

General Membership Meeting
Thursday, April 3, 2025, 2:30– 4pm
Change, Inc./GAP School
381 E. Robie Street, Saint Paul, MN 55107

WIB Members Present

Ismail Ali
Tami Cybulski
Becky Degendorfer
Sara Garbe
Ethel Garcia
Hanna Getachew-Kreusser
Fidelity Goodlaxson
Lisa Guetzkow
Katie Kapaun
Bryan Kuzel
Tony Lusiba
James McClean
Yolanda McIntosh
Kelly Miller
Donna Rapacz
Elisa Rasmussen
Rachel Stiglitz
Aalayha Traub
Tanya Velishek
Tracy Wilson

Members Absent

Tom Aasheim-EA
Jonathan Banks-EA
Jennifer Germain-EA
Chad Kulas-EA
Pamela Maldonado
Don Mullin-EA
Koami Pedado
John Perlich-EA
Mary Rick-EA
Sheri Riemers-EA
Trish Stevens-EA

Staff/Guests Present

Ama Asantewaa, MnTech
Donnell Bratton (and Family) Frogtown/Rondo Black Church Alliance
Michelle Belitz, Workforce Solutions
Kristi Cobbs, Workforce Solutions
Carlos Franco, Right Track
Charie Gill, Workforce Solutions
Cliff Kallemeyn, Community Member
Stephany Aguirre Lopez, Sprockets
Mariann Macalus, Workforce Solutions
Brad Mahr, Workforce Solutions
Becky Milbrandt, Workforce Solutions
Niko Morseth, Right Track
Kathleen Murphy, Ramsey County
Ginny Nayman-Tonn, Humphrey Job Corps
Catrice O'Neil, Workforce Solutions
John O'Phelan, Workforce Solutions
Mary Russell, Committee Member
Sabina Saksena, Smart North
Jenni Severson, Api Group
Nardos Tesfalidet, City of Saint Paul
Longkee Vang, Workforce Solutions
Ramona Wilson, Knutson Construction
Xue Xiong, Right Track

*A tour of Change Inc.'s Construction Program project house was offered right before the meeting at 2p.

*Refreshments were provided by Humphrey Job Corps Culinary Arts program students after the meeting.

Call to Order and Announcements

Chair Rasmussen called the meeting to order at 2:34 pm and read the following announcements:

- Welcome to the Workforce Innovation Board of Ramsey County meeting. We especially welcome any of our partners and guests who are joining us today. This is a particularly special meeting where we will have the opportunity to celebrate some of the amazing work happening in our community to support young people!
- Thank you to GAP School staff and students for hosting today's meeting and for providing a tour of their construction program's project house. I hope many of you had a chance to see the students' talents and skills firsthand. In just a few minutes, we will hear from Jill Johnson, Executive Director of Change Inc.
- Welcome to Ethel Garcia who is attending her first meeting as members today. I will invite Ethel to introduce herself in just a few minutes.
- On today's consent agenda is the 2024 WIB-Workforce Solutions Annual Report. I want to extend a special thank you to the Partnership & Outreach Committee for their leadership and insights into the development of this year's report. An email will be sent out to all WIB members this afternoon with the link to the report. Thank you for sharing it with others in your networks who are interested in learning about all the impactful work happening in workforce development in Ramsey County.
- 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.

- I hope you can all make it to the next WIB meeting on Thursday, June 5, 2:30-4pm at the Plato Conference Center.
- Before we move into the agenda, I want to thank Katie Kapaun and the Culinary Arts students at the Humphrey Job Corps Center for providing refreshments for today's meeting. I'd like to invite Katie and her team to share a bit about the program and what they have prepared for us today.

Land Acknowledgement

Cybulski read the land acknowledgement aloud.

Welcome to GAP School

Johnson welcomed everyone to the school and shared that GAP School serves children and youth at high risk of school failure, as well as immigrants and refugees seeking to create a better life in this country. The school was founded in 1967 by Sister Giovanni to address the high number of secondary school dropouts in the Saint Paul's West Side neighborhood.

