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NYC DEPARTMENT OF SMALL BUSINESS SERVICES
PRE-RFP CONFERENCE FOR NEW PROGRAMS
110 WILLIAM STREET, 4TH FLOOR
SEPTEMBER 5, 2007
9:00 A.M.

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1 P R E S E N T:

2 LORENE GILMORE,
Dept. Of Probation

3

4 ANGIE KAMATH,
Assistant Commissioner, SBS

5 LIZA KHAN,
CEO Representative

6

7 VANESSA MARTIN,
Work Advancement Director

8 CHRIS NEOLE,
Sector-Based Director

9

MEGAN O'MEARA

10

MELORRA SOCHET,
Criminal Justice Director

11

12 VERONICA WHITE,
CEO Executive Director

13

14

15 Also Present:
16 Sheridan Ameer, Chief Contracting Officer

17 Rivkah Berman

18 Pearl Chin

19 Martin Crong

20 Joseph A. Farrell

21 Dale Grant

22 Glen Gutterman

23 Luis Jimenez

24 Rebecca Lurie

25 Ms. Martinez

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1 P R O C E E D I N G S

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4 MS. KAMATH: I'm Angie Kamath,
5 Assistant Commissioner for Program Design and
6 Development, here at Small Business Services.
7 We're the unit that's responsible for launching the
8 Center for Economic Opportunity initiatives.

9 Thank you for coming to the information
10 session this morning. We're glad so many people
11 are here. It's an exciting time in New York City
12 for work force development.

13 The purpose for this morning is to
14 really share information that we had in our concept
15 papers that were released in June, and to also
16 really give potential applicants an understanding
17 of the reasons behind the programs we have
18 designed.

19 To be clear, this is not a replacement
20 for the bidder's conference. There will be
21 bidder's conferences for each of our three

22 initiatives.
23 This is really just an opportunity to
24 share some information we thought important for
25 potential providers, since there are a volume of

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2 programs and new programs, to understand what we
3 are doing.
4 The format for each of our three
5 sessions will be a presentation by the project
6 director for each program, followed by a Q and A by
7 the team and the folks involved in the program.
8 The discussion, the Q and A period will
9 follow the presentation. Questions and answers
10 have to be limited to the content you hear today or
11 something you read in the concept paper.
12 We cannot talk about the RFP publicly
13 at this time. In terms of what you hear today and
14 the comments, we have extended the comment period
15 for a concept papers to September 21.
16 Feel free to make comments today. If
17 you don't and something occurs to you after you
18 leave, you can go to the website and there are
19 instructions on how to make comments on the concept
20 papers. That's extended to the 21st.
21 The Q and A sessions we will have
22 afterwards are really an opportunity to ask any
23 clarifying questions. No questions are too small
24 or large. We're hoping to have a good
25 conversation.

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We have scheduled three information sessions, and I know that some folks have RSVP'd to all three of them, so folks are coming to be coming in and out of the sessions, and we thank you in advance for your patience during the transitions.

7

We will be transcribing the event.

8

We've got Jeff here, who will be typing up the entire transcript for the event.

9

We'll be sending out post cards in about a week showing the website and when the transcript is to be available. We're also using Power Point today. The same Power Point will also be on our website. It will be the same length where are our concept papers are, which you can find there, possibly in about a week. We'll be mailing out post cards with instructions on how to download everything.

19

I think, with that, I'll introduce some of our CEO partners. Veronica White, Executive Director is going to make the introductory remarks.

22

We also have Carson Hicks, the Deputy Director of Evaluations for CEO Projects; and Liza Khan, a program analyst for Deputy Mayor Gibbs, and CEO programs.

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MS. WHITE: Good morning.

3

I'm just here to put in context a little bit a number of the organizations and some of you, individually, worked with the Commission for Economic Opportunity last year.

7

It was almost exactly a year ago that Dick Parson and Jeff Canada issued a report for the Mayor, and the Mayor asked Deputy Mayor Gibbs to follow-up and work with all the agencies to establish programs to deal with the three populations that we've addressed in the report: The zero to five-year olds and young adults and the working poor.

