Members Present: Ben Damerow, Bobby Hopewell, Carol McGlinn, Jonathan Pulley, John Oliver, Kym Hollars

Members Absent: Patrese Griffin, Brenda Hughes, Alyssa Stewart, Don Cooney,

City Staff: Kevin Ford, Shared Prosperity Kalamazoo Coordinator; Jaime Marsman, Community Investment Secretary

Call to Order
The meeting was called to order at 12:39 p.m.

Roll Call
Mr. Ford conducted roll call of the organizing committee and determined quorum existed.

A motion was made by Ms. McGlinn to excuse the absent members, seconded by Mr. Damerow. A voice vote was taken, and the motion passed.

Approval of (regular/special) minutes of the last meeting

A motion was made by Mr. Oliver to approve the minutes of December 6, 2021, as presented, seconded by Mr. Pulley. A voice vote was taken, and the motion passed.

Approval of Agenda
Mr. Hopewell noted an addition to the agenda by the City to give a financial allocation update. Mr. Ford noted that he will also provide an update on workforce development. The agenda will move forward with these changes.

Reports of Officers, Boards and Committees
None.

New Business
Streaming SPKOC Meetings
Mr. Ford stated that there is a question of whether the SPK meetings would like to be livestreamed going forward or continue with the public meeting only. It was discussed that during COVID, IT and the Communications Department handled the streaming, but these responsibilities will now be taken over by City Staff. Should livestreaming be desired, the SPK Organizing Committee would also need to meet in the City Commission Chambers, which does not have room for all 11 members on the dais. It was noted that it is not mandatory to continue livestreaming.

Ms. McGlinn asked if there was any sense of how many folks watched the SPK videos? It was discussed that the amount has not been great. It was discussed that no one has called for follow-up after watching a meeting. Ms. McGlinn affirmed the importance of
being transparent and open, and noted that we are under the Open Meetings Act, so the public is welcome to come to the meeting itself. Mr. Hopewell asked if there was an easy way for people to reach out to SPK through the website? Mr. Ford affirmed that he has received communications from citizens through the website. Mr. Ford stated that he will ask the Clerk’s office and Neal Conway if there are announcements on the website and/or social media posts advertising the SPK meetings. There is a posting at City Hall.

Mr. Hopewell recommended that, due to the close quarters of the Chambers Room, until the COVID/mask restrictions are lifted, that the SPK Organizing Committee continue with public meetings in the Community Room. Mr. Damerow supported this proposal.

A motion was made by Ms. McGlinn that the SPK Organizing committee continues to hold open public meetings in person that follows the Open Meetings Act as it stands presently, seconded by Mr. Damerow. A voice vote was taken, and the motion passed. This will be reviewed in six months.

Replacing Cyekeia Lee
Ms. Lee has stepped down from the SPK Organizing Committee. She has accepted a position in Detroit. Mr. Ford stated that Ms. Griffin, Vice Mayor Cooney, and Ms. Stewart are members of the Nominating Committee. It was noted that there is room for two more members on this committee if anyone else would like to join. No other members indicated an interest to join the Nominating Committee.

The Nominating Committee will be reactivated. Possible candidates were discussed. Mr. Ford affirmed that he would ask a possible candidate if he were interested soon.

Children’s Savings Accounts (CSA)
Mr. Ford stated that he and Steve Brown are working on the development of the CSA. The State has opened the opportunity to grant a city & rural area $500,000 to start a CSA. We would like to take advantage of that opportunity as that would accelerate the work we are doing locally. The CSA could be interpreted as an economic asset and K-12 within the 2 Gen approach. Mr. Ford stated that they have discussed the Lansing Save Model with representatives from the City of Lansing who had a strong financial partner in Michigan State Credit Union. Schools play a significant role as well as a financial partner.

Ms. McGlinn asked if there was an education component partner? Mr. Ford stated that they are having conversations with KRESA and KPS who are cautious about introducing new curriculum items given the situation with the teachers. Ms. McGlinn stated that, perhaps, Junior Achievement could be utilized. KPS has stated that they would look at 3rd graders for this program as a start. Many details still need to be determined. This would be a 3-year pilot. Moving forward, additional grades could be included. Mr. Hopewell affirmed that there is more work to be done. Mr. Ford stated that we have been working on this for a year. Ms. Hollars asked if they would have more parent focus groups? Mr.
Ford stated that he will check on this. Mr. Oliver asked for information on the parent focus groups as well.

