

**Workforce Innovation Board of Ramsey County**  
Constructions-Green Jobs Committee Meeting Minutes  
Tuesday, March 11, 2025  
3:00 – 4:00pm  
Zoom Video Conference

**Present:**

Liz Boyer  
Becky Brink Ray  
Don Mullin  
Mary Rick

**Absent:**

Joseph Adamji  
Elisa Rasmussen-EA

**Staff/Guests:**

Mariann Macalus, Workforce Solutions  
Brad Mahr, Workforce Solutions  
Becky Milbrandt, Workforce Solutions  
Catrice O’Neal, Workforce Solutions  
John O’Phelan, Workforce Solutions  
Laani Xiong, Local Initiatives Support Corporation

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**Call to Order & Land Acknowledgement**

Mullin called the meeting to order at 3:04pm. Mullin read the land acknowledgement aloud.

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**Introductions**

Introductions were made to welcome Catrice O’Neal, the new Workforce Solutions Director and Executive Director of the Workforce Innovation Board (WIB).

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**Approve January Minutes**

**Motion (Brink Ray/Mullin) to approve the January 14, 2025, minutes as presented. Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.**

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**Committee Work Plan Updates**

Boyer shared:

*Build Your Own Future Campaign:*

Department of Energy (DOE) Good Jobs in Clean Energy Prize – Update and Next Steps: The goal is to develop a clean energy career exploration tool. This is in partnership with the City of St. Paul, Ramsey County, CEEM, Saint Paul College and Goodwill Easter Seals. The application and materials disappeared from the DOE website before the deadline; therefore, Phase 1 funding opportunity vanished. Momentum remains and materials are reusable so partners will regroup and explore alternative grants and funding sources to advance clean energy workforce initiatives.

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**Staff Updates**

The following updates were provided:

*Apprenticeship Program Group:* O’Phelan shared the Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry is interested in expanding their apprenticeship program. This is an opportunity to create a new apprenticeship within Ramsey County as an employer, exploring regional collaboration for public sector apprenticeships. Basically, still in the environmental scan research phase, partnering with the City of Minneapolis to share best practices and identifying opportunities for local government apprenticeships  
*GES Success Story:* Brink Ray shared a recent graduate of the 12-week construction program who is now employed as a tile installer at Ving Tile & Tone, celebrating his one-year anniversary with two raises. He also serves on the Goodwill International’s Youth Advisory Council, helping other young people succeed.

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**Construction – Green Jobs Related Events**

O’Phelan shared the following events:

### *Event Recaps*

- **Construct Tomorrow:** This event was held February 12 at the Minnesota Fair Grounds with over 800 students who attended. Students are able to connect and learn from 15 trade unions that provide hands-on activities as well as information on how to enter the construction and building trades industries. ARPA funding is now gone; therefore, working on ways to continue this East Metro side event.
- **AGC Construction Summit:** This event was held February 19-20 at the Saint Paul RiverCenter as a gathering of construction industry professionals for inspiration, education and networking. The keynote speaker emphasized the need for effective leadership in the rapidly transforming construction industry. In the future, this event will be shared with the committee in advance as it is a great opportunity to connect with peers, discuss industry trends and explore potential collaborations for anyone interested in attending.
- **NAWIC Women in Construction Week:** This event was held March 2-8 celebrating the contributions of women in the construction industry, organized by the National Association of Women in Construction (NAWIC). This year's theme, Together We Rise, recognized the strength and knowledge of women in shaping the future of the industry. It was recommended that committee members attend future construction week events.
- **Expand the Toolbox – Addressing Generations:** This event was held March 4, focused on generational differences in the construction industry and leveraging each generation's strengths for the future workforce. Takeaways of the event was the changing workforce trends shifting population patterns, increasing diversity and workforce aging in Minnesota along with small group discussions encouraged reflection on generational insights using interactive tools like Word Cloud/Kahoot. RealTime Talent provided construction workforce data, emphasizing generational shifts. The report from RealTime Talent will be shared in the follow up email.
- **Green Expo and Career Fair:** This event will be held March 19 at the Wet Minnehaha Recreation Center. The goal is to connect residents with green employers and organizations focused on sustainability, conservation, and environmental careers; to explore job opportunities, resources and training in the green sector and to engage with hands-on activities and learn about environmental initiatives in Ramsey County. The county is opening the Environmental Service Center next month.
- **4<sup>th</sup> Annual CERT Connect Open House:** This event will be held April 10 at the Ramsey County Public Works Building on Arden Hills. It is a unique opportunity for small businesses to connect with Ramsey County staff and partners directly involved in construction and contracting; to gain insight into certification, procurement and upcoming projects within the county and to learn about opportunities with The Heights and Rice Creek Common developments.
- **MN Construction Crew 11<sup>th</sup> Annual Hiring Expo:** This event is April 29 at LIUNA Local 563 Office. It is a construction industry hiring event connecting job seekers with contractors and union representatives to learn about career paths, training opportunities and union benefits. Over 30 contractors and unions will be in attendance, offering insights into hiring needs and career growth.

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### **Other Committee Updates**

Milbrandt shared the following:

- **Level Up Young Adult Career Resource Fair:** April 24 at YMCA–St. Paul Eastside 9am-1:30pm.
- **Youth Job and Resource Fair:** May 3 at Maplewood Mall 10am to noon.
- **Tech Month:** Planning underway to host 1-2 events in May and share other local events.
- **CareerForce Relocation:** The CareerForce Center is now open at Metro Square. The first day of services was successful with about 30 visitors. Pictures were shared and its features were highlighted. Signage is up at the previous location to direct people to this new location. The

outreach campaign will start March 13. A grand opening for the WIB, elected officials and the community will be once the County's expanded Service Center is open sometime this summer.

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**Adjourn**

Upon completion of the agenda, the meeting was adjourned at 3:54pm.

Next Meeting: Tuesday, May 13, 2025, 3-4pm via Zoom