

**Workforce Innovation Board of Ramsey County  
October 4, 2018  
Meeting Minutes**

**WIB Members Present**

Toni Carter  
Elena Gaarder  
Karen Gerdin  
Jennifer Germain  
Butch Howard  
Chad Kulas  
Mike Lang  
Gaye Adams Massey  
Karin McCabe  
Paul Nikstad  
Sheila Olson  
Kate Probert  
Shannon Watson  
Ramona Wilson  
Tracy Wilson

**Members Absent**

Michael Fondungallah  
Larry Gilbertson  
Kristin Guild-EA  
Clarence Hightower-EA  
James McClean  
Sean Mullan-EA  
Don Mullin-EA  
Jennifer Roettger-EA  
Mary Russell-EA  
Chris Tolbert  
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**Staff/Guests Present**

Emily Baxter, We Are All Criminals  
Leon Boeckermann, Ramsey County  
Rebecca Milbrandt, WIB Staff  
Ruth Stadheim, MN Dept. of Corrections  
Dunn Yoshitani, Workforce Solutions  
Kamaria Grigsby, Dept. of Human Rights  
Becky Johnson, Vocational Rehab. Svcs.  
Christy Parson, Bank of America  
Janie Metcalf, HMSHost  
Greg Mellas, Metropolitan State University  
Liz Jennings, DEED  
Charles Sutton, Senator Smith's Office  
Thomas Adams, Better Futures MN  
PJ Hubbard, Better Futures MN  
Elizabeth Pacunas, Public Housing Agency  
Ling Becker, Vadnais Heights EDC  
John O'Phelan, Workforce Solutions  
Marty Moylan, MN Public Radio  
Kevin Lindsey, Dept. of Human Rights  
Adriana Hernandez, Ramsey County  
Mary Jo McGuire, Ramsey County Board

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**Call to Order**

Chair Karin McCabe called the meeting to order at 1:35 p.m. All those in attendance introduced themselves.

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**Announcements**

McCabe read the following announcements:

- Welcome to the Workforce Innovation Board of Ramsey County meeting. We especially welcome our partners, presenters and guests.
- Thank you to Sheila Olson and the staff of Goodwill-Easter Seals for hosting today's meeting.
- Please welcome Elena Gaarder to the WIB. Elena is the Program Officer for Nexus Community Partners.
- Ramsey County Workforce Solutions received \$127,173 to continue operating the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Employment and Training Program. The goal of the program is to help SNAP eligible individuals fully utilize their benefits, gain the essential skills needed for gainful employment and successfully transition off public assistance. Thank you to the WIB for your ongoing support for comprehensive services to SNAP eligible residents.
- The People's Fellowship officially started on September 24. The People's Fellowship is a full family/two gen, cross-sector program between Saint Paul Promise Neighborhood, Department of Health and Human Services, Ramsey County Workforce Solutions, Ramsey County Financial Assistance & Public Health, the Network for the Development of Children of African Decent and other implementation partners. The collective goal is to increase educational success of children and full family wellness through improving readiness for school, housing, and educational and employment support. There are currently 22 African American families living in the St. Paul Promise Neighborhood enrolled and participating.

- The Resilient Communities Project connects communities in Minnesota with University of Minnesota faculty and students to advance local sustainability and resilience through collaborative, course-based projects. Ramsey County's *Removing Transportation Barriers to Employment Project* was selected for this work. A U of M professor and graduate level students have started their research to determine a long-term action plan for helping residents connect to jobs. Once completed, these strategies will be shared with WIB.
- We are actively recruiting new WIB members, particularly business members. If you know of an individual or organization that would be a good fit for our Board, please send their contact information to Becky and we will follow up with them on your behalf.
- A current list of all community organizations under contract with Workforce Solutions is available. Please see Becky if you would like to review the list.
- The next WIB meeting is December 6 from 2:30-4:30 at Goodwill-Easter Seals. Please note: We will be taking the official WIB portrait for the 2018 Annual Report so please make every effort to attend.

