

**ECONOMIC AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT  
COUNCIL COMMITTEE MINUTES  
TUESDAY, JUNE 2, 2020  
VIDEOCONFERENCE**

<b>Members Present:</b>	Councilmember Rebecca Viagran, <i>Chair, District 3</i> Councilmember Adriana Rocha Garcia, <i>District 4</i> Councilmember Shirley Gonzales, <i>District 5</i> Councilmember Melissa Cabello Havrda, <i>District 6</i> Councilmember Manny Pelaez, <i>District 8</i>
<b>Staff Present:</b>	Carlos J. Contreras, III, <i>Assistant City Manager</i> ; Alejandra Lopez, <i>Director, Economic Development Department</i> ; Nancy Cano, <i>Office of the City Clerk</i>
<b>Others Present:</b>	None

**Call to Order**

Chairwoman Viagran called the meeting to order.

**1. Approval of the minutes from the Economic and Workforce Development Committee meeting on March 3, 2020.**

Councilmember Gonzales moved to approve the Minutes of the March 3, 2020 Economic and Workforce Development Committee Meeting. Councilmember Rocha Garcia seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

**1. Briefing and possible action on the recommendations of the Economic Transition Team and Business and Employment Working Group** [Carlos J. Contreras, III, Assistant City Manager; Alejandra Lopez, Director]

Alejandra Lopez reported that on March 30, 2020, Mayor Ron Nirenberg and County Judge Nelson Wolff appointed the COVID-19 Community Action working groups to serve as strike teams focused on areas in need of immediate attention. She stated that the Business and Employment Working Group (BEWG) was one of five teams charged with identifying both response and recovery measures and met on a weekly basis over the month of April and May to extensively discuss small business and workforce development challenges and opportunities. She added that BEWG completed a final report in late May 2020 which included its final recommendations.

Ms. Lopez reported that on April 21, 2020, Mayor Nirenberg and Judge Wolff appointed the Economic Transition Team (ETT) to provide recommendations and resources specifically for local businesses to reopen and operate safely, as a supplement to the Health Transition Team (HTT) report. She stated that the ETT prioritized equity in its recommendations, recognizing many small businesses were disproportionately impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. She added that the ETT work was completed in early May 2020 and included: A 'playbook' for reopening businesses; recommendation for a robust public relations and marketing plan to

promote consumer confidence; and additional short- and long-term recommendations to support small business.

Ms. Lopez presented BEWG Recommendations for Small Businesses to include a focus on outreach and communications, provide alternative loans and financial assistance and implement support strategies for micro businesses.

Ms. Lopez presented BEWG Recommendations for Workforce Development to include a focus on community outreach, expand educational opportunities and skills training, and seek additional funding for programs and services.

Ms. Lopez presented ETT Short-Term Recommendations to include provide targeted financial relief, loans, and guidance, assure proper insurance coverages to operate in a COVID-19 environment, assistance with legal advice, provide free guidance and training in best practices to prevent the spread of COVID-19 and provide access to cleaning supplies and safety products.

Ms. Lopez presented ETT Long-Term Recommendations to include develop and implement free or low-cost business continuity and risk-management educational training, promote equitable access to capital beyond the pandemic and foster business-to-bank relationships.

Councilmember Cabello Havrda asked: 1) What were the most impactful marketing plans to promote small business consumer confidence; 2) What was the most effective recommendation of ETT to directly and immediately support small businesses; and 3) How would that impact be measured. Ms. Lopez stated that small businesses with retail or service components were focusing marketing efforts on making sure patrons felt comfortable and safe. She stated ETT identified the need for infrastructure resources such as Capital, COVID-19 supplies, and technical supplies. Ms. Lopez added that impact could be measured by tracking percentages of business activity before and after March 2020.

Councilmember Gonzales asked if there were private sector initiatives in place to support small business interests. Ms. Lopez stated that the San Antonio Economic Development Foundation (SAEDF) served as the City's main liaison for the private sector. She reported that SAEDF and other industry groups collaborated to promote the support of small businesses.

Chairwoman Viagran noted that this Committee had a very important role in leading mid-term and long-term policy discussions. She recommended ample lead times and turnaround times be included in the Request for Proposal (RFP) process so as to provide further opportunities for local contractors to bid on local RFPs. She recommended breaking up contracts for procurement to allow for more local subcontracting.

Item 4 was addressed at this time.

**4. Briefing and possible action on the charge of the Small Business Subcommittee of the Economic and Workforce Development Committee** [Carlos J. Contreras, III, Assistant City Manager; Alejandra Lopez, Director, Economic Development Department]

Councilmember Viagran stated that small business owners needed help quickly and Federal funds needed to be appropriated quickly. She announced that Councilmember Gonzales would be leading the Economic & Workforce Development Subcommittee with a focus on small business. Councilmember Gonzales noted that it would be important for the two groups to move quickly through the larger funding issues.

Item 3 was addressed at this time.

**2. Briefing and possible action on the small business and workforce development strategies included in the COVID-19 Community Recovery and Resiliency Plan**  
[Carlos J. Contreras, III, Assistant City Manager; Alejandra Lopez, Director]

Ms. Lopez stated that the COVID-19 Community Recovery and Resiliency Plan was based on four guiding principles: Public Health and Safety; Equity; Braided Funding; and Community Resilience; and was comprised of four Pillars: Workforce Development, Small Business Support, Housing Stability, and Digital Inclusion.

