

**Workforce Innovation Board of Ramsey County**  
**December 3, 2020 2:30-4:30**  
**Meeting Minutes**

**WIB Members Present**

Becky Degendorfer  
Jennifer Germain  
Lisa Guetzkow  
Susan Jambor  
Hyon Kim  
Chad Kulas  
Cindy Larson  
Tony Lusiba  
Gaye Adams Massey  
James McClean  
Jim McDonough  
Camila Mercado Michelli  
Don Mullin  
Paul Nikstad  
Sheila Olson  
Koami Pedado  
Julie Thiel  
Tanya Velishek  
Carly Voshell  
Brooke Walker  
Shannon Watson  
Ramona Wilson  
Tracy Wilson

**Members Absent**

Kristin Guild-EA  
Karin McCabe-EA  
Sean Mullan-EA  
Elisa Rasmussen -EA  
Sheri Riemers-EA  
Chris Tolbert-EA

**Staff/Guests Present**

Ling Becker, Workforce Solutions  
Kristi Cobbs, Literacy Minnesota  
Mary Sue Hansen, Suburban Ramsey Family Collaborative  
Amanda LaGrange, Tech Dump  
Beth Pacunas, Saint Paul Housing Agency  
Kristin Poffenberger, Ramsey County  
Mary Russell, Community

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**Call to Order**

Chair Chad Kulas called the meeting to order at 2:32 p.m.

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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 and guests.
- Congratulations and welcome to new members Julie Thiel from Schwan's Co. and Susan Jambor from SPIRE Credit Union. Julie and Susan will have an opportunity to introduce themselves in a few minutes.
- 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 Thursday, February 4, 2021 at 2:30. The location is yet to be determined but will likely be through Zoom.

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**Approve Consent Agenda**  
**December Meeting Agenda**  
**October Meeting Minutes**  
**WIB Financial Report**  
**2021 WIB Budget**

Pratt provided a brief overview of the financial report, noting an accounting glitch that will result in a decrease in the Direct WIB Support expense. The adjustment will be reflected on the next report. She also reported plans to change the staffing for the WIB to have a 60% Planner and 15% Administrative Assistant. All unspent money from 2020 will roll over into 2021, giving the WIB approximately \$100,000 for strategic priorities.

**Motion (Nikstad/Kim) to approve the consent agenda as presented. Motion carried unanimously by roll call vote.** Germain, Velishek and R. Wilson were not present at the time of the vote.

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**Vern Vick Memorial Award**

Nikstad introduced Mary Sue Hansen, recipient of the 2020 Vern Vick Award. Hansen shared about her work as Director of the Suburban Ramsey Family Collaborative (SRFC). The SRFC provides emergency services to children, youth and families in need. Nikstad expressed his appreciation for her service to the community and for the energy she brings to the Youth Committee. Hansen thanked the SRFC board, system practitioners and the WIB for partnering in this work. She received a round of applause.

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**New Member Introductions and Break Out Session**

Jambor introduced herself and shared details about her career and volunteer background. She is excited to be part of the WIB. Thiel also introduced herself and reported on her passion for talent management and advancing opportunities for workers and on her experience on the Greater Metropolitan Workforce Council. Becker mentioned that several additional prospective members are in the approval process and will be introduced at the next meeting.

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**Breakout Sessions**

Meeting attendees broke into small groups to introduce themselves and talk about the following questions:

- What are some things you have adapted in your life due to COVID that you want to continue?
- What are some things your organization has adapted due to COVID that you want to continue?

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**Meeting Schedule, Committees and Appointment**

Becker reported that WIB meetings will be reduced to 1.5 hours in 2021. They will follow the same date schedule (first Thursday of even-months) and start time (2:30pm). She also outlined proposed changes to the WIB's committee structure:

- The Partnership and Equity Committee to become the Equity Committee
- The Partnership focus will shift to the Communications & Outreach Committee to become the Partnership and Outreach Committee
- An ad hoc Tech Committee will be formed

All committees will meet during the same week of the month, with the exception of the Executive and Youth Committees. Becker will send emails to all WIB members to confirm committee memberships.

