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Subject: Economic Development
To: pgrenier492@gmail.com <pgrenier492@gmail.com>

Good afternoon Mayor Grenier,

Thank you for taking the time to speak me today. I appreciate the demands of your position. Your personal approach to engaging new residents speaks to the unique culture of this city and your leadership style.

I have attached a copy of my resume as you requested. It was written with the intention of highlighting past managerial experience and only mentions my experience working with communities around workforce development strategies in very broad strokes. Therefore I would like to take this opportunity to mention a few things about my previous experience.

I am currently the Northeast Regional Director for Prison Fellowship. I oversee all in prison programming and the staff that provide it in twelve states. Prison Fellowship provides a unique training platform for incarcerated individuals that promotes pro-social behaviors and prepares participants for successful reentry. Here is a link that gives an overview of what that entails, [Prison Academy Helps ND Inmates Prepare for Life Outside](#). The numbers speak for themselves. It works.

My interest in employment at Prison Fellowship had as much to do with my past experience in workforce development as it did with my faith background. Prior to my current role, I spent almost 17 years at a large non-profit that served both the Framingham and Worcester Massachusetts regions. In that time I held a number of roles, all of which promoted self-sufficiency by training and supporting priority populations with the tools necessary to gain meaningful, living wage employment that also provided the ability for career growth through the attainment of stackable credentials. I designed, implemented and managed multiple programs to address economic development in the local community, everything from micro loans for small business as part of a city revitalization program, a Green Jobs Academy, a day labor program that provided case management and individualized employment training, programs for women in a dual diagnosis treatment facility, heads of household of families in shelter, individuals leaving long term mental health hospitalizations, people with disabilities, summer jobs for youth and individualized employment training and supports adults receiving TAFDC.

I would like to highlight one initiative I developed; a training platform to address transportation access issues for homeless families. Historically the state of Massachusetts has relocated homeless families from the city of Boston, West, to multiple suburban towns. One thing all of the towns provided was public transportation access. However, the planners of this system were short sighted and the transportation did not meet the needs of these new residents for a myriad of reasons. To address this, I worked closely with the Metro West Regional Transit Authority, the Framingham Public Schools, multiple daycare providers, the Massachusetts Department of Transitional Assistance as well as multiple other entities. What I was able to design and launch was a program that used MWRTA buses to drive parents and children to their respective daycares, and then to their places of employment and then repeat in reverse at the end of the day. The individuals driving the buses were also heads of household of homeless families that utilized a specifically designed CDL training program we provided in conjunction with the MWRTA. We hand picked all of the participants, whether drivers or passengers, and provided intensive employment supports. Multiple participants went from homeless shelters, to market rate apartments to our new homebuyers program within a year. We were also able to help the local school system by providing busing to and from some athletic events for athletes and coaches, the local YMCA with transporting elderly individuals to and from water exercise classes, the MWRTA with boosting their ridership numbers to help increase federal funding in the next fiscal year and the DTA with increasing the number of employed clients, all of whom left the cash benefit programs in time. We did all of this on a shoestring

budget, saving the state many thousands of dollars, by leveraging existing relationships and resources with community partners.

I reached out to you today because my wife Sandra, my son John and I all love this community and I would like to become an active participant in its future success in anyway I can. I would welcome your insight into what that might look like. I have no specific service opportunity in mind at this time and I am open to any suggestions you might have.

Thank you again for your time,
Mark Knowlton