

City of Alexandria Economic Opportunities Commission (EOC) Meeting Minutes
April 17, 2024, 7:00 PM ET

Attendees:

1. Meronne Teklu, Chair
2. Aminata Ly, Vice Chair
3. Tim Laderach, Secretary
4. Conrad Sylvanus
5. Jenn Ayers
6. Taylor Phillips
7. Charles Brown
8. L'Allegro Smith
9. Alison Coleman, Staff
10. Lesa Gilbert, Staff
11. Guest: Julie Mullen (Center for Economic Support)
12. Guest: Matt Harris (Human Rights Commission)

Absences:

1. *Berole Bekele
2. *David Parker
3. *Illiana Moses
4. *Babak Pirouz
5. *Karishma Merchant

*Excused

Meronne commenced the meeting at 7:09 PM ET.

Procedural

- Meronne reviewed the agenda, L'Allegro moved to approve the agenda and Conrad seconded. The Commission unanimously approved the agenda.
- Meronne reviewed the March minutes, Aminata moved to approve the minutes and Tim seconded. The Commission unanimously approved the March minutes.
- Brief welcoming remarks.

Guest Speaker: Matt Harris

- **Matt introduced himself and his service in the city.**
- **Discussed support of labor and unions**
 - Union density in private sector: 6-7%
 - In airline industry: 95%
 - Application to CoA:
 - Recent collective bargaining authority, exercising authority
 - School employees, public safety ⇒ unions
 - Pre-ordinance, illegal to engage in collective bargaining

- Schools: a half-step
 - Described history of DASH, union buster in DASH, ATU
 - Economic equality through labor organizing, empowering workers
- Questions:
 - Background info on Alexandria unionization
 - What protections are provided by a union
 - Don't need to explicitly be member of a union to benefit
 - re: 20% raise for library workers
 - bargaining, just cause removal

Guest Speaker: Julie Mullen

- **Julie introduced herself and his service in the city.**
- **Discussed work in Center for Economic Support**
 - ARISE
 - Guaranteed income pilot
 - Funded by ARPA, \$500/mo
 - First payment Feb 2023, final payment January 2025
 - 18y or older, 50% AMI or below
 - Household of 1, ~49K; 4, ~73K annually
 - No strings attached; supplement to existing social safety support, not replacement
 - ARISE coach available for supportive services
 - Conducting RCT on 170 treatment group, 210 control group
 - Physical/emotional well being
 - Financial stability
 - Child outcomes
 - Labor participation, etc.
 - Quantitative and Qualitative research
 - Median income of participants: ~\$21,000/yr
 - **Findings brief towards end of 2024
 - 9th program
 - Data dashboards from Stanford, UPenn
 - Useful to see how the money is used, identify gaps in services/needs
 - Urban Institute: Mobility Action Team
 - Upward mobility from poverty
 - Team: CoA, ACT for Alexandria, ALIVE!, Neighborhood Health
 - Economic Success, Power & Autonomy, Dignity & Belonging
 - Opportunity to partner
 - Pulse check conversations
 - TBD what that looks like for EOC
 - e.g. community cookouts, farmer's markets
 - Re: 6 questions from the team

City Updates

- **OCS updates - Alison**
 - Winter shelter closed as of April 15, seeing increase in households accessing homeless services
 - Big win: Partnership to prevent and end homelessness:
 - SOP to compensate those with lived experience of homelessness to serve on board; recently approved for 2 positions
 - PIT: Local narrative sent out in ~ 1 month
 - Overall: Increased unsheltered (from 10 → 18)
 - Pre-pandemic ~200 at 2020; back to these levels again
 - Children: increased by 105% (25 → 52)
 - Increase in domestic violence phone calls
- **DCHS updates - Lesa**
 - Budget add/delete sessions, April 24, 27

Old Business

- **Potomac Yard Proposal Discussion:** no longer on the table for Virginia
- **City Budget Letter:**
 - Draft circulated via email, reviewed by EOC, voted to approve.
 - Meronne submitted and read at City Council session.
- **EOC Needs Assessment Report (Final)**
 - Completed, sent to Virginia, in Queue for Alexandria eNews & Council
- **Nominating Committee**
 - Voted on several members last month
 - Executive board elections in June; EOC members to reach out to Meronne if interested in discussing serving on executive board.

New Business

- GA Housing Bills
 - Discussed several bills that were vetoed/passed/amended
 - Refer to chart
- Panelists for May & June
 - Invited AEDP representative (May)
 - CHIP and AHD updates (June)
- Need to reschedule for Juneteenth
 - Tentatively plan for reschedule on June 26

Announcements / Open Discussion

- Conrad brought up youth representatives for EOC to fill a commissioner slot
- Spring to Action April 24
- Alive! Happy Hour for 6-8pm at Port City

Closing: L'Allegro moved to adjourn the meeting and Conrad seconded. The meeting adjourned at 8:57 PM ET.