**Workforce Development - \$80 million:**

- Child Care Services - \$10 million: Temporary Support for Working Families
- Workforce Training Support
- Career Navigation/Local Business Intelligence/Job Placement Opportunities
- Education and Training - \$14 million
- Participant Stipends - \$48 million

**Workforce Development Potential Outcomes:** Serve up to 10,000 residents by September 2021

**Small Business Support - \$33.1 million:**

- Virtual and Place-Based Financial Recovery and Resilience Hubs:
  - Physical Hubs – Westside Development Corporation (WDC), San Antonio for Growth on the Eastside (SAGE), Southside First and Maestro Entrepreneurship Center: \$25,000 each
  - Virtual Hubs - Launch SA: \$100,000
- Door-to-Door Outreach with Hard-to-Reach Micro Businesses:
  - San Antonio Economic Development Foundation – Coordination and Training: \$250,000
  - WDC, SAGE, Southside First and Centro San Antonio: \$800,000
- Microbusiness Support:
  - LiftFund – Grants from \$10,000; \$75,000 based on number of employees - \$27 million
  - Protective Equipment and Sanitizer Distribution - \$2 million
- Arts Support: Local arts-related non-profit organizations - \$2.6 million

Ms. Lopez presented small business support potential outcomes to include:

- Small Business Hubs: 75% will demonstrate increased knowledge of financial practices and 10% will re/hire employees

- Door-to-Door Outreach (up to 5,000 businesses): 75% will report an increase in awareness of business support organizations, resources, and financial practices, and 25% will re/hire employees
- Micro Business Support (up to 1,000 businesses): 100% of grants will be disbursed to all eligible businesses by September 2020 and 50% of businesses receiving grants will re/hire employees

Ms. Lopez presented overall outcomes:

- 2020 net annual revenues for businesses receiving grants will be at least 50% of 2019 net annual revenues
- 2021 net annual revenues for businesses receiving grants will be at least 75% of 2019 net annual revenues

Ms. Lopez provided next steps for the approval of the Plan by City Council. She stated that program execution would begin July 2020, small business support programs would be completed December 2020, and workforce development programs would be completed September 2020.

Chairwoman Viagran requested further data on CARES Act grant appropriations distributed by LiftFund. She requested geographical distribution data of LiftFund grants and asked of the application process and any possible barriers to LiftFund grants.

Chairwoman Viagran referenced the Plan's arts support appropriation of \$2.6 million for local arts-related non-profit organizations. She recommended that the Committee be charged with establishing distribution guidelines.

Chairwoman Viagran asked of the door-to-door outreach to 5,000 small businesses and how the data would be gleaned and managed. Ms. Lopez stated that staff would acquire and manage all data. She added that staff acquired additional outreach data for the small businesses that participated in the protective equipment and sanitizer distribution effort.

Chairwoman Viagran requested that a small business outreach phone line be activated in addition to virtual hub services.

Councilmember Gonzales asked if someone could receive child care services in addition to receiving a stipend. Ms. Lopez stated that child care services were separate and apart from receiving a stipend. Assistant City Manager Contreras added that Federal rules regarding child care eligibility, certification, and licensing would apply and he would provide further information.

Councilmember Gonzales voiced concern about SAEDF's ability to conduct door-to-door outreach with 5,000 hard-to-reach micro businesses and asked how SAEDF was selected. Ms. Lopez stated that SAEDF would serve as the coordinating entity and partnering organizations would conduct the door-to-door outreach.

Councilmember Rocha Garcia noted barriers to documentation for some small businesses that did not have extensive bookkeeping records. She stated that some small business owners reported that they were not able to apply for grants through LiftFund due to its requirements. She asked for

assurance that additional barriers would not be created. She asked who operated the Women's Business Center. Ms. Lopez recognized that there were gaps in financial literacy for some small businesses and stated that additional outreach resources and services were provided to LiftFund for documentation development training and to help businesses set up bookkeeping practices. She replied that LiftFund operated the Women's Business Center.

Councilmember Rocha Garcia referenced the Workforce Training and Education estimated Budget of \$14 million and asked if that was the cost of the Alamo Colleges proposal to train 10,000 employees. Ms. Lopez stated that the \$14 million would be applied to associated workforce training with the vast majority anticipated to be provided through Alamo Colleges. She stated that there were other training partners that would collaborate, to include aerospace courses.

Councilmember Rocha Garcia referenced the \$2.6 million arts support for local arts-related non-profit organizations and requested that this Committee develop a strategic plan that targeted local, independent artists.

Councilmember Rocha Garcia referenced the 1,000 micro businesses to be targeted door-to-door and requested that the Committee review a strategic plan to ensure outreach to every corner of the City. Ms. Lopez stated that planning discussions would ensue as soon as possible with a sense of urgency to ensure all pockets of need were covered within a comprehensive scale.

Councilmember Cabello Havrda voiced her support for the living wage requirements to help elevate workers in the community as part of the COVID-19 Community Recovery and Resiliency Plan.

Chairwoman Viagran noted that all local universities were great training sources and possible future partners. She requested that today's powerpoint presentation be uploaded to the [www.sacovidaction.com](http://www.sacovidaction.com) website. She requested that outreach be conducted via phone calls to microbusinesses requesting them to take the survey if door-to-door contact could not be made.

Councilmember Viagran requested flexibility in implementing the Plan after approval by City Council should the need arise. Assistant City Manager Contreras stated that there would be opportunity at the Committee level and City Council level for the Committee and Subcommittee to provide further input as implementation plans were developed. He added that performance measures and reports would be submitted to the Committee during the implementation process which was expected to be finalized by the end of June 2020.

### **Future Agenda Items**

None.

## **Adjourn**

There being no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 3:53 pm.

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***Rebecca Viagran, Chairwoman***

***Respectfully Submitted,***

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***Nancy Cano  
Office of the City Clerk***