Workforce Innovation Board of Ramsey County
Technology Committee Meeting Minutes
Thursday, May 8, 2025, 1:00pm–2:00pm
Via Zoom Video Conference

Present:	**Absent**:	**Staff/Guests**:
Annie Byrne	Ismail Ali-EA	Mariann Macalus, Workforce Solutions
Len Cacioppo	Ama Asantewaa	Rebecca Milbrandt, Workforce Solutions
Sam Drong	Tony Lusiba-EA	Catrice O'Neal, Workforce Solutions
Caroline Karanja		Matt Saari, Workforce Solutions
Abdi Mohamed		Greg Weaver, IT CareerLab
Koami Pedado		
Sabina Saksena		
Jaime Wascalus		

Call to Order & Land Acknowledgement
Wascalus called the meeting to order at 1:05pm and read the Land Acknowledgement aloud.

Approve March Minutes
Motion (Wascalus/Drong) to approve the March 13, 2025, Tech Committee meeting minutes as presented. Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

Committee Work Plan/Project Updates
Full Stack Saint Paul: Wascalus provided an updated on Full Stack, reminding everyone of what Full Stack's 2025 goals focus on and wanting to solicit some information and feedback from the group. The ten-year target for Full Stack is a diverse, future-ready workforce. Many steps were taken previously to categorize strong, good employer partners. There was discussion about developing great, strong employer relationships. Since key pieces that are missing include looking past criminal offenses; competency/potential based vs. skills based; smaller vs. larger businesses defining early careers; pathways that lead to jobs whether that be projects, internships or other entry points; buy-in from core people/business leads not just human resources and categorize different potential employers by what they are seeking.
Tech Month 2025:
- Tech Committee led events:
  - US Bank Tech Tour & Panel Discussion: May 15, 9-11am at the location in Hopkins. US Bank has a robust internship program for early career seekers (0-2 years of experience).
  - BetterYou Tour and Entrepreneurship Panel: May 29, 9-11am at Osborn370. Local founders and tech leaders will share their journeys, challenges and insights into launching tech ventures.
  - There was discussion about a third tour focused on artificial intelligence (AI) where folks use different AI tools with an industry expert. Karanja and Saksena will discuss merging this with the BetterYou event.
- A landing page on the county's website will list all the events happening in the community during Tech Month. Milbrandt shared a few of those events. Links for others will be sent in the follow-up.
- Minnebar19: May 3, 8am-6:30pm at Best Buy Corporate. This event is sponsored by Full Stack and is the largest and longest running tech (un)conference in the Western Hemisphere.
- Tech Connect: May 7, 8am-5pm at the Saint Paul RiverCentre. This is an opportunity to join fellow tech professionals from the MnTech community for a day of learning, networking, and inspiration. This event is sponsored by Full Stack.
- For the Public Conference: May 14-15 at Union Depot in Saint Paul. This is a two-day convening featuring knowledge sharing and opportunities for networking and connections.
- Tech on Tap: May 21, 4-6pm at Urban Growler Brewing Company. This is a casual networking event for tech professionals. Tech on Tap is a free quarterly event sponsored by Full Stack Saint

Paul, for anyone in the tech industry looking to broaden their network, build their community and find opportunities to get engage in Minnesota's tech ecosystem.

- Strengthen the Strong/Chamber Connect: May 21, 4-6pm in Saint Paul, sponsored by Full Stack.
- Future of Our Communities: Accelerating Tech Equity & Inclusion for All Minnesotans in the Digital Economy: May 22, 7:45-9:15am at Osborn370. This is an immersive conversation with community, industry, and civic leaders about building a digital-forward workforce.
- Open Source North: May 29, 8am-6pm at the University of St. Thomas. This is a regional tech conference focused on enterprise application developers and industry experts.

Tech Trainer Project: Byrne provided an update of this effort. The work group has finalized the goals, 1) identify best practices, student support and employer engagement, and 2) identify methods to align employers and align workforce partners which will lead to the long-term goal of establishing funding requirements that incorporate best practices which have been vetted by training providers and employers. Erin Olson from RealTime Talent met with the work group and presented research looking at on-line job postings, finding that the supply far surpasses the demand. Interviews with training providers will be completed by the end of June. Topics discussed include program design, available supports, how they engage employers, the kinds of practical on-the-job trainings and internships that are available, and program outcomes. The most informative question being asked during the interviews is, "If you could design the perfect information technology program, what would it look like and why?".

MSP Tech Hire 2025

Byrne shared that Minneapolis is longer operating MSP Tech Hire. To raise greater awareness, the training program will be rebranded to Full Stack Learn and Earn. The RFP is being reviewed with plans to release at the end of the month. Byrne will reach out to folks on this committee to review the proposals.

Staff Updates

Tech Squads: O'Neal and Saari provided an update, noting that the legislature approved an extension of the direct appropriation through June 2028. Saari has returned fully to Workforce Solutions, dedicating 100% of his time to the delivery of Tech Squads. He will focus on tech training and employment opportunities for interested job seekers. The participants have been very successful in either finding jobs or furthering their training. Saari will continue to stay in touch with participants as long as possible given the appropriations.

Upcoming Events: Milbrandt shared information about the following events:

- Drive for 5: Unlocking High-Growth Career Pathways Webinar: May 15, 9:30-10:30am, addressing each of the Drive for 5 sectors' top five gateway careers which meet the wage and demand requirements of Drive for 5. This event is sponsored by the metro area workforce boards. A link will be added to the follow-up email.
- Midway Area Job Fair: June 18, 10am-2pm at Allianz Field. This is the fifth annual job fair in the Midway and county's largest job fair of the year. New this year is Tech Skills and Resource Corner. A link with more details will be added to the follow-up email.

Committee Member Updates and Other

No further items discussed.

Adjourn

Upon completion of the agenda, meeting was adjourned at 1:56pm.

Next Meeting: Thursday, September 11, 2025, 1-2pm