15

Our senior partner in all of the working poor initiatives is SBS; and I've had the pleasure, since I started last fall, when we set up the Center for Economic Opportunity last December, of working with Angie and the team she's put together here.

21

The way we've chosen to implement the recommendations of the report is to set up a very small center that's focussed on three things: A few people, such as Liza, working with me on all the program development areas, the agencies, for

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2 example, the working poor; a small unit of
3 evaluators, a key component of the center's work
4 and working with external evaluation team, as well;
5 and thirdly, a poverty research team.
6 We've recruited in the past few months,
7 Christian... Director of Evaluations for CEO; and
8 he'll be working closely with CEO, the small group
9 at City Hall, on the evaluation of these
10 programs... involved in the future.
11 In addition, we've recruited Mark
12 Leventen, who serves as the Director of Poverty
13 Research, an ongoing role in the issues of poverty
14 measurement itself, and other larger issues with
15 respect to poverty in the city and nation.
16 And we're putting together a tremendous
17 team of 23 funded positions with CEO dollars, which
18 is terrific. We're anxious to have the best staff
19 and programs and perhaps have the dollars to
20 implement those.
21 It's been a great few months putting it
22 together and I'm anxious to get a lot of responses
23 to the RFP, and anxious to get it out.
24 This is another terrific idea to host
25 this in advance, to get a lot of the thought

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2 product and not just the protocol and concept
3 papers and RFP conferences; but additional extras
4 such as this event, to try to get people to shift
5 more ideas, to give people a real understanding of
6 the different programs we have out there.
7 So in terms of evaluations, I want to
8 mention a little bit about that. What it is, we
9 have a \$115 million annual budget for the CEO
10 center; \$25 million is private money, and that's
11 regarding additional cash transfers and...
12 We have \$125 million of city money.
13 All of that money is going into a pot for an
14 innovation fund, and what we're doing over the next
15 couple of years is, as we develop the programs and
16 roll them out, an agency such as SBS, a joint team
17 of CEO, agency, in this case SBS, and OMB will be
18 working with an evaluation team on each program to
19 see -- this is a terrific program, let's ramp it up
20 quickly, get it out in more neighborhoods, it's
21 really working, having impact.
22 On the other hand, if it isn't working,
23 why not, retool it, figure it out. The evaluation
24 process is very, very, very important to us and
25 that's the reason we are able to get this new

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2 money, and the Mayor is calling it an innovation
3 fund.

4 We're very anxious to have full
5 participation in the evaluation, not only for the
6 city budget, but in the time of declining... and
7 federal funds and certain programs, when we are
8 able to ramp up the federal dollars again, it will
9 be very interesting to be able to have a microcosm
10 pilot in the city.

11 We know what's wrong with a lot of...
12 dollars, in terms of ways you can't spend it.
13 What's great about the city money is, it's much
14 more flexible dollars, and SBS uses a lot more
15 imagination and experience in putting the program
16 together.

17 I wish you all good luck on these
18 programs.

19 Thank you.

20 MS. KAMATH: Before we turn the
21 presentation over to Melorra Sochet, who's the
22 Criminal Justice Director, we want to get a little
23 bit of context for SBS, to folks who are not as
24 familiar with our agency and perhaps our program.

25 Really, what we wanted to share is

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2 that, in 2003 Mayor Bloomberg merged SBS, the
3 Department of Small Business Services with the
4 Department of Finance.

5 The idea behind that merger was really
6 to connect work force development, economic
7 development, in a demand-driven approach.

8 What we mean by demand driven is simply
9 starting up the businesses, starting up the jobs,
10 and then developing training and preparation tracks
11 that respond to those jobs.

12 And so, by creating and preparing
13 people for actual jobs that exist, we can help
14 people get into those jobs, hopefully retain those
15 jobs, and advance in those jobs.

16 Since we started, since we launched our
17 centers in 2004, we placed nearly 28,000 people and
18 worked with about 3,000 businesses. And so, based
19 on this success, what we really view as the next
20 part of our system is focusing on retention and
21 advancement. Those are themes throughout all of
22 our new programming.

