



NOVA Workforce Board Executive Committee
December 15, 2021 Meeting
Minutes

Executive Committee members present: D. Cima, R. Foust, C. Galy, P. Guevara, J. Morrill, and A. Switky

NOVA staff: M. Sessions, L. Jackson, and E. Stanly

Meeting was held remotely via videoconference call.

1. **Call to Order:**

The meeting was called to order at 12:05 p.m.

2. **Action Items:**

a. Approval of October 20, 2021 Meeting Minutes: It was moved by A. Switky, seconded by J. Morrill and carried by voice vote to approve the October 20, 2021 meeting minutes as submitted.

3. **Discussion Items:**

a. Contract(s) for Services for Recruiting and Engaging Dislocated Workers; Additional Assistance Grant: The Executive Committee approved the \$900,000 State Additional Assistance Grant (AAG) application at its April 21 meeting to serve dislocated workers who have been laid off from industries impacted by COVID-19. Services would include career search and navigation, skills assessment and training, digital literacy, and referrals for social assistance. Given the protracted pandemic and remote services, job seekers have lost touch with the resources that are available to them in the community. This is reflected in the significant decline in customers that NOVAworks has seen over the past year. In response, a key component of this grant application was to launch extensive participant outreach strategies to raise awareness about the services that are available to those who may have been disconnected from assistance. The State approved this grant application and NOVAworks moved forward with procuring the outreach services for recruiting and engaging dislocated workers. The goal of the AAG grant is to serve 200 customers, but to date, NOVAworks has only enrolled 67 customers. The outreach and recruitment services will be important to achieving this goal. NOVAworks will be contracting with the two applicants who submitted proposals: Working Partnerships, USA, who will focus on serving Santa Clara County, and United Way Bay Area, who will serve San Mateo County. Over the years, NOVAworks has collaborated with Working Partnerships on various projects including the long-running Trades Orientation Program that prepares individuals for careers in the trades and the recent hospitality project that provided supportive services to hospitality workers impacted by COVID-19. United Way Bay Area has a deep experience working with dislocated workers during COVID-19 through its various recovery programs. Both organizations are well qualified to perform this service. In addition, their existing relationships in the community will be invaluable in building upon and further leveraging outreach strategies. For these reasons, the two providers were recommended for funding. The contracts will be for approximately seven months through July 2022, for \$15,000 each.

b. Review Draft Agenda for January 26, 2022 Board Retreat: A draft Board retreat agenda was distributed and reviewed. The focus of this year's retreat will be on equity and diversity. There will be presentations from the director on a review of 2021 and expectations for 2022 and Board member S. Levy on the California economy. In addition, Shireen Malekafzali, Chief Equity Officer for the County of San Mateo will be the keynote speaker and will offer a data-driven perspective on equity and diversity. Breakout group discussions will follow the presentations. It was recommended that the

proposed question of, “How is your company/organization looking at the question of diversity, equity and access and how might NOVAworks move forward with this?” be the last discussion question. While this year’s retreat will be utilizing a condensed format, there may be opportunity to explore hosting an Executive Committee only retreat in the summer.

c. San Mateo County Workforce Development Network: Last spring, NOVAworks partnered with the County of San Mateo to develop a county-wide workforce development plan to address the workforce needs of that community. NOVAworks convened a design team of workforce development and education leaders that highlighted the needs of access and opportunity. The team recommended a holistic approach to workforce development that should include not only job training, but housing, transportation, childcare, and healthcare, among other resources. The community review team examined these recommendations and concurred but also recommended that equity be infused in these efforts. Following this process, NOVAworks continued to engage these leaders which has evolved into a broader network, with NOVAworks as the convenor. The goal is to support and leverage a longer-term network that is built to last and is equity-focused to improve services to customers, address barriers to opportunity, and build new bridges. Network members will complement rather than compete with one another. The network has already met twice with a third meeting to be scheduled. Recommendations were made to include legal aid and health plan organizations in this network.

d. Update San Mateo County Workforce Recovery Initiative: The County of San Mateo has embarked on a thoughtful process to determine how best to utilize its federal American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding for workforce recovery and development. The County has contracted with the Boston Consulting Group that is soliciting input. NOVAworks has been asked to participate in this process. The County is expected to make funding decisions at the beginning of 2022, with a focus on underserved and disadvantaged populations.

e. Update U.S. Economic Development Administration Good Jobs Challenge Grant Initiative: The U.S. Economic Development Administration has launched a highly competitive, large-scale Good Jobs Challenge grant program to build back better and serve individuals from underserved communities for growing industries. Approximately \$300 million is expected to be distributed. NOVAworks will be partnering with San Francisco (lead applicant), Contra Costa County, Alameda County, and the cities of Oakland and Richmond to provide disadvantaged workers with workforce development services for jobs in five growing industries. The industries include IT, healthcare, advanced manufacturing, transportation/logistics, and life sciences. NOVAworks will be taking the lead on the life sciences industry. Life sciences represents a significant industry in this region. The San Francisco Bay Area is the state’s largest life sciences hub with 4,028 establishments, 178,958 employees, and an average annual compensation of \$179,528 as of 2020. Total industry economic impact for the Bay Area included 411,198 jobs, \$54.5 billion in labor income, \$159 billion in total business sales, and \$104 billion in gross regional product in 2020. The application is due January 26, 2022. (Since the meeting, the deadline has been extended to February 10.) A recommendation was made to thread together all the different companies in the region that make up the biotech/life sciences industries which include Genentech, Gilead Sciences, Biomedical Manufacturing Network (biomedmfg.org), and Biocom, among others. In addition, Board member companies can provide letters of endorsement for this application.

4. **Information Items:**

- a. The next Executive Committee meeting is scheduled for February 16, 2022 at 12 Noon.
- b. 2022 Executive Committee Meeting Schedule was distributed.

5. **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 12:50 p.m.