

Workforce Innovation Board of Ramsey County
October 1, 2020 2:30-4:30
Meeting Minutes

WIB Members Present

Becky Degendorfer
Jennifer Germain
Chad Kulas
Cindy Larson
Tony Lusiba
Gaye Adams Massey
James McClean
Jim McDonough
Camila Mercado Michelli
Don Mullin
Paul Nikstad
Sheila Olson
Koami Pedado
Elisa Rasmussen
Sheri Riemers
Chris Tolbert
Shannon Watson
Ramona Wilson

Members Absent

Lisa Guetzkow
Kristin Guild
Hyon Kim-EA
Karin McCabe-EA
Sean Mullan-EA
Tanya Velishek
Carly Voshell
Brooke Walker
Tracy Wilson

Staff/Guests Present

Ling Becker, Workforce Solutions
Mary Russell, Community
Susan Jambor, SPIRE Credit Union
Jacob Wascalus, MN Compass
Tim O'Neill, DEED
Johnny Allen, JK Movement
La Tasha Shevlin, UpTurnships
Mickey Frost, 828 Truce Center

Call to Order

Chair Chad Kulas called the meeting to order at 2:30 p.m.

Announcements

McCabe read the following announcements:

- Welcome to the Workforce Innovation Board of Ramsey County meeting. We especially welcome our partners and guests.
- We want to welcome several prospective new members whose appointments will go to the City Council and County Board next month:
 - Trish Stevens, Hospitality Minnesota
 - Susan Jambor, Spire Credit Union
 - Tom Aasheim, Finishing Trades of the Upper Midwest
 - Yolanda McIntosh, Lunda Construction
 - Chris Duffy, Goff Public
 - Julie Thiel, Schwan's
- Section 13D.021 of the Open Meetings Law makes it possible for the WIB to have meetings via telephone or other electronic means when an in-person meeting is "not practical or prudent because of a health pandemic or an emergency declared under chapter 12." Under these circumstances, the law requires that all votes be taken by roll call.
- 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.
- WIB members and guests are invited to attend any committee meetings. All agendas and minutes are available on the WIB's webpage. Due to the pandemic, all meetings are being conducted via video conference. Instructions to participate are included in the meeting invites and are posted on the WIB's webpage.

- The next WIB meeting is December 3 from 2:30-4:30pm. The location is yet to be determined.

Approve Consent Agenda**October Meeting Agenda****August Meeting Minutes****WIB Financial Report**

Motion (Watson/Nikstad) to approve the consent agenda as presented. Motion carried unanimously by roll call vote.

Election of WIB Chair-elect

Kulas reviewed the roles and responsibilities of the Chair-Elect. He opened nominations for WIB Chair-Elect. McDonough nominated Ramona Wilson. After asking for other nomination three times and hearing none, Kulas closed nominations.

Motion (McDonough/Degendorfer) to cast a unanimous ballot for Ramona Wilson for WIB Chair-Elect for the 2020-2022 term. Motion carried by roll call vote. R. Wilson abstained from the vote.

Impacts of COVID on the Food Service Industry

Wascalus provided an update on how the pandemic has affected the food service sector. While the demographic trends are the same (Minnesota's population is getting older and more diverse), economic and workforce trends have completely changed due the pandemic. According to the data, nearly two-thirds of all bar/restaurant employees in Ramsey County had filed for unemployment, with 3,586 currently unemployed. This is the hardest hit sector in the metro area. The speculation is that the situation will worsen this winter. O'Neill has additional demographic data available that he agreed to share after the meeting. Becker feels short term training is key to getting people on a new career path and helping/building wealth in our local economy.

Director's Report

COVID-19 Response: Workforce Solutions (WFS) continues to provide virtual services and in-person services at nine Career Lab sites across the county, including one that will offer services in Spanish and Hmong. Outreach on the Dislocated Worker program is being increased. Cumulative unemployment claims are nearing 1 million statewide. The economy is not recovering equally for all people. BIPOC, less educated, women and younger workers have been disproportionately impacted.

Customer Survey: WFS is bringing together a team to start doing customer satisfaction surveys across the whole system. Russell is helping with this work. Any other WIB members interested in this effort should contact Becker.

Regional Virtual Services: The metro area directors are jointly coordinating virtual job fairs. The plan is to have one per week, each focusing on different industries.

County Budget: Ramsey County approves a biennial budget. 2020 would normally focus on performance measures but the County Board decided to adopt a zero levy increase for 2021, so work is being done to cut budgets. A truth in taxation meeting is being held in November.

CARES Funding:

- The TechPak program was able to increase the number of Paks released to 1,500 (from the original plan of 500) with help from Tech Dump and PCs for People.
- The county contracted out over \$10M in funding to 97 community organizations. Each contacted vendor is listed on the county's website.
- The Workforce Resiliency Fund sets aside \$1.2M to support workforce organizations. Each organization can apply for a \$10,000 grant starting later this month.
- Representatives from three organizations that received CARES funding shared information about their projects and how these funds are helping the community. McDonough suggested that as the challenges these organizations are facing are identified, efforts are made to pair them up with other county resources. Becker suggested the WIB have a listening session with the contracted providers to learn more about their work and needs.

One-Stop Partner Convening: The OSO Consortium is hosting a convening of workforce partners on October 8. The goal of the system is to provide more integrated services and referrals for residents.

CareerForce: A standardized workshop series is being offered on topics such as networking and resume reviewing. While all CareerForce sites are closed, virtual services are being offered.

Committee Work: Becker provided a brief overview of the work of each committee. Kulas appreciates the regular review of the work plan dashboard and the progress each committee is making.

Ramsey County Job Connect, Training Dashboard: No update.

Other

Becker has set aside time to meet with all interested WIB members one-on-one in October. A link to the sign-up sheet will be sent soon.

Adjourn

Upon conclusion of the agenda, the meeting was adjourned at 4:18 pm.

The next WIB meeting is December 3, 2:30-4:30pm.