

PROJECT UNITY

MEETING SYNOPSIS | Economic and Workforce Development

October 1, 2020 | 1:30 pm

The following is a summary of the first meeting of the Economic and Workforce Development subcommittee. The meeting was held virtually for subcommittee members and in the Daughtery Conference Room for staff.

Subcommittee Members Present:

Jim Page
Mildred Hooks
Isaac McCoy
Michele Coley
Jason Moore
Thomas Dedrick
NaTa'sha Black
Erik Johnson
Josh Sahib

Staff Present:

LaParry Howell (Project Team Leader)
LaShonda Kemp (Deputy Project Team Leader)
Brendan Moore (Team Leader)
Audrey Buck (Team Leader)
Cristy Gilliam-DeLoach (Administrative Support)

Welcome and Introductions:

LaParry Howell welcomed the subcommittee members to Project Unity. He introduced himself and each staff member proceeded to introduce himself or herself. Subcommittee members then introduced themselves and their professional backgrounds.

Subcommittee Roles and Expectations:

LaParry Howell explained the roles and expectations of the subcommittee members. He stated Mayor Maddox and staff have identified all subcommittee members as leaders in the community. LaParry Howell explained how the subcommittee is expected to make recommendations that will improve the health and well-being of neighborhoods and businesses, increase wealth, and reduce inequities and present these recommendations to Mayor Maddox and City Council.

LaParry Howell reminded the subcommittee to complete their required ethics training and submit their short biographies to Cristy Gilliam-DeLoach or their team leaders.

Meeting Expectations:

Audrey Buck explained there would be 1-2 meetings per month. She then asked members to email dates and times that did not work with their schedules.

Brendan Moore explained that the goals and objectives of the group were not definite and that members were encouraged to share their ideas about issues that were most important to them.

The meeting opened to discussion between members.

Challenges:

- Access to capital
- Digital divide
- Support from community
- Awareness and education
- Lack of support for entrepreneurs
- Tax options pose limitations
- Access to transit/transportation to and from work
- Training facilities and transportation to and from
- Training outside of Tuscaloosa
- Retention

Ideas:

- Job and lifestyle attractions to retain students after graduation
- Connectivity between each area of Tuscaloosa
- Rideshare industries
- Miracle Mile
- Diversified workforce
- Encouraged entrepreneurship
- Use of tax revenues for the city

There was a discussion of inviting Donny Jones of The Chamber of Commerce to the next meeting. All members agreed. The group was given the option to meet face-to-face or via Zoom for future meetings.

Adjourned at 2:30 pm