23 We operate six career centers in the
24 five boroughs; and we actively manage all of our
25 contracts. They are performance-based contracts,

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2 and that's a theme that you'll see in all of our
3 new programs.
4 The guiding principle for us when
5 building this new funding stream and new programs
6 are these four bullets on the bottom of the page.
7 The first is to really launch
8 innovative programming that has not been previously
9 implemented at scale in New York City. Doing
10 something new was important and critical to our
11 thinking.
12 The second piece is moving the working
13 poor out of poverty through intervention, tailored
14 at folks who are working. That means the types of
15 training, the times of training, the actual types
16 of services. For example, was retention focused on
17 individuals who are working but need to get to that
18 next step.
19 The third piece is leveraging the
20 existing career center system where possible.
21 Given that we have a track record of working with
22 3,000 businesses, we have a lot to bring to the
23 system. We also recognize that, as pointed out and
24 many people in this room know, that there are
25 limitations as to where.

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2 Where we can leverage the system,
3 great. Where we have to do something new and
4 different outside of the system, let's pilot it and
5 see what works and let bring it to scale
6 afterwards.
7 In all of our programs we're pushing to
8 work with businesses, understanding the labor
9 market and where the jobs are, and what preparation
10 or training people need to advance and help the
11 economy of New York grow.
12 I'll hand it over to Melorra.
13 MS. SOCHET: Thank you all for coming
14 here today to learn about the criminal justice
15 initiative. I'm Melorra Sochet, the Director of
16 the Criminal Justice Initiative, here at SBS.
17 This on my right is Ali Knight, who's
18 also working on the criminal justice initiative
19 here at SBS.
20 To my left is Associate Commissioner
21 Lorene Gilmore from the Department of Probation,
22 and you will hear more about the key role in the
23 initiative today.
24 I'll begin by putting this program in
25 context. I'm sure many of you here know that,

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2 historically in New York City, individuals with
3 criminal records work at entry level jobs with
4 minimal wages. Almost half are unemployed after
5 six months on the job, and only 10 to 20 percent
6 are employed after a year.

7 When they leave the work force, they
8 are rearrested and return to jail, or suffer long
9 periods of unemployment. They then get another
10 entry level job and the cycle starts again.

11 This program is designed to break that
12 cycle, to begin moving individuals with criminal
13 records to long-term jobs that lead to economic
14 self-sufficiency.

15 There are four goals for this program.
16 First, it's designed to enhance coordination; to
17 facilitate coordinated programming among the public
18 work force system, the New York City Department of
19 Probation; and for providers to increase the number
20 of probationers connected to jobs that lead to
21 economic self-sufficiency.

22 Second, it's designed to provide
23 education, training and support services that are
24 necessary for probationers to land the long-term
25 jobs that lead to economic self-sufficiency.

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2 Third, it's designed to place 500 to
3 600 unemployed and underemployed New York City
4 probationers in jobs with wages of at least \$9 an
5 hour.

6 Finally, it's designed to achieve job
7 retention rates of at least a year.

8 The program will serve New York City
9 probationers, both existing and those fully
10 sentenced. These probationers will be unemployed
11 and underemployed and 18 and over.

12 Currently, there are nearly 32,000
13 individuals in the probation system in New York
14 City, and approximately half of these individuals
15 are unemployed.

16 Probationers will come from two or
17 three boroughs for this program: Brooklyn, Queens
18 and/or the Bronx. We will choose the boroughs,
19 depending on the quality of the applications we
20 receive and the boroughs in which the applications
21 are based.

22 This program is focusing on the
23 probation population for several reasons. It's
24 focussing on probation, because doing so addresses
25 the service gap. Currently, there is no discrete

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2 employment program for probationers.

3 Second, it's designed to prevent crime.

4 Studies show that linking probationers to jobs can
5 prevent their engagement in more serious crime down
6 the road.

7 Third, it's designed to create systems
8 change within New York City, by enhancing the
9 capacity of the city's work force system and the
10 Department of Probation, to provide better
11 employment programming for individuals with
12 criminal records.

13 The contract under this program will be
14 managed by SBS. We will manage all aspects of the
15 contract, ensuring recruitment, training support
16 placement, retention and advancement take place in
17 designated time frames.

18 SBS staff will regularly visit program
19 sites and assess implementation. They will also
20 help the contractor to address issues that arise
21 during the course of the implementation.

