

MEMORANDUM

JUNE 13, 2013

TO: BOSTON REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY AND
PETER MEADE, DIRECTOR

FROM: JAMES M. TIERNEY, CHIEF OF STAFF AND SPECIAL COUNSEL TO
THE DIRECTOR
ERICO LOPEZ, SENIOR POLICY ADVISOR

SUBJECT: AUTHORIZATION FOR THE ADMINISTRATION AND
DISBURSEMENT OF THE CAPITAL RESOURCES FOR EARLY
EDUCATORS FUND BY THE UNITED WAY OF MASSACHUSETTS
BAY, INC. TO IMPROVE CHILDCARE FACILITIES IN THE CITY OF
BOSTON

SUMMARY: This Memorandum requests that the Boston Redevelopment Authority (the “BRA” or the “Authority”) authorize the Director to enter into an agreement with the United Way of Massachusetts Bay, Inc. (the “United Way”) for the administration and the disbursement of The Capital Resources for Early Educators Fund (the “Fund”), to improve childcare facilities in the City of Boston.

BACKGROUND

Earlier this year, Mayor Thomas M. Menino announced an initiative to improve the quality of childcare facilities in the City of Boston. The Capital Resources for Early Educators Fund (the “Fund”) has been created to invest in quality improvements to Boston’s licensed childcare and early education facilities. The financial resources for the Fund come from funds the Boston Redevelopment Authority (BRA) has collected through zoning requirements and other means dedicated to the improvement of childcare facilities.

Along with staff from the Mayor’s office, BRA staff has conducted significant research concerning the most effective manner to administer the Fund. The BRA surveyed other existing grant programs and identified the needs most critical for childcare providers. Through this process, it became clear that the expertise in childcare capital projects that is necessary to evaluate grant proposals exists in organizations that have already administered similar grant programs for childcare facilities.

THE CAPITAL RESOURCES FOR EARLY EDUCATORS FUND

The United Way has the mission of bringing communities together to help improve people's lives and strengthen neighborhoods in 88 communities across Greater Boston, Merrimack Valley and the South Shore of Massachusetts. Moreover, the United Way has expertise in the field of childcare and has administered grant funds for the improvement of childcare facilities in the recent past. United Way staff and BRA staff have agreed that the most efficient, effective way to administer the Fund is to provide these funds to the United Way to administer.

Therefore, BRA staff requests that the BRA Board authorize the United Way to act as the administrator of The Capital Resources for Early Educators Fund, a competitive grant fund created by the City of Boston and funded by the BRA.

As the administrator of the Fund the United Way will provide the following services:

1. Oversee up to two rounds of grant funding, with the first round of funding to be disbursed no later than November 30, 2013;
2. Assist the City of Boston in finalizing a sample Grant Fund Application and associated Requirements, including:
 - a. Eligible Providers,
 - b. Eligible Fund Uses and Maximum Permissible Requests, and
 - c. Required documents;
3. Manage the processing and review of all grant applications via a simple online application platform;
4. Provide support to applicants in three forms:
 - a. Host meetings where applicants can ask questions regarding the Fund,
 - b. Provide phone support for applicants during the application process, and
 - c. Host a website containing FAQ's in English and Spanish;
5. Disburse funds to recipients;
6. Host an Orientation Session for Fund recipients; and
7. Work with the City of Boston and BRA to make any necessary improvements following the first funding round.

RECOMMENDATION

The BRA staff recommends that the Authority to authorize the Director to enter into an agreement with the United Way for the administration and the disbursement of The Capital Resources for Early Educators Fund, to improve childcare facilities in the City of Boston

An appropriate vote follows:

VOTED: That the Boston Redevelopment Authority (the “BRA” or the “Authority”) authorize the Director to enter into an agreement with the United Way of Massachusetts Bay, Inc. for the administration and the disbursement of The Capital Resources for Early Educators Fund, to improve childcare facilities in the City of Boston.