



7801 S. State Street, 2nd FL  
Chicago, IL 60619  
773.644.1451  
Greaterchathaminitiative.org

**Workforce Committee Meeting Minutes  
held at the Urban Partnership Bank  
7801 S. State Street, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor,  
Chicago, IL 60619  
Wednesday, March 8, 2017 from  
10:00-11:30**

The following persons attended the meeting or by phone:

- Tony Culpepper      Paramount Staffing
- Phedra Lesile      Cook County Workforce Partnership
- Cherita Ellens      Skills for Chicagoland Future (Conference)
- Daniel Cervantes      Skills for Chicagoland Future (Conference)
- Nedra Fears      GCI
- Nicole Bridges      GCI

The minutes from the January 11, 2017 meeting were approved.

The Workforce Committee members wanted Skills for Chicagoland's Future staff to be very strategic. The Workforce Committee members wanted Skills for Chicagoland's Future to modify its proposal to target placing workers only in permanent jobs paying at least \$44,000. Skills for Chicagoland's Future explained that Skills for Chicagoland Future average worker earned \$25,000 and that \$44,000 may not be feasible. Before Skills for Chicagoland's Future can adjust the proposal, they requested a definition of middle skill workers as well as what an above entry-level wage would be.

GCI's board has tasked the Workforce Committee members with defining "middle skill workers" and above entry-level wage. The Workforce Committee members contributed the following definitions of "middle skill workers" and above entry-level wage as;

"Given that the living wage for the County/City is \$15.00/hour (\$31,200/year) this should be the general goal at the very least, barring special circumstances populations. I'm not certain how it helps to generally ask the committee to define these terms when many are not workforce data specialists or service providers. There are

clear definitions and data for these terms. I can have Cook County Workforce Partnership provide data. Additionally, I think it'd be helpful to understand skill' placement and offering as compared generally throughout the existing workforce system. The placement rate for federally-funded workforce programs in Local Workforce Investment Area #7 (Chicago & Cook County) varies based upon the population served (Adults- individuals with barriers to employment, Dislocated Workers and Youth). Our metrics are set by the federal government and negotiated with the State of Illinois. Also, the retention data was not provided."

"Generally, the term "middle-skill" refers to jobs and thus to workers in jobs or seeking jobs which require education beyond high school but not a four-year degree. I'm not aware of "above entry-level wage" being a standardized, commonly used or consensus-defined term in workforce development, the way for example "living wage" or "family sustaining wage" are. One way to approach it would just be to say that they should be wages above minimum wage, or maybe some % above minimum wage. Right now, minimum wage for the City is \$10.50, going to \$11.00 on July 1, \$12.00 in 2018 and \$13 in 2019, and being tied to inflation after that, a 10% premium over that would be roughly what Skills is averaging right, now and hopefully their average increases each year tracking the minimum wage increases.

The Workforce Development Committee is concerned that Skills for Chicagoland's Future will not be able to meet GCI's needs for placing middle skill workers in permanent jobs paying at least \$44,000 (annually).

The meeting adjourned at 11:30

The next meeting is Wednesday, May 10, 2017.