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### **Approve Consent Agenda**

#### **October Meeting Agenda**

#### **August Meeting Minutes**

#### **Partner MOU/Infrastructure Funding Agreement**

**Motion (Kulas/Germain) to approve the consent as presented. Motion carried.**

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### **Approve WIB Financial Report**

Boeckermann stated that all expenses are routine. McCabe reminded members that the report now covers two months of expenditures and revenues.

**Motion (Watson/Germain) to approve the July/August 2018 financial reports as presented. Motion carried unanimously.**

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### **Funding Request – Outreach to Schools (OTS) Program**

Nikstad provided an overview of the OTS program. He noted that with additional funding from the WIB, four interns can be fully funded for the 2018-19 school year. The funding gap is \$7,121.20. McCabe noted that these funds will come from the WIB's strategic priorities budget item.

**Motion (Kulas/Watson) to approve the Youth Committee's request for \$7,121.20 for the 2018-2019 Outreach to Schools Program. Motion carried unanimously.**

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### **Election of WIB Chair-Elect**

McCabe reviewed the role of the Chair-Elect, noting that this individual will serve a two-year term. She opened nominations for WIB Chair-Elect. Carter nominated Chad Kulas. After asking for other nomination three times and hearing none, McCabe closed nominations.

**Motion (Carter/Howard) to cast a unanimous ballot for Chad Kulas for WIB Chair-Elect for the 2018-2020 term. Motion carried.**

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### **We Are All Criminals Presentation**

In her presentation, Baxter provided crime/arrest statistics and shared stories of people who committed or were accused of crimes, those who got away with crimes, and those who have been impacted by their connection to the criminal justice system. She challenged those present to hire, promote, and judge people on their merit, not their past because it is possible to change people's lives for the better by giving them a second chance. When asked about expungement, Baxter explained that the belief that this process seals criminal records and removes them from public record is not true. She encouraged the business community to share her message, acknowledge privilege and be open to offering offenders a second chance. Baxter highlighted sources of free information, such as the Twin Cities Rise Hiring Guide, which was available at the meeting. She also noted that support for legislation addressing access to housing, reducing probationary periods, and voting restoration is needed.

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**Department of Corrections Presentation**

Stadheim shared information about the numerous secondary/post-secondary education and career/technical training programs offered through the Minnesota Department of Corrections' (DOC) adult facilities. Many of the programs are operated in partnership with local colleges, such as Century College and Hamline University. They also offer several industry recognized certifications, such as welding, carpentry, cosmetology and network cabling. Stadheim explained that three Minnesota training institutions received Second Chance Pell Grants and are now providing mechatronics, production and clean energy training certificates, which align with state's labor force needs. When asked how the WIB can help ex-offenders find employment, Stadheim encouraged employers to give them a chance. She also encouraged businesses interested in connecting with DOC training programs to contact her for a tour or to meet students. Stadheim said the greatest needs of individuals being released are mentors, transportation assistance, clothing, and other necessities to supplement their \$500 "gate money". She also advocated for Minnesota to adopt the Voc Village model currently being utilized in Detroit. This model provides case workers to help inmates develop employment tracks and continuous skills training for several months prior to release. Stadheim noted that due to capacity issues, some Minnesota facilities must reallocate program/training space for housing. She mentioned some of the creative ways they are providing training with limited space and to maintain safety and security. Despite the limitations, the DOC awards approximately 600 certificates and diplomas per year. Stadheim stated that with 3-year grant funding, they are in the process of hiring four career navigators who will assess training needs and track post-release employment.

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**Other**

No other business was discussed.

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**Adjourn**

**Upon conclusion of the agenda, the meeting was adjourned at 3:50.**

The next WIB meeting is December 6, 2018, 1:30-4:30, at Goodwill Easter Seals-553 Fairview Ave. N.