

Workforce Innovation Board of Ramsey County
Constructions-Green Jobs Committee Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, July 11, 2023
2:00pm – 3:00pm
Zoom Video Conference

Present:

Becky Brink Ray
Chris Duffrin
Don Mullin
Russ Stark

Absent:

Joseph Adamji
Muneer Karcher-Ramos-EA
Elisa Rasmussen-EA

Staff/Guests:

Ling Becker, Workforce Solutions
Mariann Macalus, Workforce Solutions
Zaire Mays, Workforce Solutions
Rachael Molenaar, Workforce Solutions
John O’Phelan, Workforce Solutions
Whitney Terrill, Drawdown’s Neighborhood

Before the official start of the meeting, Becker shared that Molenaar, who has moved into a new role supporting system-wide projects, is now the planner for this Committee. Molenaar will also be the main contact in the new Climate Change initiative on today’s agenda.

Call to Order & Land Acknowledgement

Chair Mullin called the meeting to order at 2:04pm and read the land acknowledgement aloud.

Approve May Minutes

Motion (Stark/O’Phelan) to approve the May 9, 2023, minutes as presented. Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

Ramsey County Climate Action Framework

Becker shared information on the new Climate Change initiative in, which is being led by Ramsey County Public Health. Rather than creating its own framework, Ramsey County is building on the goals of the State of Minnesota. Workforce Solutions is leaning on the “clean economy” goal. Stark shared information as it relates to the City of Saint Paul. The City has a Climate Action Resiliency Plan that was adopted in 2019 which is somewhat their guidebook. Their Plan is focused on mitigating carbon emissions and then adapting to the changing climate not on the clean economy aspect. Updates to the plan is due in 2024 which might include more on clean economy. Stark and Becker will be in communication.

Committee Work Plan

Promote & Support Industry Events: Becker provided summaries on community events: the East Side Community Summit, May 2, 2023; Union Job & Resource Fair, June 8, 2023; Grid Catalyst Cleantech, June 8, 2023; Young People Building Homes

Grid Catalyst Cleantech Pathways Event Building: Becker shared that young folks had interest in the Cleantech Pathways allowing them to be part of an Advisory Group to talk about the challenges they face in delving into this industry. Becker shared an invitation she received from the University of Saint Thomas regarding their MicroGrid Research Facilities. If anyone is interested in participating in an upcoming tour of these facilities, let her know.

Upcoming Events: O’Phelan shared information on Expand the Toolbox (ETT), with the ETT meeting mid-October focusing on work permits and visas to provide insight for the construction industry’s HR staff. The purpose is for HR staff to learn about the variety of areas they can legally employ and some of the processes. The ETT committee members are connected to either Ramsey County Workforce Solutions or Ramsey County Workforce Innovation Board (WIB).

Becker shared that the County has committed to Construct Tomorrow at the Saint Paul RiverCentre for career exploration over the next three years. Mark your calendars for Meet 'n Greet for December 5th and 6th, 2023.

Your Own Future Campaign Next Steps: Becker provided an update on the next steps for the campaign to ideate the front door to learn about construction in the community. Becker suggested a small group be formed from members of this Committee to discuss a plan, marketing campaign, community calendar, etc. so the community has all information related to construction in one spot. Some suggestions: QR code, more navigation, calendar, webpage.

New Learn and Earn Programs

Center for Energy & Environment – HVAC & Insulators: Molenaar provided an update on the new Learn and Earn programs that are funded by ARPA for ages 18-30 and the outreach and recruitment currently occurring on the County Learn and Earn website.

Duffrin shared information on the program they will be doing for HVAC and Insulators, in partnership with Saint Paul College, Ujamaa Place and other workforce partners.

Goodwill Easter Seals – Construction with Green Enhancements: Brink Ray shared information on their program focusing on youth, providing a 12-week construction course to prepare students for careers in construction trades, green building practices.

Molenaar encouraged everyone to go to the Earn and Learn website for more paid training opportunities and information sessions.

Stark is interested in helping to push out these two programs.

Director Updates

Other Funding Coordination: Becker provided an update on other funding opportunities: Assisting DEED in the Federal CHIPS for America Fund for the semiconductor industry. This Committee might be interested in connecting with schools to help them talk about hard and different jobs in the semiconductor industry. Becker also shared the information on the Minnesota CHIPS opportunity.

Other Committee Updates

Becker provided an update on driver's license. There are over 100 young people enrolled but are accepting more. The State Legislation is passing a Reintegration License Bill on August 1. People who are coming out of incarceration will get those fines and fees eliminated. This should compliment our work around drivers' licenses in getting rid of the biggest barriers people have and will consider child support.

Mullin shared his meeting with the Minnesota Building Trades Credit Union on the finance piece for getting these people vehicles, etc. given the elimination the mentioned barriers. They are very interested and Mullin continues to work on it.

Other

Becker introduced Mays, who is our Right Track intern. Mays shared her background and the tasks she has been given since the start of this internship.

Molenaar shared the write up of the funding for MTA and Urban Builders.

Stark shared the language has been finalized of what the City Council will be putting on the November ballot for the sales tax.

Adjourn

Upon completion of the agenda, the meeting was adjourned at 2:55pm.

Next Meeting: September 12, 2023, 2:00pm to 3:00pm via Zoom