**Edison Childcare Summit (ECS)**

Mr. Ford stated that the ECS occurred January 28, 2022. There were two locations and a virtual option as well. This connects to SPK work as it is in a core neighborhood, Edison. The organizers were YWCA, Kalamazoo Literacy Council and Southwest Childcare Resources, the backbone organizations for the Edison Early Childhood Education Career Pathway (EECECP). They received a grant from Early Childhood Investment Corporation (ECIC). Southwest Childcare Resources received a Tri-Share Grant to implement locally as well. The Tri-Share model was a state of Michigan pilot it is now looking to expand to other areas of the state. In the model, childcare costs are divided and shared equally into thirds by the state, employers, and employees. This is relatable to conversations regarding workforce development and barriers (affordable, accessible, and quality childcare) to accessing good jobs. There was a business roundtable to get business perspectives. There were six employers represented. Businesses learned a lot regarding ways to engage and assist employees with childcare. It was discussed that Kalsec has childcare on site. Mr. Ford stated that he will work to connect them with this work in Edison.

Ms. Hollars stated that this is also designed to get home-based providers involved in the work. Some do not have Child Development Associate (CDA) credentials, and this is an encouragement to them to get the credentials and grow their businesses. A MOU will be put together with them.

Wages and employee diversity are also topic discussions.

**Workforce Development**

Mr. Ford stated that he continues to work in partnership with Sarah Klerk from the Promise. Mr. Ford stated that the Upjohn Institute has provided an infographic and memo regarding information around core neighborhood ALICE populations, eligibility, transportation, and costs. Costs and numbers are included to help SPK focus on moving forward with this component. Mr. Ford requested that this information be kept confidential for the time being to complete conversations with key stakeholders. Mr. Ford encouraged everyone to reach out with any questions.

**SPKOC Planning Session**

Mr. Hopewell stated that workforce development and child development discussions have taken place. Mr. Hopewell stated that SPK needs to be more strategic in approaching these items.

Workforce Participation: It was discussed that we have more minorities participating and looking to get jobs, with fewer of them being hired for jobs. Strategic conversations need to happen on how to address these challenges to turn the needle now rather than later. Mr. Hopewell stated that we would like to have some dynamic time diving into this work that
we are trying to do. Mr. Hopewell reminded everyone that SPK is a partnering group, not a funding group.

Mr. Ford stated that the SPK job goal has always been to increase access to good jobs. Childcare accessibility and affordability, and transportation are two large barriers.

Mr. Damerow affirmed that this would be a good time to refocus and strategize. He stated that the childcare issue needs to be stabilized. It is important to spend our funds wisely in the areas that will have the biggest community impact for years to come.

Mr. Oliver stated that emphasis on childcare and transportation would solve many barriers in employment. Mr. Oliver asked what was being done for the population who may have not been prepared well enough to enter a two year or four-year program but may benefit from workforce training? Mr. Ford affirmed that the Upjohn memo speaks to this as it covers the ages of 18-44 as the ages of focus. Mr. Ford affirmed that they are included in the memo and anything that will be done in terms of workforce development will include that population. The best partners for this will need to be decided to help individuals move along their pathway. Ms. Hollars stated that YOU have programs and wrap around services that can assist this population and they work with them before they even enter the workforce.

Mr. Hopewell stated that the planning session will assist in moving the needle on what SPK needs to do and examine programs for outcomes. Goals need to be decided.

Ms. McGlinn stated that many programs do not have community awareness. Duplication of efforts is not desired; however, strong programs are important.

Mr. Pulley stated that another topic is homelessness and homeownership as it pertains to employment. Mr. Ford stated that he would like to have CPED City Staff come regularly to these meetings to discuss economic development and housing pieces. Their information/updates will be helpful. Mr. Pulley stated that leveraging people and knowledge sharing are transformative. It is helpful to understand how there is alignment and achievement of common goals.

Mr. Ford affirmed that the information gap continues to be large, which is why he would like to incorporate other city staff and share information from other community programs.

Mr. Ford stated that an ad hoc planning committee should be established to finalize details. Ms. Hollars, Mr. Oliver, and Ms. McGlinn volunteered to serve on the Planning Committee. They will consider a date in April.

**Unfinished Business (unfinished or pending matters)**
**Miscellaneous**
Childcare Virtual Hiring Event is happening next week. In coordination with the State and ECIC, there are four regional events throughout the state. This is for hiring of childcare workforce. Many companies have a $1,000 sign on bonus as provided by the federal government. Childcare workers will also be receiving retention bonuses as well.

Ms. Hollars stated that on March 17, there will be a spring training called EMT Basics. It is an accelerated course. Enrollment is currently open. It is an online and in-person (riding along with EMT’s) event. Mr. Hopewell stated that there is a significant need for EMTs. Mr. Hopewell affirmed that this is a great opportunity and is often a pathways job. Scholarships are available and job placement is provided. They will also assist in increasing their skills and credentialing.

**Financial Update**
Mr. Ford shared that the City Commission approved the budget and funds will be available in March (in good timing for the Planning Session). Funds for the SPK Organizing Committee are around $1.2 million.

**Public Comments—General**
None.

**Adjournment**
The meeting was adjourned at 1:33 p.m.