings of June 10, 2022 and June 15, 2022. Councilmember Viagran seconded the motion. The motion carried by the following vote:

**Aye:** Pelaez, Viagran, Rocha Garcia, Castillo, Courage

#### Public Comments

Juanita Sepulveda spoke on Item 2 and asked if statistic tracking for small businesses were taken

to better meet small business needs. She stated that innovative actions were needed to gather sufficient data which was needed to address gaps.

Jeremy Roberts spoke on Item 2 and asked for small business data to be provided comparing large and small business needs and employing small business needs.

Simon Salas spoke on Item 3 in support of funding for youth services and development. He noted the importance of youth services to the community and the economy.

Cliff Zintgraff of San Antonio Museum of Science and Technology (SAMSAT) spoke in support of Item 3 and related funding for youth services.

Ryan Lugalia-Hollan spoke in support of Item 3 and funding associated with youth services.

### **Briefing and Possible Action on the following items**

#### **2. Briefing on workforce development programs Train for Jobs and SA: Ready to Work.**

[Alejandra Lopez, Assistant City Manager; Michael Ramsey, Executive Director, Workforce Development]

Mike Ramsey, Executive Director of Workforce Development Office, provided an update on workforce development programs Train for Jobs (TFJ) SA: Ready to Work. He reviewed statistics on participants in programs, demographics, completion rates, and hiring of graduates in area jobs. He highlighted success stories of graduates placed in jobs and stated that over 900 employers had placed program graduates into jobs. Ramsey noted that JobFest 2022 was recently held with more than 130 employers and over 500 programs attending.

Ramsey highlighted the partnership with the Alamo Community Colleges District's program Alamo PROMISE and provided specifics on participants, graduates and associated funding. He highlighted programs with Project Quest and associated demographics.

Ramsey noted that the SA Ready to Work Program had over 1,400 applications and stated that it was a community engaged initiative with over 200 pledged employers in the Program and numerous community partners. He reviewed marketing and outreach efforts associated with the SA Ready to Work Program to include formal marketing and grassroots efforts. Ramsey discussed the intake process, employer engagement strategies, and approved program training providers.

### **DISCUSSION**

Councilmember Viagran asked if there was an age range of applicants. Ramsey stated that data was being gathered and would be provided to the Committee. Councilmember Viagran stated that senior residents were entering the workforce due economic strains and that strategies might be needed to address that population. She stated that she was pleased with the progress of the programs.

Councilmember Rocha Garcia noted that a link for the programs were not listed on the City's home page for applicant ease and recommended that it be placed on the home page. She requested additional Spanish language data. Councilmember Rocha Garcia asked how Veteran engagement was being conducted. Ramsey stated that staff worked with the Office of Military Affairs to engage Veterans and their spouses. Councilmember Rocha Garcia asked if there was data on the wraparound services needed by participants. Ramsey stated that childcare and transportation needs were the most identified needed wraparound services.

Councilmember Castillo stated that she was pleased to see that participants were being placed in construction industry jobs. She requested a council district breakdown of program participants. Councilmember Castillo asked for graduate data on programs with the most graduates and measures of success for each program.

Councilmember Courage reiterated the need to include Veteran Service Agencies to identify program participants. He stated that Communities in Schools of San Antonio and the San Antonio Education Partnership were other organizations that should be included in outreach efforts.

Chair Pelaez acknowledged the work performed by the Workforce Team and noted that delegate agencies needed to be continuously engaged and that their funding should be associated with participation in the workforce programs such as was accomplished with economic development programs.

Councilmember Viagran stated that she supported the engagement of delegate agencies which could be addressed at the Community Health, and Equity Committee (CHEC) and then brought forward to the full City Council for updates.

No action was required for Item 2.

**3. Briefing on the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) implementation plan for Youth Services.**  
[Lori Houston, Assistant City Manager; Melody Woosley, Director, Human Services]

Human Services Assistant Director Jessica Dovalina provided a briefing on the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) implantation for Youth Services. Dovalina reviewed community organization feedback obtained in community meetings, surveys, youth discussions and other stakeholder groups. She provided an overview of funding priority investment strategies and associated equitable outcomes associated with COVID-19 impacts. She stressed the improved awareness of available programs and services in all areas.

Dovalina provided an overview of policy direction and next steps in the Request for Proposal (RFP) process for youth services providers which could include small non-profit organizations. She stated that staff requested approval of the youth services funding timeline which included the release of the solicitation, review of submittals and full City Council approval.

## DISCUSSION

Councilmember Castillo expressed her support of proposed funding for the San Antonio Youth Commission (SAYC) and stated that the Commission could provide key information on youth

services. Councilmember Castillo asked for clarification on the communications on the solicitation and if the SAYC would be included. Dovalina confirmed that the SAYC would be included along with other youth services agencies. Councilmember Castillo requested that outreach be provided to the Edgewood Independent School District.

Councilmember Rocha Garcia asked for clarification on gang prevention outreach data and if staff worked closely with San Antonio Fear Free Environment (SAFFE) Officers. Dovalina stated that staff worked closely with SAPD SAFFE along with other community groups seeking innovative ways to address needs. Councilmember Rocha Garcia asked if delegate agencies provided support services related to substance abuse that could be funded through ARPA. Dovalina stated that the RFP was not looking to fund internal city programs, but partners would be eligible apply for funds.

Councilmember Rocha Garcia asked if equity scores had been identified as an effect of the COVID Pandemic in these areas. Dovalina stated that additional high priority data could be used to identify youth impacted in school readiness and the RFP could ask agencies to identify additional high priority focus areas.