New Member Introduction: Ethel Garcia

Garcia introduced herself and gave a brief overview of her work at Innovize as Director of Human Resources. She stated that serving on the WIB presents an opportunity for personal and professional growth. She is enthusiastic about learning from other board members, engaging with community leaders and expanding her understanding of workforce development issues and best practices.

Approve Consent Agenda

April Meeting Agenda

February Meeting Minutes

WIB Financial Report

2025 Amended WIB Budget

PY25/SFY26 Unified Local Youth Plan

2024 WIB-Workforce Solutions Annual Report

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

Youth Committee Showcase

The Youth Team provided updates on the services available to young people and for the businesses employing youth as follows:

Youth Plan Overview: The plan outlines how Workforce Solutions will deliver comprehensive youth and young adult employment and training services over the next 12 months. The plan was re-written and simplified, making it easier to understand for peer reviewers and the public.

American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Funding:

- **Power Within Us:** This is a program for youth 14-24 years old in the Juvenile Detention Center/Ramsey County Correctional Facility. It was expanded in 2025 through new resource partnerships and program locations.
- **Get SET:** This program transitioned from monthly virtual sessions to a pre-recorded, on-demand resource.
- **Learn and Earn to Achieve Potential (LEAP):** This is a national initiative expanding opportunities for youth ages 16-24, which integrates programming, resources and support to enhance success and help youth earn a secondary credential and explore career pathways.
- **Outreach to Schools (OTS):** This program has expanded the role of the Program Specialist to engage with student through OTS activities and supports students through JobReady Support, strengthening education and employer ecosystem through Teacher Externships, CTE Advisories and Career Pathways cohorts.
- **The Career Pathway Portal** was developed in collaboration with Roadtrip Nation and Youth Lens 360 and was launched in 2024 to serve as a virtual "one-stop" hub. The hub provides youth access to interviews with local community members about their careers.

Youth Programs Funding: It was noted that the 2025 Program Year for the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Youth funds are not yet determined. Also, the 2026 Minnesota Youth Program (MYP) State Fiscal year funding is pending but expected to drop to the 2023 levels, which is a significant decrease from the supplemented fiscal year 2024-2025 level.

Youth Workforce Champion Awards

Traub shared that these awards are given each year to highlight standout members of the community who dedicates themselves to working with and improving the lives of Ramsey County's young people to develop the next generation's full potential. Donnell Bratton, Pastor at Frogtown/Rondo Black Church Alliance was recognized as the 2025 recipient of the Legacy Award, and Stephany Aguirre Lopez, Youth Leadership program Manager at Sprockets received the Rising Star Award.

Staff Updates

O'Neal shared the hiring of Deputy Director Holly Pratt who started on March 31. Workforce Solutions is also hiring a program specialist to support the delivery of the county's Public Pathways programs and Young Adult Career Academy. McIntosh and Milbrandt shared about their attendance at the National Association of Workforce Boards 2025 Forum held in Washington DC. The Forum is the nation's largest annual workforce development conference and an opportunity to learn directly from the nation's most informed experts about workforce policy, initiatives and trends. This year's theme was "Together, Forward, Change". There were sessions on a wide variety of topics including performance metrics, apprenticeships, immigration, artificial intelligence, skills-based hiring, federal policies and mental health in the workplace. After the Forum, there was a workforce advocacy day on the hill where attendees could meet with their congress members and their staff to provide a briefing on the key legislative issues facing workforce boards.

Other and Award Recipients' Photo

Following the meeting, the award recipient took photos and enjoyed refreshments.

Adjourn

Upon conclusion of the agenda, the meeting was adjourned at 3:45pm

Next meeting: Thursday, June 5, 2025 2:30-4pm – Plato Conference Center, 90 W. Plato Blvd., Saint Paul