

Workforce Training Subcommittee Agenda
Meeting May 29, 2019 – City Hall
1:00pm – 3:00pm

Members: Tom Geismar, Chair; Ricky Brown, Marian Hannah, Carolyn Herman, Ceil Pillsbury Schellenberg, Shamika Wright, Jennifer Blalock subject matter expert

Call to order – identify members in attendance

Approve minutes from previous two meetings

Agenda preparation and development

Ideas for recommendations – discuss Carolyn Herman’s Hub Prooposal

Grant requirements

Future meeting - communication proposal – Vincente Waugh, Student, Robert E. Lee High School

Next steps

Next meeting date?

Other issues

Public comments

Adjourn

MEMORANDUM

TO: SUBCOMMITTEE ON WORKFORCE TRAINING
FROM: CAROLYN HERMAN
RE: CREATING A HUB/EXPUNGEMENT PROJECT
DATE: MAY 23, 2019

At the meeting held on May 22, 2019, I proposed two mechanisms which might facilitate the Subcommittee's mission and vision. Below is a summary of each one.

I. HUB

My first proposal involved creating a HUB, a one-stop shopping organization where vetted opportunities for workforce training and employment in the City could be found. This proposal is for the most part based on the following conclusions already reached by the Subcommittee:

1. We do not have to reinvent the wheel. There are numerous organizations city-wide already providing workforce training and other services supporting workforce training, including for-profit, not-for-profit, not-for-profit 501(c)(3)s, federally, state and/or locally funded, and privately funded programs (collectively, "Workforce Training Resources" or "Resources").

2. Many of our residents in need of workforce training programs and employment are unaware of a vast majority of these Resources, if not all.

3. The efficacy of any workforce training program and the ability to become employed at an appropriate standard of living are significantly hampered by a number of barriers, including, but not limited to, the lack of public trust, transportation, child care, funds, education, criminal background, and community leaders and, in general, a welfare mentality.

Based on these conclusions, my recommendation as to how to carry out our mission is to create a HUB *which, rather than providing workforce training programs*, instead would have an entirely different group of responsibilities.

A. Responsibilities of the HUB: The HUB's responsibilities would include the following:

1. Create a database of the various Resources available to all residents of Jacksonville.

This database would consist of the names of each Resource, a brief description of its services, and a specific contact person. The database would be made available by creating a written guide, by distributing that guide around the City and at all City-sponsored-events, by posting the database to a dedicated website, and by utilizing other forms of social media to

maximize availability. Prior to obtaining a listing, each Resource would need to be vetted to determine that it has all necessary licenses, is financially sound, has personnel trained to provide the services offered, and can continue to be economically viable. Why would a Resource want to be part of this database? Among other reasons, only those Resources which are included in the database will be eligible for incentives offered by the City (see below), funding sources created by the Subcommittee on Business Partnerships, funding sources created by other Task Force Subcommittees and the receipt of HUB references and referrals.

2. Produce Workforce Training Events

The HUB would produce events, or support other vetted Resources to hold events, that address the need for and the benefits derived from workforce training, e.g., educational seminars, Resource Trade Shows, and family events centered around success stories, i.e., testimonials from community members who have successfully engaged in workforce training.

3. Propose to City Council various City incentives to enable continued funding of Resource programs.

4. Serve as a liaison between (a) the Resources and state/federal funding resources; and (b) employers seeking to hire graduates of workforce training programs/or currently involved in acquiring relevant workforce training.

5. Continue to identify any gaps in our current Resources.

6. Create an assessment tool for Resources to measure the success of their programs.

7. Facilitate the Resources' acquisition of the necessary licenses and provide a checklist of the requirements for its maintenance as a viable entity. The manner in which to accomplish these responsibilities would be similar to the ways discussed in A.1. above.

B. The HUB's Format:

Ideally, the HUB would be an independent commission or organization so as to avoid any possible concern for political influence over the conduct of its responsibilities. (However, regardless of format, one would hope that strong leadership and the recognition of the importance of the HUB's mission would dissuade any appearance of impropriety and silence any critics.) I propose that the HUB be created as a City Office or Department of Workforce Training ("Office") funded by the City (e.g., see existing Office of Sports and Entertainment.) City Council would appoint a full-time Manager of the Office. The Manager would then hire either on a full or part-time basis an Assistant Manager, administrative staff, and four to six "Outreach Counselors" (part-time) who would be assigned specific areas of the City in which to carry out the HUB's mission. The Office also could have a volunteer advisory

board (no more than 10 members) made up of community leaders throughout the City who meet on a regular basis to discuss HUB operations and as needed, make recommendations.