**Motion (Degendorfer/Jambor) to approve the 2021 committee structure and schedule. Motion carried unanimously by roll call vote.** Germain and Velishek were not present at the time of the vote.

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**Dislocated Worker and WIOA Adult Priority of Service Proposals**

Guetzkow explained that Priority of Service (POS) comes into play when resources become limited. It establishes an equitable way to allocate services to those in most need. There isn't a shortage of funding for services currently. This POS would only be enacted by Workforce Solutions and its contracted providers if

enrollments of eligible individuals in the WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker programs reach 75% of the funded enrollment goal set by DEED. Guetzkow outlined the current and proposed priority levels for each program. Becker explained that if there was ever a need to enact these Priorities, additional funding would be actively pursued from other sources. Kim suggested Asian populations, refugees and immigrants be added to the list of Priority groups. It was also confirmed that current enrollees would not be at risk of losing services if they fell into a lower Priority.

**Motion (Kim/R. Wilson) to approve the enactment of the proposed Priority of Service. Motion carried unanimously by roll call vote.** Guetzkow abstained from voting.

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### **Infrastructure Funding Agreement**

Larson explained that the Infrastructure Funding Agreement (IFA) is the mechanism for allocating the costs associated with operating the One-Stop Centers among the system partners. The IFA is typically approved as part of the Memorandum of Understanding but was delayed by DEED for six months pending guidance from the Department of Labor. Pratt explained that based on that guidance, all partners are now expected to contribute through cash, in-kind supplies/services, or third-party in-kind contributions. The goal is to have the new IFA completed by the end of the year. Once completed, the IFA will be approved by all partners and signed by the WIB Chair.

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### **Director's Report**

*COVID-19 Response:* Becker reported that CareerForce Saint Paul is still closed to walk-in services but is offering services virtually. CARES funds were used to open Career Labs across the county. Through September, approximately 600-700 reservations had been made. Services are also being provided virtually through Workforce Solutions.

#### *CARES Funding:*

- 1,500 student support kits were distributed to COVID impacted Saint Paul College, Century College and Metro State students to encourage them to stay enrolled. The kits contained headphones and gift cards.
- CARES funds have been used to serve over 1,500 youth and young adults so far, in partnership with contracted vendors. In an average year, the numbers served would be 350-400 youth.
- A partnership with Fairview/M Health was created to provide CNAs with additional training to move them into high demand Health Unit Coordinator positions.
- Through a partnership with Goodwill, CARES funds were used for construction training for residents at the Margaret Street House.
- An inspiring community conversation with youth was held as part of Level Up Week.
- Becker will send out a flyer with details about Move Forward Week, a weeklong event with several virtual events for job seekers.
- The Resiliency Fund was set up to give grants to organizations doing workforce and food security work. Workforce organizations can apply for a \$25,000 grant, with \$50,000 in grants available for food organizations. Currently, 40 workforce organizations have applied.

*2021 Work Plan:* Becker proposed a short term, 6-9 month work plan knowing the county is working on an Economic Competitiveness and Inclusion Plan that will align with the WIB's work. The WIB will likely do a strategic planning session once the Inclusion Plan is approved by the County Board. The short-term work plan will be discussed at committee meetings and reviewed in more detail at the February WIB meeting.

*TechPak Project & Tech Equity Discussion:* LaGrange introduced herself and shared information about Tech Dump, a non-profit located in the Midway that works with individuals coming out of incarceration or in recovery from addiction, to recycle and refurbish electronics. A social return on investment report will be shared with the WIB later this year. Becker provided examples of the modified TechPak models that were used throughout the program. There were nearly 1,500 TechPak applicants. Becker shared some preliminary demographic data on the recipients. A final report will be shared when all the data is collected. Cobbs shared information about the assessments and digital supports recipients received with the Paks. Lusiba provided some insight on the WIB's new Tech Committee. Becker encouraged members to share the opportunity to serve on this committee with others who are connected to the tech industry.

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**Other**

No other items were discussed.

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**Adjourn**

Upon conclusion of the agenda, the meeting was adjourned at 4:27 pm.

The next WIB meeting is February 4, 2021, 2:30-4pm.