22 Contractors, in turn, will provide
23 regular tracking and management reports to SBS.
24 They will also participate in monthly performance
25 review meetings.

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2 Finally, they will participate in
3 learning sessions, regular learning sessions with
4 one another, to discuss implementation challenges
5 and to share their successes.

6 The Department of Probation is a key
7 partner in this initiative. The New York City
8 Department of Probation will identify eligible
9 probationers to participate in the program.

10 Contractors that are chosen will need
11 to work closely and collaboratively with the
12 department, to assure referrals made are sufficient
13 in number and of appropriate quality.

14 Currently, senior management at the
15 department is working very closely with us at SBS
16 to design the program, and is aligning their data
17 management staff service flow and intake processes
18 to support this as a priority program.

19 The contractors chosen will regularly
20 update the Department of Probation on participant's
21 progress and coordinate case management efforts
22 with the department.

23 In terms of program approaches, there
24 will be programming targeted both at the employer
25 and at the probationer; meaning the business and

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2 job seeker needs of both employer and the job
3 seeker is central to this approach.

4 In terms of employer services, the
5 contractor will pursue demand-driven strategies,
6 working closely with businesses to source jobs,
7 and then to train and screen appropriate candidates
8 for each job order.

9 Contractors will provide human resource
10 to businesses, including hiring and training
11 services; and they'll emphasize the challenges that
12 arise for individuals in the criminal justice
13 system.

14 Contractors will pursue innovative
15 approaches to job development, such as the creation
16 of social enterprises like Graceland Bakery;
17 apprenticeship and consortium with employers.

18 The contractor will also link employers
19 to benefits, such as wage subsidies, tax credits
20 and bonding insurance.

21 Finally, the contractor will pursue job
22 placements that are tied to growth industries, and
23 will make at least 15 percent of placement through
24 SBS Work Force 1 career centers.

25 There are career centers in each of the

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2 boroughs being considered for this program:
3 Jamaica, Queens; Downtown Brooklyn; and the South
4 Bronx.

5 In terms of job seeker services, there
6 will be a focus on assessment, preparation and job
7 placement. The contractor will develop innovative
8 and unique strategies that lead to employment and
9 long-term retention.

10 They will develop and implement post
11 sentencing plan, that includes the formal skill
12 assessment to determine areas of interest and
13 aptitude. And also, an assessment of social
14 services and skill development needs.

15 The contractor will screen and train
16 appropriate candidates for jobs. They will also
17 provide direct access to skills development
18 opportunities offered either on-site or through
19 partnerships.

20 Skills with development opportunities
21 should include work readiness and preparation
22 skills, GED, ESL and basic education and literacy
23 training; and technical and occupational skills.

24 The contractor will also link
25 participants to social services that address their

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2 particular job placement barriers, such as drug and
3 alcohol abuse, family issues and mental health
4 issues.

5 They will also counsel participants on
6 how to address other barriers, such as lack of
7 identification and work documents, rap sheet
8 issues, background checking, lack of certificates
9 of relief, and civil legal issues, such as child
10 support.

11 Finally, the contractor will place
12 participants with requisite skills in jobs paying
13 \$9 an hour or more; and other participants without
14 requisite skills in jobs as close to \$9 as
15 possible.

16 Long term retention is a key goal of
17 this program. Historical retention rates for
18 individuals with criminal records have been dismal,
19 significantly lower than those for the general
20 population.

21 There are two concurrent retention
22 goals under this program: Placing participants in
23 high quality jobs with advancement opportunities,
24 and ensuring skills and education and social
25 service support necessary to succeed and advance in

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2 a job.

3 Potential strategies for job retention
4 include working with businesses, supervisors and
5 Work Force 1 career center staff to understand and
6 address retention issues; linking employees needing
7 a GED, technical skills or social service support
8 to appropriate programming; and providing case
9 management and coaching for at least one year post
10 placement, to address the issues that arise during
11 employment, to find new jobs for participants if
12 they are terminated; to coordinate educational
13 programming and social services; and to track their
14 progress.

