

Workforce Innovation Board of Ramsey County
Constructions-Green Jobs Committee Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, September 13, 2022
2:00-3:00 PM

Present:

Joseph Adamji
Becky Brink Ray
Chris Duffrin
Muneer Karcher-Ramos
Don Mullin
Elisa Rasmussen
Russ Stark

Absent:

Staff/Guests:

Quanda Arch, Science Museum of MN
Ling Becker, Workforce Solutions
Mariann Macalus, Workforce Solutions
Becky Milbrandt, Workforce Solutions
John O'Phelan, Workforce Solutions

Call to Order & Land Acknowledgement

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

Approve May and August Minutes

Motion (Stark/Karcher-Ramos) to approve the May 10, 2022, and August 9, 2022, minutes as presented. Motion carried unanimously by chat vote.

Advancing Equity Through Workforce Partnerships Opportunity

Becker shared this funding opportunity which was released by the Department of Energy. The grant seeks to establish multi-stakeholder high-road workforce development partnerships that help accelerate deployment of solar energy while advancing administration priorities. The grant would fund efforts to recruit, train and retain diverse and local workforce in this area. The letter of intent to apply is due next week. Goodwill-Easter Seals and Hired have asked the WIB, specifically this Committee, to partner with them as the Technical Advisory Council, to oversee the grant. There are three target groups they are working with as eligible populations. Becker is interested in the Career Pathway Center that the St. Paul School District recently opened. There was discussion about next steps. The IBEW will be part of future discussion. One limitation for this committee being the advisory council is that none of the current members has experience in solar industry, but this might be an opportunity to recruit someone. The Center for Energy and Environment's location has some great synergy as it's on the edge of the Rondo Community. This would also be a good partnership with the Science Museum.

Bloomberg Recommendations

Becker and Stark brought to the forefront information on the Saint Paul Workforce Development Program/Equitable Construction Trades Workforce Research Report. This initiative seeks to bring more equity in helping BIPOC and women enter the construction trades. Research was conducted among BIPOC and woman nationally who had participated in pre-apprenticeship and/or workforce development programs for the construction trades. The purpose is to understand what the participants found helpful/not helpful and what should be changed about the programs to make them more useful. This committee could assist in the development of the fundamental principles of trainings. Even though there were positives that came out of the study, there also were opportunities for improvement for their trades. The biggest barrier indicated was the entry into the workforce and the thought is to partner with the Equity Committee. Another strategy might be to break down into the employee life cycle (i.e., retention, culture) and to focus on employers who have success in embracing the concept of workforce inclusion to use in a marketing campaign. Becker will sketch out the core pillars of a more equitable and inclusive construction training program for this committee to review.

Committee Work Plan

There was discussion about the Request for Proposal based on:

Move Forward Plan on Asset Mapping of Programs: This would be done on constructions programs.

CBO Convening: This would be to delve further on shortcomings and gaps.

Director Updates

Becker provided updates on the following:

American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA): Workforce Solutions is awaiting the City-County Joint Powers Agreement. The Learn and Earn Request for Proposal will be released soon. The Drivers' License Academy was just launched.

CERT Connect: O'Phelan shared that there will be an open house on October 4 at the Public Works building in Arden Hills for all small businesses that are or are interested in being certified with government entities.

Xcel Energy Power Up: Xcel Energy is working with the DEED on training program oversight and grant management to issue a Request for Proposals for Minnesota training providers. The Power Up training program will provide a workforce training pipeline for a variety of energy-related construction occupations to facilitate direct placement of 150 training program participants into union apprenticeship or energy-related construction jobs. Anyone interested in learning more can attend an info session on October 15 at 1pm.

Other Committee Updates

No other items were discussed.

Adjourn

Upon completion of the agenda, the meeting was adjourned at 2:57pm.

Next Meeting: Tuesday, October 11, 2022, 2-3pm