

**Workforce Innovation Board of Ramsey County
Communications & Outreach Committee Meeting Minutes**

May 7, 2020, 1:00-2:00pm
Via Zoom Video Conference

Committee Members Present

Butch Howard
Koami Pedado
Carly Voshell
Brooke Walker

Members Absent

Staff/Guests Present

Ling Becker, Ramsey County

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 1:00 pm.

Approve March Minutes

Motion (Walker/Voshell) to approve the March 5, 2020 minutes as presented. Motion carried.

COVID-19 Disparities

Becker provided an update on the impacts of COVID on employment. Hardest hit are the hospitality/retail sector and low income jobs which disproportionately affects people of color. Although the federal government has provided significant relief funding, Becker feels it is the work of the WIB to think about workforce programs that will be part of the recovery. Access to technology and digital literacy will be an increasing determinant in economic opportunity. The goal of this committee for the remainder of the year could be to elevate the WIB's messaging around key issues facing our community, including the technology gap. The bottom of the economic downturn could still be months away so it will be critical to get information about workforce services out to job seekers and businesses. Becker reported that Ramsey County received \$15 million in CARES funding for workforce efforts that must be spent by December 30. There will be an urgent need to get these funds out into the community quickly. The WIB could help spread the word about opportunities to apply for funding with community organizations. Becker share ideas for how these funds could be used, including establishing sites throughout the county to provide universal services, offering trainings for youth and young adults, and developing a more flexible Dislocated Worker program. There was agreement that the need for people to have access to tech devices and WIFI is critical. Howard stressed the importance of training people to use technology so they have the skills to get a job and use technology in their jobs.

New Ramsey County Job Connect Job Board

Becker shared details about a new job board that will be on the county's economic development portal. It will be used by all the local chambers and the cities will provide links and share it on their social media. The job board will have an interactive map to find jobs by location and along transit lines. Employers can add videos, pictures and list inclusive hiring information. Job seeker information will be collected and used to send out job alerts and information about trainings.

Culturally Inclusive Communications List/Connecting with the Unconnected Job Seeker

Becker indicated that the need for this list is even more critical during COVID to help get messaging out to community organizations so they can share it in a way that their community will understand. The Governor's office did a similar reach out and may be willing to share their list. Voshell will create a form to be shared out with the full WIB.

Strategic Funding Request Opportunity

Becker reminded the committee that the WIB has \$40,000 to use on strategic priorities. If the committee has an idea for a project, a funding request could be submitted to the Executive Committee.

Committee Dashboard Review

No discussion.

Other

The committee decided to schedule another meeting next month to continue talking about plans for using the WIB's strategic priority funds on a project.

Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 2:02 pm.

Next meeting: May 27, 2020 via Zoom video conference