

Workforce Innovation Board of Ramsey County

Equity Committee Meeting Minutes
Monday, February 14, 2022, 3-4 PM

Present:

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

Absent:

Shym Cook
Lauren Hunter-EA
Ramona Wilson

Staff/Guests:

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

Call to Order & Land Acknowledgement

Chair Rasmussen called the meeting to order at 3:02 pm. Wilson read the land acknowledgement aloud.

Approve January Minutes

Motion (McCabe/Degendorfer) to approve the January 10, 2022, minutes as presented. Motion carried unanimously by chat vote.

Committee Chair

Becker reminded everyone of Rasmussen's recent role change within Xcel Energy and her shift to the Construction-Green Jobs Committee. This change leaves the chair position on the Equity Committee. Anyone interested in the opportunity should contact Becker/Milbrandt. Rasmussen shared her enjoyable experience being chair and encouraged others to consider taking on the role. The chair would also be a member of the Executive Committee.

Action Planning Update

Milbrandt gave an overview of the three action items this committee decided on. Discussion was had on the initiatives the committee will work on in the coming months. McCabe suggested added another item to the plan: support for small, women and minority-owned businesses and focusing on how to share and support their experiences.

Equity Updates

Inclusive Workplaces Cohort: Russell gave an update on the February session and stated that Real Time Talent gave an excellent presentation. The cohort members continue to be engaged. Becker asked for volunteers to work on a subcommittee that would meeting 1-2 times in late February or early March to assess the current cohort to make sure it is going well, decide how to showcase the cohort's efforts along the way, and decide if the WIB should consider doing another cohort. An idea for showcasing the program is to create a video sharing experiences of the participants. Russell volunteered to be part of this work team.

Racial Equity Index: Becker shared the Center for Economic Inclusion's Racial Equity Dividends Index, a tool to help businesses measure their progress towards building racially equitable and inclusive workplaces. The Index assesses 37 business practices across the categories of leadership, hiring, culture, procurement, philanthropy, public policy, and products and is designed for mid-sized to large private-sector businesses. Ramsey County is partnering with the Chamber to sponsor up to 20 businesses interested in taking the assessment.

Untapped Event Series: Becker shared the need for help planning and hosting a series of three webinars on workforce disparities around specific populations, such as Hmong, Black, people with disabilities and

Latino/Latinx. The hope is that this committee would take this on as a major project this year. Discussion was favorable in pursuing this project. Milbrandt will send a request for volunteers in the follow up email.

Director's Updates

Ramsey County Early Childhood Academy: Early Childhood was seen as a huge gap in relief funding that the County is investing in. Ramsey County is developing an Academy for early childhood worker training and small business support. This should be up and running in April.

Driver's Licenses: Not having a driver's license is a barrier for young people getting and/or retaining employment. Ramsey County is developing a pilot to help students in high school, young adults and those already in the workforce to obtain their driver's license.

Other

No other items were discussed.

Adjourn

Upon completion of the agenda, the meeting was adjourned at 4:00pm.

Next Meeting: March 14, 2022, 3-4pm.