

General Membership Meeting
Thursday, June 5, 2025, 2:30– 4pm
Plato Conference Center
90 W. Plato Blvd, Saint Paul, MN 55108

WIB Members Present

Tom Aasheim
Ismail Ali
Sara Garbe
Ethel Garcia
Hanna Getachew-Kreusser
Katie Kapaun
Tony Lusiba
Yolanda McIntosh
Kelly Miller
Koami Pedado
Donna Rapacz
Elisa Rasmussen
Mary Rick
Sheri Riemers
Trish Stevens
Rachel Stiglitz

Members Absent

Jonathan Banks-EA
Tami Cybulski-EA
Becky Degendorfer-EA
Jennifer Germain-EA
Fidelity Goodlaxson
Lisa Guetzkow-EA
HwaJeong Kim-EA
Chad Kulas-EA
Bryan Kuzel-EA
Pamela Maldonado
James McClean
Don Mullin-EA
John Perlich-EA
Aalayha Traub
Tanya Velishek-EA
Tracy Wilson

Staff/Guests Present

Michelle Belitz, Ramsey County
Ricardo Bennett Guzman, CLUES
Corey Hazelton, Ramsey County
Pia Her, Hmong American Partnership
Aaronica Jackson, Ramsey County
Caroline Karanja, Hack-the-Gap
Mariann Macalus, Workforce Solutions
Becky Milbrandt, Workforce Solutions
Catrice O’Neil, Workforce Solutions
Tim O’Neill, MN DEED
Anika Robbins, Anika Foundation
Mary Russell, Committee Member

Call to Order and Announcements

Chair Rasmussen called the meeting to order at 2:36 pm and read the following announcements:

- Welcome to the Workforce Innovation Board of Ramsey County meeting. We especially welcome our partners and guests joining us today.
- On behalf of the WIB and staff, I want to extend a sincere thank you and best wishes to Tony Lusiba, Pamela Maldonado and Rachel Stiglitz who are not seeking reappointment for another term on the WIB.
 - Tony:
 - Was first appointed to the WIB in 2020.
 - Served as chair of the Tech Committee and a member of the Executive Committee.
 - Tony has been an outstanding leader on the WIB and advocate for workforce development, especially related to the tech industry. He has always been agreeable when asked to moderate panel discussions and represent the WIB at a variety of events.
 - Pamela:
 - Served on the WIB twice: 2010-2012 and 2022-2025.
 - Served on the Partnership & Outreach Committee.
 - Although Pamela isn’t seeking reappointment, we are happy that another leader from CLUES has applied, ensuring we have a solid connection to the organization and the Latino community.
 - Rachel:
 - Just joined the WIB earlier this year as the representative from the Metro East Adult Basic Education Consortium. This Education seat alternates between the local ABE groups each term.
 - We hope Rachel will continue serving on the Construction-Green Jobs Committee and return as a WIB member in 2 years.

They have been tremendous leaders on the board and have left a lasting impact on our community. Let’s give them a round of applause!

- A reminder that all WIB and committee meetings are open to the public. Agendas and minutes for all meetings are posted on the WIB’s webpage. Committee meetings are conducted virtually and instructions on how to join are also posted on the webpage.

- Article 8 of the WIB’s Bylaws state that “...members shall not cast a vote on any matter regarding the provision of services by the member or by an entity that the member represents or on any matter that would provide direct or indirect financial benefit to such member or the immediate family of such member”. If you believe you have a conflict on any items on today’s agenda, please abstain from discussion and voting.
- I hope you can all make it to the next WIB meeting on Thursday, August 7, 2:30-4pm at the Plato Conference Center.

Land Acknowledgement

Lusiba read the land acknowledgement aloud.

Approve Consent Agenda

June Meeting Agenda

April Meeting Minutes

WIB Financial Report

Motion (Aasheim/Miller) to approve the consent agenda as presented. Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

Election of WIB Chair-Elect

Before opening up nominations for the WIB Chair-Elect, Rasmussen reviewed the roles and responsibilities of the Chair-Elect. Commissioner Miller then nominated Jonathan Banks. After asking for other nominations three times and hearing none, Rasmussen closed nominations. Banks was not present but indicated beforehand that he would accept if nominated.