15 Expected outcomes of this program
16 include job placement for 500 to 600 probationers
17 each year. A large percentage -- and that exact
18 number will be negotiated at the time of contract
19 -- will be placed in jobs paying \$9 hour or more.

20 There will also be job retention for a
21 large percentage of employees -- and again, the
22 number will be negotiated at the time of
23 contract -- and again, this retention rate will be
24 for a minimum of one year.

25 There will be job placement and

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2 retention services, educational and social
3 services, for all participants requiring them.
4 And there will also be an outcome tied
5 to recidivism reduction. We will compare
6 recidivism rates for individuals in this program to
7 those in the general probation population.
8 Recidivism will be tracked for
9 evaluation purposes, but it will not be part of the
10 performance-based structure.
11 Finally, the budget and contract.
12 Between two and three contractors will be selected
13 to deliver services under this program. SBS
14 anticipate a total of \$6 million will be available
15 for a two-year period; that's \$3 million each year.
16 There will be an option to renew for a third year.
17 Start-up costs will be available in the amount of
18 \$500,000.
19 SBS expects the contractors will
20 leverage new and existing resources to supplement
21 the services funded under this contract.
22 We would now like to try to answer all
23 of your questions and hear your comments.
24 MS. KAMATH: In terms of the protocol
25 for the Q and A, if you stand, speak loudly, say

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2 your name and organization, so the stenographer can
3 capture that, that would be great.
4 MS. VELEZ: Good morning. My name is
5 Awilda Velez and I'm from the Bronx. My firm is AV
6 Financial Consulting.
7 It's a big order to deliver under one
8 umbrella, to say it mildly. The good thing is that
9 SBA is working collectively with the work force
10 centers.
11 My question is, under the contracting
12 capability that SBS has, are you going to at least
13 leverage the existing contracts that you oversee?
14 In the industries that this population is going to
15 be more geared to, more successful in employment?
16 For example, construction?
17 If you monitor those contracts, are you
18 going to leverage with the tax credits that you
19 already give, so that when whoever is chosen for
20 the contract could, more or less, have more to work
21 with, so to speak?
22 MS. SOCHET: I think that one of the
23 final points that was made in the presentation
24 specified that we would like all contractors to
25 leverage existing resources.

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2 MS. VELEZ: I was talking about on your
3 end, as the Mayor's initiative? If you want to
4 reduce the rate of recidivism and you already have
5 existing programs that are being contracted as we
6 speak, to get the reentry employed; I think one of
7 the missing pieces -- and there may be several --
8 is that the industries that you are going to give
9 those tax credits are already getting city dollars.

10 Are you going to sort of make this as
11 part of your resource capability to help existing
12 contractors that give to this RFP be more
13 successful?

14 MS. SOCHET: I think that the
15 parameters of SBS's roll, in terms of supporting
16 the contractors, are outlined in the RFP. However,
17 I will say that SBS wants this program to succeed
18 and will be a partner with contractors to help it
19 to do so.

20 MS. VELEZ: Thank you.

21 MR. WATSON: My name is Bill Watson,
22 from Inner City Startups.

23 I notice the focus is on probationers.
24 I guess most of them come from Riker's for
25 misdemeanor charges.

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2 How about 15,000 or so coming from the
3 Upstate correctional facilities? I know it is a
4 different jurisdiction, but these men and women
5 reside in New York City. Can they participate in
6 this program also?

7 MS. SOCHET: This program is focusing
8 on probationers, New York City probationers and --
9 period.

10 THE SPEAKER: I'm Joe... director of
11 project... We have an initiative with the one of
12 the drug treatment courts. They actually -- the
13 felons have taken a plea, and once the completed
14 case is dismissed. They're not technically on
15 probation, but they would fit the age category and
16 are obviously jail bound.

17 Is that a population that would be
18 eligible for this? There is some really
19 interesting work that's been done around these
20 people, marijuana smokers particularly. They've
21 been in drug court and sentenced to residential
22 programs and failed miserably. They don't have a
23 drug problem; they have a lifestyle problem...
24 services and jobs?

25 MS. SOCHET: When you refer to that, a

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2 lot of those cases that are in the drug courts,
3 there is a probation officer in some of the
4 boroughs; and so there is that element of
5 supervision. If they are in that element of
6 supervision, then they would be eligible, because
7 they would be in that pool of people.

