

Workforce Innovation Board of Ramsey County

Equity Committee Meeting Minutes

Monday, April 11, 2022, 3-4 PM

Present:

Mohamed Mourssi-Alfash
Michelle Belitz
Becky Degendorfer
Karin McCabe
Yolanda McIntosh
Mary Russell
Tanya Velishek

Absent:

Shym Cook-EA
Lauren Hunter-EA
Ramona Wilson-EA
Tracy Wilson

Staff/Guests:

Ling Becker, Workforce Solutions
Mariann Macalus, Workforce Solutions
Becky Milbrandt, Workforce Solutions

Call to Order & Land Acknowledgement

Acting Chair Becker called the meeting to order at 3:02 pm. Degendorfer read the land acknowledgement aloud.

Approve March Minutes

Motion (Degendorfer/McCabe) to approve the March 21, 2022, minutes as presented. Motion carried unanimously by vote.

Inclusive Workplaces Cohort Update and Survey Results

Russell provided an update. There continues to be great attendance and participation. The biggest challenge, though good, is the need to have more time for the small breakout sessions as everyone wants to learn from one another. A way to help with the “connecting” might be to have the sessions in-person, which Becker will suggest this to CEI as a consideration. Becker shared the four survey responses received after the March session. Discussion centered around forming a small group to give recommendations in establishing whether we should continue to do these cohorts, what should the focus be moving forward, how do we get there, etc. Some suggestions were to run two smaller cohorts and changing the timing to a sprint model vs. running it over a year. The model should be sustainable with decisions made by early summer if it is decided that another cohort will be offered so plans can be built for outreach to start in September.

Work Plan Updates

Becker provided an overview of the committee work plan which centers around supporting events.

Untapped Event Series: This committee will reconvene on this topic once the joint meeting with the Partnership & Outreach Committee has been held, currently scheduled for May 10.

Community Based Organizations (CBOs) Convening: Discussion with the Committee as to exploring Hidden Worker initiatives, employee retention and gaining insights on the work CBOs are doing in the community. The focus might be on getting the job seekers involved to inform DEED, the County or non-profit organizations. WIB and the committees could be the entity leading the round table discussions to create distinctive and measurable outcomes around what the CBOs need.

Director's Updates

Becker provided the following:

Second Chances Month: Representatives from Community Corrections, Tech Dump, Ujamaa Place, Hired, Art from the Inside and the Department of Corrections joined the County Board in proclaiming April as Second Chance month. This is an opportunity to uplift the critical issues of ensuring that all Ramsey County residents, including those who have been impacted by the justice system, have a fair opportunity to participate in the economy. While some good work has been done, there is much more

work to do. For the rest of the year, Ramsey County will be working on a series of events to highlight and support more inclusive hiring for those with criminal backgrounds. The first event will be May 20.

Other

Becker provided the following:

WIOA Growth Opportunities Grant: The Department of Labor has released an \$85M grant focused on justice-involved youth and young adults for employment through education and training, paid work experiences, mentorship and leadership development and contributes to the community violence intervention. Ramsey County is going to apply and if successful the grant would start in January or June of 2023. Becker shared what the components are of the proposed program.

McCabe shared that the Saint Paul Chamber is in the planning stage for a career exploration event in October 2022 for 10th graders in the area. Local businesses that want to host a table to share who they are and what they do can let McCabe know. She'll keep this committee informed as plans develop further. A conversation should be had about the WIB supporting this event.

Adjourn

Upon completion of the agenda, the meeting was adjourned at 3:46pm.

Next Meeting: May 10, 2022, 3-4pm – Joint with Partnership & Outreach Committee