THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

# EXECUTIVE OFFICE FOR

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# BOSTON, MA 02133

**Meeting Minutes**

**Federal Funds Equity & Accountability Review Panel**

**Wednesday, May 31, 2023, 2:30 – 3:30 p.m.**

In accordance with Section 20 of Chapter 20 of the Acts of 2021, this meeting will be conducted, and open to the public, via Zoom and Teleconference:

**Zoom URL:**

.<https://zoom.us/w/93075273822?tk=MBBcFUP86RrdAVP884XztRHWUATdCHU97RcyCEFs1yA.DQMAAAAVq7f4XhZyYkJqOXlFR1MzSzM5dnZ4U2dVel9nAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA&pwd=RmFyeTh3M0U1VGY5aHd2OWxjOUMxZz09&uuid=WN_vaEiEnscSIGSrFK_WOAiow>

**Passcode:** 856512

**Teleconference Line:** +1-301-715-8592, **conference code:** 856512

A meeting of the Federal Funds Equity & Accountability Review Panel was held via teleconference on Wednesday, May31, 2023, in accordance with Section 20 of Chapter 20 of the Acts of 2021.

Meeting was called to order at 2:35PM

**Panel members comprising a quorum:**

Nicole Obi, Panel Co- Chair, Coalition for an Equitable Economy

Marcony Almedia- Barros, Panel Co-Chair, Governors Office

Diana DiZoglio, Auditor of the Commonwealth

Erica Seery, Chief Digital Officer, Executive Office of Technology Services and Security

Marie-Frances Rivera, Massachusetts Budget and Policy Center, Inc.

Elizabeth Weyant, Massachusetts Association of Regional Planning Agencies

Bill McAvoy, Supplier Diversity Office

Kristina Johnson, Chief Data Officer, Executive Office of Technology Services and Security

Raquel Halsey, North American Indian Center of Boston, Inc.

Michael Frieber, Inspector General’s Office

Kevin Murray, Massachusetts Association of Community Development Corporations

Yasmin Pada sees, Commission on the Status of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders

Amy Nable, Office of the Comptroller

Luisa Santos, Green Justice Coalition

Leemarie Mosca, Massachusetts Nonprofit Network, Inc.

Joe Curtatone, Northeast Clean Energy Council, Inc.

Shaheer Mustafa, HopeWell

Leemarie Mosca, Rosie’s Place

Denella Clark, Boston Arts Academy Foundation

Geoff Foster, Common Cause Mass.

Gwen Hart, Center for Women & Enterprise

Yasmin Padamsee, Asian American Commission

Raquel Halsey, North American Indian Center of Boston

Bishop Tony Branch, NAACP-New England Area Conference

Elizabeth Weyant, Metropolitan Area Planning Council

Max Charles, Mass. Minority Contractors Association, Inc.

Cindy Luppi, Clean Water Action

Tracye Whitfield, Coalition for an Equitable Economy

**Others in attendance**:

Danielle Littmann, Executive Office for Administration and Finance

Robert Braza, Executive Office for Administration and Finance

## 1. Administrative Matters

**I.** Ms. Littmann conducted the roll call for the meeting. Co-chair Obi called the meeting to order.

## 2. Discuss Approving Previous Three Meeting Minutes

**I.** Co-chair Obi proposed voting on approving all three the meeting minutes with edits. The three meeting minutes with edits passed all yes and one abstained.

**3. Discuss ARPA Spending Update**

**I.** Co-chair Obi asked Ms. Littmann to provide an update on the ARPA allocations and spending for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Ms. Littmann highlighted that the update focuses on the CSFRF $5.3 billion and is through April 2023. Ms. Littmann commented that the legislature and the Executive Office for Administration and Finance (ANF) has allocated $4.977 billion. Ms. Littmann continued by stating that of the $4.977 billion allocated, $2.821 billion has been encumbered and $2.618 billion has been spent. $300 million has yet to allocated by the legislature. Ms. Littmann emphasized the timeline forexpending the CSFRF funds as follows: All funds to be obligated by December 31, 2024 and spent by December 31.2026. Ms. Littmann will send out additional materials later in the week for the Panel to review.