8 THE SPEAKER: Also, is there any
9 discussion with the labor unions about retention
10 and higher paying jobs, opportunities particularly
11 with some of the construction unions for training
12 perhaps, graduated increases as an incentive for
13 people? Any discussions with unions about this?

14 MS. SOCHET: On our part?

15 THE SPEAKER: Yes.

16 MS. SOCHET: We are talking to -- will
17 be talking to possible employers, but we are also
18 hoping the contractors themselves will be doing
19 that work.

20 Coming back to the gentleman's question
21 about other populations, I think we pointed out
22 that this is pilot program. We are hoping it's
23 very effective. When it is very effective, we then
24 can consider expanding it to other populations.
25 But we wanted to speak about this population first.

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2 THE SPEAKER: I'm Glen... from the Legal
3 Action Center.

4 You talk about long term retention and
5 sustainable wages and so on. You have to really
6 think about the correlation between education and a
7 person's ability to move through the labor market.

8 Are you encouraging folks to take
9 advantage of programs that exist today, programs
10 that help people with criminal records get into
11 college?

12 Are you looking for organizations that
13 have all of the services in-house, or that will
14 look to subcontractors, to other folks?

15 MS. SOCHET: In terms of first part of
16 your question; it's similar to both. In terms of
17 -- you're absolutely right. We are encouraging
18 contractors to link individuals needing educational
19 supports to appropriate educational supports; and
20 those supports can either be in-house or through
21 partnerships.

22 An din terms of whether subcontracting
23 -- the parameters of subcontracting, whether it's
24 allowed, that's all detailed in the RFP.

25 MR. FARRELL: I'm Joseph Farrell from

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2 Educational Data Systems Incorporated.

3 I'm more interested in hearing about
4 the referral partner, what kind of process you may
5 have in place to refer people to this program; what
6 kind of incentives you may be placing upon the
7 referrals; is this a stipulation of probation to
8 attend the program, or is it mentioned to them?

9 MS. SOCHET: All referrals will come
10 through the Department of Probation. In the RFP it
11 specifies the different tracks they're coming from.

12 In terms of whether it is incentives,
13 all probationers under the law are required to
14 either be working or looking for work. While it
15 will not be court mandated, there is that
16 requirement, the probation requirement.

17 THE SPEAKER: There will be the support
18 and the follow-up. That's the reason for the
19 partnership. With probation, you have probation
20 officers to follow-up; why things aren't working,
21 give responses, so that's a big part of it.

22 MR. FARRELL: Will it be up to the
23 individual probation officers to refer people or
24 will it be a centralized function? Does that
25 already exist, to refer people to programs such as

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2 this?

3 MS. GILMORE: The plan is to make it as
4 centralized and simplified for this program, so
5 that it is successful; and we will constantly be
6 monitoring it to make sure we are doing it the most
7 effective way.

8 MR. FARRELL: Will your department be
9 receiving funds to participate in this in order to
10 make sure it is successful, or is this -- will it
11 be part of what you're already doing?

12 MS. SOCHET: We receive money from the
13 State to provide additional staffing, and there
14 will be resources leveraged from Probation, as
15 well.

16 THE SPEAKER: Is a portion -- or has
17 there been consideration for this RFP in itself,
18 for MWBEs to be a percentage of that, that has to
19 go? Or is that not part of this RFP?

20 MS. AMEER: I'm the agency chief
21 contracting officer.

22 There are specifications within the law for MWBE
23 programs, and if you are a for-profit company, you
24 would be included within our numbers.

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2 But there are laws that do not include
3 not-for-profits. So we don't have any
4 specifications and we don't look at you more
5 favorably if you are a... vendor, but it does help
6 with our agency contracting goals if you are.

7 We do encourage everyone, MWEB or
8 subcontractor, or just a vendor to apply for all
9 specifications.

10 THE SPEAKER: Thank you.

11 THE SPEAKER: Would it be possible to
12 use funds to stipend? For instance, to pay a
13 participant who actually worked for a company for
14 some set period of time, a month or something, to
15 see them without having to invest in them? Is it
16 possible to do that?