II. SEALING/EXPUNGEMENT PROJECT

As mentioned above, one of the barriers to employment for many of our residents is a criminal background. It may also affect the ability to get adequate housing and needed licenses. As I mentioned at a prior meeting, pursuant to the Florida Statutes, an adult who has entered the criminal justice system **may** have the right to file a petition to expunge or seal even an arrest from their records, enabling them to subsequently deny any question concerning a criminal background. Also, minors who have entered the criminal or the juvenile justice system have special rules regarding petitions for sealing and expunging juvenile records.

However, the ability to petition with the Department of Law Enforcement is extremely limited and requires the help of a legal professional. But, notwithstanding its limitations, the ability to have a criminal record expunged or sealed may at least in some cases substantially remove the barriers mentioned above.

It might be helpful if at one of our meeting we ask someone from the Public Defender's Office or other legal professional with knowledge of the process to speak to our subcommittee on the ins and outs of filing these petitions. (Sorry, but I am a civil lawyer only and have **extremely** limited knowledge on this matter.) Once we have a better understanding of the process, perhaps we can recommend that a Project be funded which would facilitate its use as a way to eliminate certain barriers.

The Welfare State Is Broken. Here's How to Fix It.

Ella is a British woman who grew up in a broken home and was abused by her stepdad. Her eldest son got thrown out of school and ended up sitting around the house drinking. By the time her daughter was 16, she was pregnant and had an eating disorder. Ella, though in her mid-30s, had never had a real job. Life was a series of endless crises — temper tantrums, broken washing machines, her son banging his head against the walls.

Every time the family came into contact with the authorities, another caseworker was brought in to provide a sliver of help. An astonishing 73 professionals spread across 20 different agencies and departments got involved with this family. Nobody had ever sat down with them to devise a comprehensive way forward.

In her mind-shifting book, “Radical Help,” the British social entrepreneur Hilary Cottam tracks how one of the social workers in Ella’s case spent his days. Roughly 74 percent of his time was spent on administrative matters — recording data, making referrals to other agencies and meeting with other agencies. Only 14 percent of the social worker’s time was actually spent with the family he was meant to be serving. And that face-to-face time was mostly with a clipboard, checking off boxes on the forms that went back to central administration.

The administrative system around Ella and her family costs roughly 250,000 pounds per year.

Cottam asked the government workers involved in Ella’s case if they could recall a time when they’d transformed a family so it no longer needed government help. They couldn’t think of one.

I met Cottam in London last week and she made the point that welfare systems are often designed to manage needs, but they are not designed to build capabilities so that families can stand on their own.

Moreover, most Western systems were not designed to confront the kind of poverty prevalent today. When these systems were put in place in the 1950s and ’60s, unemployment was more often a temporary thing that happened between the time you got laid off from a big employer and the time you got hired by a new one. Now, economic insecurity is often a permanent state, as people patch together different jobs to make ends meet. Health issues for people in the welfare system are often chronic — obesity, diabetes, many forms of mental illness.

Our legacy welfare structures are ill suited to today’s poverty.

Cottam has spent the past decade or so helping local authorities across Britain build new welfare programs. Her programs start by shifting power to the former “recipients” of services. The programs ask, What sort of trajectory would you like to be on? Then the programs build social networks around the families to help them achieve their goals.

For example, Ella was asked if she would like to lead a “life team” that would help her family turn around. She agreed. She was given the power to select the eight people from across agencies who would comprise the team. She chose people from social work, the housing authority and the police force.

Members of the team spent 80 percent of their time with the family and only 20 percent on administration. Ella and the team worked together to stabilize her most immediate issue — negotiating away eviction notices. Then the team worked to improve inter-family dynamics so there wasn't so much violence and screaming.

After a family is stable, the team and family work on building skills and telling stories of success. By 18 months, many of the families involved in the Life Team program no longer need the team. Ella got her first office job and assumed more responsibility for her family. Her kids were back in mainstream schooling.

In the old welfare model, social workers are detached professionals and overwhelmed, bound by bureaucratic rules and often slipping into emotional permafrost. At Life Team, it's about relational accompaniment, giving social workers the discretion to do what they think is best.

Cottam has designed other programs with a similar collaborative ethos. Backr is a program that takes people who are detached from the labor force and helps them join extended social networks where they can connect one another to job openings and develop skills. Circles is a program for the elderly. It brings together lonely seniors into small groups that are part social club, part concierge service and part self-help cooperative. Wellogram is a similar social structure for the chronically ill.

Basically, Cottam's programs create villages within the welfare state. Her systems are not designed around individual clients, but around relational networks. People tend to have better outcomes when they are held accountable by a network of peers. Three-quarters of the smokers in Wellogram successfully quit, 44 percent lowered their blood pressure, 64 percent started work or went back to school.

The old legacy welfare programs were designed for people enmeshed in thick communities but who had suffered a temporary setback. Today many people lack precisely that web of thick relationship. The welfare state of the future has to build the social structures that people need to thrive. This is one way government can build community.