



Denver City Council

**Joint Meeting
Summary
Youth & Community Services & Finance Committees**

Date: June 13, 2006

Time: 1:30

Location: Council Conference Room

Committee Members Present:

Boigon, Linkhart,

YCS Committee Members Absent:

Brown, Faatz, Garcia, Lehmann, MacKenzie, Montero

Wedgeworth, Johnson

Joint with Finance Committee

1. Transfer of Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) employment training case management from Department of Human Services to Division of Workforce Development (DWD)

Committee Action

The Committee approved increasing the DWD General Cost Pool from \$2,660,000 to \$4,960,000 to accommodate the transfer of about 72 staff effective July 1, 2006 and creation of an appropriation account for transferred funds.

Summary of Discussion

Chiquita McGowin and Betty Sparrow, DWD, and Roxane White and Valerie Brooks, Department of Human Services, made the following points about the rationale for the transfer:

- The goal is to increase client self sufficiency and improve work rate participation rates.
- The Department of Human Services is facing sanctions and reductions in appropriations this October if participation rates are not improved.
- Workers who specialize in case management—rather than eligibility determination—appear to be more successful with clients' employment issues.
- This approach has been in the planning stages for some time with participation of both Departments and from caseworkers themselves.
- The initiative will also evaluate whether the "correct" clients are being counted in the work participation rates and whether adjustments are needed in the methodology.
- Change is difficult for both the workers and the contract services providers, but each has had input into the process.

- Some changes in services will be phased in over time and initially DWD will be working primarily with the same providers, but eventually the new system will implement more accountability for contractors to reach performance goals.
- Data is currently being analyzed to determine what are the elements and caseloads for a high performance team that is successful for different types of cases.
- The changes to the Temporary Assistance and Needy Families program contained in the 2005 Deficit Reduction Act will be very difficult for Colorado and all local jurisdictions to meet.
- DHS and DWD will update the Committee later in the summer and periodically on the progress of the initiative.

Youth and Community Services Committee Resumes

2. Briefing: WIRED grant & approval of first half of budget

Committee Action

The Committee authorized budgeting for the first half of the grant funds (\$2.4 million) expected based on a letter of intent from the Colorado Department of Labor and Employment for the Workforce Innovation in Regional Economic Development (WIRED) Initiative grant.

Summary of Discussion

Betty Sparrow, DWD, explained that the WIRED initiative will be overseen by Letty Garcia-Ekstein, who could not be here today. She said that the grant is a bit behind in planning and implementation due to the lack of specific goals yet to be determined from the Department of Labor.

The following discussion points were made:

- WIRED is a three year regional project with the Office of Economic Development acting as the fiscal agent for the Denver metro region
- The Metro Denver Economic Corporation (MDEC) will be implementing the grant
- WIRED is intended to support the development of the Denver metro regional, integrated approach to workforce, economic development and education
- The goal is to identify growing employment sectors and tie education and training to these needs
- Funds can also be used to provide direct training
- City staff should monitor closely the types of subcontractors and services provided through MDEC to assure equity and balance

- The middle college model should be considered for implementation under this grant due to its success in transitioning young people to successful training and college experiences
- Grant staff should work closely with the TANF population to help meet the identified industry training needs

Staff were directed to schedule the MDEC for a follow-up discussion on the status of the initiative.