17 MS. SOCHET: The goal of this program
18 is for permanent long term employment. If
19 contractors can demonstrate different strategies
20 that wind up achieving that outcome, we will be
21 happy to consider that.

22 MS. SIMON: I'm Mia Simon from CUNY.
23 Two follow-up questions on the presentation.

24 The 15 percent placement that needs to
25 be made through career centers, has there been

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2 thought about using business services, the services
3 provided, or through referral directly from the
4 career center?

5 My second question is also about the
6 budget. Are there any discussions about the
7 structure of the budget?

8 MS. SOCHET: In terms of the second
9 part of your question, all of the details regarding
10 the budget and performance-based payment system are
11 detailed in the RFP.

12 In regards to working with the work
13 force centers, the answer is that both can come
14 through placement referrals or through business
15 services.

16 THE SPEAKER: My name is Jose
17 LaPuente... New York City.

18 My question is about entrepreneurship.
19 Does that count toward placement goals?

20 Actually, I'm at the reentry program at
21 John Jay, I'm a student there. We're researching
22 how Maryland's program uses entrepreneurship for
23 reentry candidates in order to get employment.

24 MS. SOCHET: If by entrepreneurship you
25 mean you are enrolling someone in your program to

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2 give skills necessary to attain a job, I would
3 repeat that the goal is to place 500 to 600
4 individuals in long-term permanent jobs.

5 If you have a strategy that leads to
6 that goal of entrepreneurship or others that would
7 be effective, we'd be happy to hear about them. We
8 want the contractors to be as innovative as
9 possible.

10 THE SPEAKER: My name is Gordon...
11 from...

12 My question is about the selection
13 process of the probationers; some are vague. Is
14 there an age limit, an educational level? I notice
15 GEDs are on there. I see those with an 8th or 6th
16 grade level in my position now.

17 Are you screening out to see what level
18 of education they should be at?

19 MS. SOCHET: The screening tool is
20 detailed in the RFP. However, I do want to say
21 that we want to achieve our goals and we would like
22 to avoid screening. It will be a balancing act
23 between achieving those who are ready to go and
24 work -- and maybe even get a job without us -- and
25 servicing those who still may need us for their

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2 placement goals.

3 THE SPEAKER: You refer to the RFP. It
4 sounds like it's almost hot off the press.

5 Any dates for us yet?

6 MS. SOCHET: It has to go through a
7 procurement process now.

8 MS. KAMATH: It goes through a fairly rigorous
9 process, which will take a few more months and it will be
10 approved by the Mayor's Office of Contract Services.

11 THE SPEAKER: It could be out in six to
12 eight weeks.

13 MR. JIMENEZ: I'm Luis Jimenez, from the
14 Peter Young Housing Industry and Treatment Center.

15 I wanted to ask a question if any
16 particular industries are being highlighted or
17 focussed on in the RFP?

18 MS. SOCHET: We're focussing on growth
19 industries, but we're interested in hearing from

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2 providers as to those industries they think will be
3 most receptive to hiring individuals with criminal
4 records.

5 THE SPEAKER: Will SBS share their
6 resources with the 3,000 businesses they have the
7 contractor or subcontractor of this RFP with, so
8 they can have access to do more marketing and
9 introduce the benefits of hiring the population
10 that you want to place?

11 MS. SOCHET: We would like the
12 contractors to be, as one of their key
13 responsibilities, identify employers for this
14 program. That said, I think -- similar to the
15 question you asked before -- we want this program
16 to succeed.

17 We will be a problem solver for you,
18 using whatever resources we have available.

19 MS. NIXON: I'm Vivian Nixon from the
20 College for Community Fellowships.

21 I have a question about the parameters
22 by which you are going to measure individual
23 success in the program. You say you're looking for
24 a \$9 hour job, retained for a period of one year.

25 I'm asking if -- suppose a college

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2 program is involved and a client has maintained a
3 job, but not at \$9; but they're one year, six
4 months away from getting an associate's degree.
5 They have a job at \$7 or \$8, but their chances for
6 success within six months of getting an associate
7 degree are increased.

