

**BUSINESS SERVICES COMMITTEE**  
**June 14, 2022**  
**MEETING MINUTES**

STAFF: Tran, Thoo, Sanchez, Walter

GUEST: Sylwia Palczewska, Project Director, Equus Workforce Solutions

NOTE: All votes were by roll call unless otherwise indicated.

**I. CALL TO ORDER & ROLL CALL**

Chair George Chao called the meeting to order at 3:06 pm.

**Roll Call**

**Present:** McGrath, Smith, Takahashi, Taunk, Koepp-Baker (3:19 p.m.), Chao

**II. OPEN FORUM**

None

**III. BUSINESS**

**A. Minutes Approval**

Mr. Takahashi moved to approve minutes of the April 12, 2022, Business Services Committee meeting. Ms. Smith seconded. The committee approved unanimously.

**B. Employer Engagement**

*Staff reports and discussion, including without limitation*

- 1. Meta/Facebook Marketing Internship Updates** – Equus Workforce Solutions San Jose Project Director Sylwia Palczewska reported on the Career Connections partnership between work2future and Meta/Facebook. The project supports very small businesses in Santa Clara County with interns trained in digital marketing at no cost to the businesses. Facebook provided a 5-week mentoring/training program for young adults in digital and social media marketing. Over 200 young adults applied for the program and 31 were selected. 95 small businesses indicated an interest in participating in the program. Currently, Equus is pairing trained interns with selected small businesses. On July 5, 2022, the interns will begin an 8-week internship. Interns will be paid \$25.31 per hour for up to 237 total hours.
- 2. Skillful Talent Workshops** – Lead Business Services Analyst Huong Tran gave an update on the Bay Peninsula Regional Planning Unit's (BPRPU) Skillful Talent Workshops, a program designed to train businesses to improve the effectiveness of their recruiting efforts by focusing on the skills they need for various positions, instead of relying on academic degrees or other academic credentials as a primary screening filter. Ms. Huong shared that the team had been offering 4 free workshops per month since March. Starting in June, the workshop program will shift to a virtual asynchronous model. Series 101 (Attract the Right Talent) and Series 102 (Selection Process) are currently available in the online model, while Series 103 (Selection Guidelines) and Series 104 (Retention) remain in development. Ms. Huong expects to provide additional updates on the online workshop availability in the next meeting.

**C. Services**

- 1. Career Fairs** – Ms. Tran reported on the planning for the June 23<sup>rd</sup> Career Fair in partnership with Bloom Energy and the City of San Jose. 23 employers are confirmed as participants, as well as EDD and work2future. Also in progress, a large job fair with a focus on Youth Employment is scheduled for September 2022, with anticipation for at least 75 employers to participate. Ms. Tran also highlighted the outcomes for the April 20<sup>th</sup> Manufacturing Career Fair; 18 employers, 4 resource providers, and 151 job seekers participated. Follow-up regarding job placements resulting from the Manufacturing Career Fair is ongoing.
- 2. WAF 9.0 Career Accelerator Update** – Strategic Engagement Manager Lawrence Thoo gave an update on the WAF 9.0 Career Accelerator Pilot with Flex Interconnect Technologies (FIT). 4 participants are entering their 3<sup>rd</sup> week in an 11-week training program. 1 participant was offered the opportunity to apply for a direct-hire position. Business Services Specialist Fidel Sanchez detailed the outreach, selection, and onboarding processes for the program participants. Mr. Thoo shared changes in program management strategies after completing the first pilot with CAES that have led to improved outcomes.
- 3. Incumbent Worker Training** – Project Manager Deanna Walter gave an overview of the planned Incumbent Worker Training (IWT) program. Ms. Walter anticipates that the IWT program will be ready to roll out in late July 2022 or August 2022, pending review and approval by the City of San Jose. She highlighted program goals and expectations, as well as key characteristics of eligible employers, employees, and training providers.

#### **D. Business Intelligence**

*Staff reports and discussion, including without limitation*

- 1. Rapid Response Updates** - Ms. Tran reported receiving two WARN notices in April 2022 from PayPal (for 83 individuals) and Parcel (Amazon delivery provider) (for 83 individuals). No WARN notices were reported for May 2022 and June 2022.
- 2. February 2022 Labor Market Summary** – Strategic Engagement Manager Thoo reported on the status of the labor market in Santa Clara County and the San Jose-Sunnyvale-Santa Clara Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA). He noted that the unemployment rate continues its downward trend; for Santa Clara County the rate was 2.1% in April 2022, marking the lowest unemployment rate since the beginning of the pandemic. Mr. Thoo also pointed out that while the unemployment lowered, the total number of employed persons in Santa Clara County also decreased by approximately 7,500, indicating a reduction in labor market participation. He highlighted year-over-year employment increases within the MSA in several sectors: leisure and hospitality, professional and business services, educational and health services, manufacturing, information, transportation and utilities, and construction.

Mr. Thoo discussed a nationwide trend showing a gap in the labor force – 5.5 million unemployed workers coupled with 11.4 million job openings – and noted future concerns for workforce boards around an aging workforce with high retirement rates, as well as a lack of and the high cost of reliable childcare. Mr. Thoo also pointed out a decline in the MSA/County population as compared to national population rates. Within Santa Clara County, Mr. Thoo demonstrated that labor gap numbers follow a similar trend with approximately half as many job seekers as job postings, but also noted that hiring is complicated by a mismatch between required skill sets and available talent. Mr. Thoo pointed out that several demographics are underrepresented within the in-demand quality occupation categories identified by work2future. He noted a readjustment in the County's living wage rate, resulting in a recalculation of the base wage that work2future will consider for in-demand quality occupations to \$26.96 per hour.

- 3. Committee Observations on Local Labor Market** – Mr. Takahashi commented that the combination of a compressed labor force, wage escalation, inflationary pressures, and lack of affordable housing could create an unsustainable situation in the region. Ms. Taunk wondered about the availability of research analysis around trends in work-from-home and return-to-office. Ms. Koepp-Baker related a personal experience demonstrating employers having success offering greater accommodation for school and other scheduling issues when hiring part-time workers.
- 4. Bay Peninsula RPU Apprenticeship Grant Information** – Mr. Thoo informed the committee that San Francisco, NOVA, and work2future — working together as the BPRPU — have submitted an application for a \$5 million Apprenticeships Building America grant. The intent of the application is to create an intermediary to promote and support regional businesses in the adoption, creation, and implementation of apprenticeships as an additional pathway to employment, particularly in non-traditional industries. Mr. Thoo expects to hear the result of the application in Fall 2022, with possible implementation in early 2023.

**IV. OTHER**

Mr. Thoo announced that the next Business Services Committee meeting would likely be held in person and is scheduled for August 2022.

**V. ADJOURNMENT**

Mr. Chao adjourned the meeting at 4:26 pm.

*Draft minutes prepared by D. Walter, reviewed by L. Thoo.*