Councilmember Viagran agreed that the inclusion of delegate agencies was needed to gather data on the need for youth services. She stated that gang related activity could also be addressed at the Public Safety Committee to identify needed programs. Councilmember Viagran stated that it was important to address the capacity of applicant agencies and the services that they could deliver.

Dovalina stated that staff worked closely with delegate agencies to assure that they could provide the services needed or had referral services identified to make sure participants were served. Councilmember Viagran requested that the Public Safety Committee hold discussions to ensure that collaborations were identified to address gang prevention. Rebecca Flores, Education Programs Administrator, provided clarification on the services included in gang prevention services.

Councilmember Castillo requested more information on available gang prevention services to ensure that information could be provided to individuals from council district offices.

Councilmember Courage expressed his support of the staff recommendations and recommended that funding be considered for youth mental health counseling and services.

Councilmember Viagran expressed her support for the recommendations but asked for clarification on whether recommendations should be reviewed at the Public Safety Committee.

Chair Pelaez expressed concern regarding specific funding associated with the individual COVID-19 impacts and questioned how gang prevention had COVID-19 impacts. He noted that it was important to ensure that workforce development was not the core of the recommendations and should be addressed in a separate committee since they did not directly address youth economic workforce issues.

Councilmember Viagran stated that it was important to communicate that youth had other sources of income outside of gang related activity and these recommendations could identify other options

for youth. She stated that the COVID Pandemic had an impact on gang related activities since there were no other options for youth.

Councilmember Castillo stated that strong job training such as those in STEM youth programs assured that youth continued their education and future job training and stated that she supported the Committee's review and recommendations to move forward.

Councilmember Courage noted that the impacts of COVID were far from over and that youth were impacted by COVID since there were lost services provided for youth and that youth found negative alternatives for social and economic activity.

Chair Pelaez asked if a job preparedness category could be added to address the economic and workforce development component to the solicitation. Dovalina stated that this could be included and was currently imbedded in all the proposed categories. Flores reiterated that the economic and job readiness components were added in the proposed programs to meet the whole individual youth. Alex Lopez, Assistant City Manager, stated that there was a COVID impact to youth services categories which could be expanded to address workforce components.

Councilmember Viagran reiterated that workforce components needed to be embedded in workforce development and growth. Dovalina confirmed the direction of recommendations for workforce growth.

Councilmember Rocha Garcia agreed that workforce components were already tied into the recommended categories.

The Committee agreed that an economic and workforce emphasis should be added to communications and the solicitation. Assistant City Manager Lopez stated that references would be incorporated into the current language.

Councilmember Castillo moved to recommend and forward the proposed Plan to the full City Council on August 18, 2022 for consideration. Councilmember Rocha Garcia seconded the motion. The motion carried by the following vote:

**Aye:** Pelaez, Viagran, Rocha Garcia, Castillo, Courage

**4. Briefing on the American Rescue Act Plan (ARPA) spending framework for Digital Inclusion/ Literacy.** [John Peterek, Assistant to the City Manager; Brian Dillard, Chief Innovation Officer, Office of Innovation]

Chief Innovation Officer Brian Dillard provided an overview of digital inclusion and literacy efforts to include identification of council priorities and alignment of efforts with program engagement and partnerships. Dillard expanded on Affordable Connectivity Program Awareness Campaign strategies employed and updates on Mile Mile Grant Program submissions and considerations. He provided an update on considerations for broadband equity and digital divide expansion. Dillard reviewed the staff recommendation for a Request for Proposal (RFP) to capture services for digital divide and broadband equity delivery services/infrastructure to unserved and underserved residents. He reviewed the timeline for the solicitation and noted that the

solicitation was part of a partnership with Bexar County.

## DISCUSSION

Councilmember Viagran stressed that a B Session presentation to the full City Council was needed to address “red lining” concerns associated with digital divide and equity issues. She supported the release of a solicitation but was concerned with funding availability at the State level. John Peterek, Assistant to the City Manager, stated that a broader conversation could be held after the solicitation release.

Councilmember Rocha Garcia noted her support of marketing materials and social outreach provided for digital divide programs. She requested information on what the investment for digital divide was by Bexar County and noted that she had requested the data before. Councilmember Rocha Garcia stated that a contingency plan should be identified in case of poor submissions and that rural area digital divide needed to be addressed as well.

Councilmember Castillo asked if performance indicators were being developed for family equity. Dillard stated that the data would be provided.

Councilmember Courage expressed concern that a guaranteed path forward was not identified in a timely manner. Peterek noted that the City had a path for the \$6.9 million funding for City developed infrastructure, but that staff was seeking to leverage funding with partners to stretch opportunities. Councilmember Courage stated that it was important to address “red lining” concerns within the community and that providers needed to identify strategies and infrastructure to address unserved and underserved areas.

No action was required for Item 4.

## EXECUTIVE SESSION

Chair Pelaez recessed the meeting at 12:10 PM to enter into Executive Session to discuss the following items:

**A. CONSULTATION WITH THE CITY ATTORNEY’S OFFICE CONCERNING  
ATTORNEY CLIENT MATTERS UNDER CHAPTER 551 OF THE TEXAS  
GOVERNMENT CODE**

Chair Pelaez reconvened the meeting in Open Session at 12:25 PM and announced that no action was taken in Executive Session.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 12:25 PM.

**Approved**

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*Manny Pelaez, Chair*

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*Debbie Racca-Sittre, City Clerk*