8 Would that be considered, in terms of
9 how you measure success?

10 MS. SOCHET: The exact parameters, the
11 performance based payment structure, are detailed
12 in the RFP and will be negotiated at contract.

13 That said, as I mentioned earlier, the
14 goal of this program is to move people to \$9 an
15 hour jobs. For some people that will be easy; for
16 some, hard. We will negotiate with you, at the
17 time of contract, the percentage of individuals
18 that will need to be in \$9 jobs immediately, and
19 those that can move there over time.

20 MS. KAMATH: We've got six more
21 minutes. Any last questions before we gear up the
22 next one?

23 THE SPEAKER: In terms of eligible
24 probation, who makes the final determination? If
25 probation sends someone over and they're eligible,

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2 but the grande decides this person is not eligible,
3 who makes the final determination?

4 MS. SOCHET: The screening tools are
5 detailed in the RFP. I should mention to you all
6 that while the concept paper is out, part of the
7 purpose of this session is to get your input
8 in how to make the program as effective
9 as possible.

10 If you have ideas that you have not
11 already sent to us online, in response to the
12 concept paper, you should feel free to do so now
13 or, if you prefer, you can send them to us again,
14 online.

15 THE SPEAKER: Are we mandated to serve
16 individuals sent to us from probation?

17 MS. GILMORE: There will be a referral
18 process. We will be working with the screening
19 tool; and, again, it's an ongoing process to work
20 collaboratively and be successful. So, I hope that
21 answers it.

22 If you are saying it is someone that
23 the screening tool didn't screen out or something
24 like that, we would always discuss that.

25 MS. GRANT: Dale Grant, from Dale Grant

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2 Associates.

3 We operate the Queens Work Force 1
4 career center, and we note with interest the
5 collaboration requirement with the Work Force 1
6 center and the requirement that 15 percent of
7 placements come from the center.

8 In order to get full cooperation from
9 the center, the question is, since it's two
10 different pots of money, would that 15 percent be
11 counted both as placements for this and placements
12 for the Work Force 1 career center?

13 MS. SOCHET: That's a question we have
14 been recently examining. Thank you. And we will
15 negotiate that with the contractors chosen and the
16 work force centers during the contract negotiation
17 process.

18 THE SPEAKER: The population that we're
19 going to serve, they are attached to other
20 different services, whether they want to or not;
21 one of which would be child support enforcement, in
22 particular.

23 So when somebody is in our program, we
24 place them, before we know it, there will be
25 attachment to wages, so that meets the needs for

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2 child support enforcement, which isn't necessarily
3 a problem.
4 But, have there been discussions at
5 your level about how that will affect the person's
6 success? Are we obligated to interact with child
7 support enforcement to make sure that they follow
8 through with their obligations?
9 Will somebody contact us saying, "Hey,
10 you are working with this person and we want them
11 to go to this court, they're not paying," and other
12 sorts of things?
13 MS. SOCHET: We will ask the contractor
14 to address all of the barriers individuals face in
15 sustaining employment. Those barriers can be
16 educational as raised before, but they can also be
17 social service barriers; they can deal with civil
18 legal issues, such as child support.
19 We're asking the contractor to address
20 all of the barriers in whatever fashion is
21 effective to sustain employment for the individual.
22 THE SPEAKER: Will it be also for men
23 and women?
24 MS. SOCHET: Yes.
25 THE SPEAKER: The provider has to

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2 provide both services? Some only provide men.
3 Others provide only women. Would the contractor
4 have to provide both genders?
5 MS. SOCHET: Contractors should put
6 forth the strongest application they can; but the
7 probation pool will include both men and women.
8 There are not nearly as many women as men, but they
9 will include them.
10 THE SPEAKER: Rachel... from Businesses
11 of Tomorrow.
12 If an individual has training needs,
13 does the contract allow for the program or the
14 contractor to pay for the training that the
15 probationer needs in order to get them employable?
16 MS. SOCHET: We imagine many of the
17 probationers will have training needs, literacy
18 needs. We are asking the contractors to use funds
19 available under this contract, as well as to
20 leverage additional resources that the contract has
21 to address all of those challenges.
22 Thank you very much.
23 Also, we have extra copies of the
24 concept paper up here.
25 (Recess taken.)