Motion (Miller/Aasheim) to cast a unanimous ballot of Jonathan Banks for WIB Chair-Elect for the 2025-2027 term. Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

WIB Committee Spotlight: Tech Month Recap

Lusiba provided a recap of the events held in May for Tech month. The events led, sponsored or promoted by the Tech Committee included Minnebar19, Tech Connect Conference, Tech on Tap, Strengthen the Strong/Chamber Connect, Future of Our Communities: Accelerating Tech Equity & Inclusion for All Minnesotans in the Digital Economy and Open-Source North (a conference at the University of St. Thomas). Karanja shared that there were over 1,400 attendees at the Minnebar19 annual technology conference. In anticipation of increasing the number of participants moving forward, if anyone has ideas or is interested in submitting a session next year, please let her know. Additionally, there were two tours hosted by the Tech Committee; one of US Bank that included a panel discussion and one at BetterYou in Osborn 370 that included an entrepreneurship panel and hands-on AI experience. Both tours were intended for early-career talent.

Juneteenth Family Event

O’Neal introduced Anika Robbins, President and CEO of Anika Foundation. Robbins shared the relationship with Ramsey County started in 2019 with Census 2020 Engagement which had a goal of counting “everyone once, only once, and in the right place”. The relationship allowed the Foundation to serve the community by meeting them where they are with real time response to needs. The Foundation’s mission is to promote health and wellness, civic engagement and economic empowerment. It serves as a catalyst for change, dedicated to improving the quality of life in communities. The Juneteenth Family Celebration initially was a CARES Act promotion in alignment with Ramsey County being the first Minnesota county to make Juneteenth a public holiday. This year’s event is on Saturday, June 21, from noon-6pm on the Minnesota State Capitol grounds. It is a celebration of culture, journey and contributions of People of African Descent in Minnesota. Robbins provided several ways to support the Foundation’s efforts.

Ramsey County Equity Priorities and Discussion

O’Neal introduced Aaronica Jackson, Ramsey County’s Racial Health and Equity Administrator for the Economic Growth and Community Investment and Safety & Justice Service Teams. Jackson explained her role is

to assist in providing institutional guidance and alignment of policies and practices meant to advance racial equity in Ramsey County. The focus is on expanding and deepening racial equity leadership across the county. Partnering with Workforce Solutions and the WIB is an opportunity to launch a county-wide effort to increase talent attraction which reflects the county demographics. WIB members and guests formed small groups to reflect and discuss how the WIB could assist in informing the county's equity priorities.

Director Updates

O'Neal shared that the county continues to monitor all federal grants and cuts to track and analyze any potential impacts to the county budget if there are shifts to these funds. In addition, the following was shared:

- The Department of Labor has ordered a "phased pause in operations" for Job Corps Centers across the country. A resource fair was held on June 4 to support the youth that will be displaced due to the federal order.
- The legislature approved the extension of the Tech Squads direct appropriation through June 2027.
- Youthprise's driver's license bill did not make it through the state legislature this session. Ramsey County's Driver's License Academy is funded by ARPA through September 2026. Current participants will continue to receive support with obtaining their driver's license until the program funds have been fully expended with no new applications being accepted.
- The Minnesota Youth Program allocation to Ramsey County for State Fiscal Year 2026 is \$457,864, which is a decrease from the previous fiscal year.
- The Dislocated Worker bill did not have the support to move forward this year.
- This year's WIOA Youth program allocation decreased by 24% from last year, which was the largest percentage decrease of all the areas across the state.

Milbrandt shared that the Midway Area Job Fair is scheduled for June 18 at Allianz Field, 10am-2pm.

Other

No further items discussed.

Adjourn

Upon conclusion of the agenda, the meeting was adjourned at 4:04pm.

Next meeting: Thursday, August 7, 2025 2:30-4pm – Plato Conference Center, 90 W. Plato Blvd., Saint Paul