



Legislation Text

File #: 2020-0268, **Version:** 1

To: Board of Supervisors of Sonoma County
Department or Agency Name(s): Economic Development Board
Staff Name and Phone Number: Sheba Person-Whitley (707) 565-7170
Vote Requirement: Majority
Supervisory District(s): Countywide

Title:

Economic Development Board Business Services Program Manager

Recommended Action:

Adopt a Resolution amending the Department Allocation list of the Economic Development Board, effective April 28, 2020.

Executive Summary:

As part of its comprehensive response to the COVID-19 Emergency, the Economic Development Board seeks to add a 0.5 full-time equivalent (FTE) Department Program Manager to combine with an existing vacant 0.5 FTE. This would create one full-time Program Manager dedicated to creating and executing programs that connect local employers with customized workforce training programs, while identifying ongoing needs for additional services. These activities, and this addition, are funded through a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Human Services Department and the Workforce Investment Board through at least June 30, 2022. The added staff resource will result in four total staff dedicated to business start-up, retention, diversity and workforce development services. The added staff resource will also be a critical component in the County's response to employment and economic impacts related to the COVID-19 emergency.

Discussion:

As the county's workforce and employers currently experience an unprecedented economic disruption and record unemployment claims due to proactive distancing and shelter in place orders related to COVID-19, the Economic Development Board and Sonoma County Workforce Investment Board seek to bolster their response by adding a position that would be tasked with creating strengthened relationships with local employers. Once active, the position would immediately begin work to identify industries that are still experiencing surging employment demand, while identifying displaced workers, transferrable skills, and training resources to fulfill needs. The number one objective at the outset of this program would be the creation of new and viable career pathways for workers displaced by COVID-19 related actions, while continuing to create a solid and vibrant economic base by fulfilling the needs of Sonoma County employers.

Background:

In November 2011, the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors approved the County's Economic Development Strategy and Jobs Plan and adopted a resolution in support of a continued commitment to economic development and job initiatives. The Board of Supervisors subsequently approved additional Transient

Occupancy Tax (Advertising Program) funding in April 2012 that allowed the Economic Development Board to bring aboard staff to provide direct services and resources to the business community. Those positions currently provide a broad range of specialized outreach and services to local small businesses, including start-up and entrepreneurial services, business retention and expansion, business development and access to capital.

In 2014, and with funding through an MOU with the Human Services Department, the Economic Development Board created a Business Services position tasked with creating connections to resources for individuals that face employment barriers, working directly with employers to customize training programs. The position was successful in creating connections between employers and job-seekers, and developing an innovative on-the-job training program to offset employer training costs and provide career paths to formerly low-wage earners.

This role was previously filled from 2014 to 2017 and demonstrated many successes in creating programs that benefitted local employers and job seekers equally. These successes included an on-the-job-training program that subsidized employer training for up to six months, customized trainings for niche industries with high needs (alternative fuel vehicle technicians, industrial sewing for the apparel industry, for example) and significant input to the County's Workforce Investment Board on new and emerging trends. Thus, the infrastructure is in place for a relatively quick ramp-up. It is anticipated that the program would be fully operational within three to six months after a candidate is identified. Outcome measures will include training dollars vs. positions filled, successful placement (in total and among identified populations) of Job Link clients, and other measures to be defined by the Workforce Investment Board and included in existing regular updates to the Board of Supervisors.

Prior Board Actions:

June 2014 - The Board of Supervisors approved a program/position change request to create the original Business Services Program Manager position.

November 15, 2011 - Approve recommendations regarding the Economic Development Strategy and Jobs Plan.

FISCAL SUMMARY

Expenditures	FY 19-20 Adopted	FY20-21 Projected	FY 21-22 Projected
Budgeted Expenses	\$141,000	\$172,000	\$177,000
Additional Appropriation Requested			
Total Expenditures	\$141,000		
Funding Sources			
General Fund/WA GF			
State/Federal			
Fees/Other	\$141,000	\$172,000	\$177,000
Use of Fund Balance			
Contingencies			

Total Sources	\$141,000	\$172,000	\$177,000
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Narrative Explanation of Fiscal Impacts:

The estimated additional cost to upgrade from a part-time to a full time Department Program Manager is \$31,000 more, totaling \$172,000 in FY 20-21 and in FY 21-22, the full time position is \$177,000. An MOU between the Economic Development Board and the Human Services Department has been executed to provide partial funding of this position through FY 21-22.

Staffing Impacts:			
Position Title (Payroll Classification)	Monthly Salary Range (A-I Step)	Additions (Number)	Deletions (Number)
Department Program Manager	\$6,558.77-\$7,972.80	.5	0.0

Narrative Explanation of Staffing Impacts (If Required):

The .5 FTE requested will be added to an existing .5 FTE to create 1.0 full-time Department Program Manager charged with creating workforce development resources for employers and job seekers.

Attachments:

1. Resolution amending Department Allocation List
2. Memorandum of Understanding
3. Letter of Support from WIB Director
4. 2011 Economic Development Strategy and Jobs Plan

Related Items "On File" with the Clerk of the Board:

None.