Amy Nable asked if there was a risk in CSFRF being clawed back at the federal level. Ms. Littmann answered that ANF is working with its counterparts and partners on this and that we do not believe CSFRF are at risk for claw back. CSFRF is fully obligated at the federal level. Co-chair Obi then discussed the difference between encumbered and spent and highlighted that $300 million has not been allocated by the legislature.

Marie-Frances asked if half the money being spent is typical for government spending. Ms. Littmann explained that for CSFRF the Commonwealth is working within the confines of what the legislature has appropriated, and that spending differs based on programs. Co-chair Obi indicated that there are 145 programs and 617 earmarks that make up CSFRF. Michael Frieber asked for a document associated with the programs and earmarks. Ms. Littmann showed the Panel the Federal Funds Office (FFO) website and highlighted that the CSFRF Spending Table on the website should be relatively up to date and is a good source to download data.

Kevin Murray asked about funds that have been assigned but not encumbered. Ms. Littmann explained that these funds are in the program design and compliance process phases.

Co-chair Obi asked the Panel if anyone had anymore questions about where the spending of CSFRF is. There were no further questions.

**4. Discuss Public Comment Period**

Co-chair Obi gave the floor to Equity Metrics Subcommittee co-leads Lizzi Weyant and Marie-Frances Rivera to discuss the results of reviewing the Public Comment Period comments. Marie-Frances Rivera started by providing a review of the current Equity Allocation Metrics uploaded on the FFO website. Marie-Frances Rivera continued by discussing the tiering system developed and the distribution of funds determined by the Panel.

Marie-Frances Rivera and the subcommittee completed a review of the public comments and agree with the comments to remove the gateway city metric because of duplicity with the vaccine equity metric. This was agreed upon by the subcommittee as an actionable suggestion from the public comment period because the gateway cities are for the most part included in the vaccine equity initiative community with a few exceptions.

Marie-Frances Rivera continued to highlight that the public comment period resulted in overwhelming input from rural communities asking to add a measure that specifically focused on rural communities and the subcommittee thoroughly reviewed this suggestion. There was also input on immigrant communities and the subcommittee thoroughly reviewed this suggestion as well.

Ultimately, the Equity Metrics Subcommittee is recommending removing the gateway city tier, going from 5 to 4 tiers.

Tracye Whitfield asked why remove gateway cities as a metric instead of the vaccine equity metric. Marie-Frances Rivera replied that vaccine equity metric was mandated and that the focus of the Panel is on Coronavirus and negative impacts from it. Kris Johnson added that Barnstable is the only community that will move down a tier because of this change in tiering. Co-Chair Obi commented that every community gets something because the tiering system developed is a multiplier system. Leemarie Mosca asked if there were changes for other communities. Kris Johnson responded that some communities moved up in tiering like Boston.

Co-chair Marcony Almeida-Barros applauded the work of the subcommittee and commented that it does not appear that a large change in tiering has occurred. He commented that the subcommittee has spent a lot of work on providing this recommendation and that we should move forward with the recommendation. Erica Seery agreed and would like to move forward with the recommendation.

Marie-Frances Rivera discussed sending a document to the legislature highlighting the needs of the rural communities.

Co-chair Obi asked if the Panel was ready to vote on the recommendations. On a motion made by Leemarie Mosca the Panel voted unanimously to move forward with the recommendation of removing the gateway city metric. The Co-chairs will write a letter with support from Ms. Littmann to the legislature and inform them of the approval of the tiering system.

Co-chair Obi announced that she will be stepping down from her position and Tracye Whitfield from CEE will take over as Co-chair. Tracye Whitfield thanked the work of the Panel and discussed her background. Co-chair Obi thanked the Panel.

Michael Frieber asked if the letter to the legislature should mention that the programs are not all at individual level and measuring equity will be a challenge. Co-chair Obi agreed to the difficulties with how the programs are spent.

## 4. Adjournment

 **I.** The meeting was adjourned at 3:29PM.

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Robert Braza, Executive Office for Administration and Finance