

Workforce Innovation Board of Ramsey County
Executive Committee Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, January 22, 2025, 7:30-9:00am
Meeting held using Zoom Video Conference

Present

Chad Kulas
Tony Lusiba
Kelly Miller
John Perlich
Elisa Rasmussen
Mary Russell

Absent

Cheniqua Johnson
Yolanda McIntosh-EA
Don Mullin
Aalayha Traub-EA

Staff/Guests

Lisa Guetzkow, Workforce Solutions
Mariann Macalus, Workforce Solutions
Becky Milbrandt, Workforce Solutions
Rachael Molenaar, Workforce Solutions
Catrice O’Neal, Workforce Solutions
M. Kathleen Murphy, Commissioner Office

Call to Order and Land Acknowledgement

Chair Rasmussen called the meeting to order at 7:33am. Kulas read the land acknowledgement aloud.

Introductions

Introductions were made to welcome Commissioner Miller, Workforce Solutions Director O’Neal and Commissioner’s Assistant Murphy.

Approve November Minutes

Motion (Kulas/Perlich) to approve the November 20, 2024, minutes as presented. Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

Conflict of Interest Acknowledgement

Rasmussen read the Conflict of Interest Acknowledgement and reminded everyone that any WIB and committee member who has a conflict of interest should abstain from the discussion and voting. Milbrandt shared that this policy is reviewed by every committee and the WIB each year. The policy will be included in the follow-up email.

WIB Financial and Strategic Funds Reports

Milbrandt reviewed the November-December financial reports noting all revenues for the WIOA and MFIP grants have now been collected. Expenditures were all routine. The Strategic Priorities supplemental report was also reviewed, providing details on how those funds were spent. All remaining Strategic Priorities funds from 2024 will be carried over to the WIB’s 2025 budget.

Amended 2025 WIB Budget

Milbrandt shared that the WIB approved the preliminary 2025 budget in December. Now that all revenue and expenditures have been finalized, an amended 2025 budget has been prepared. It was reviewed by the committee and will be presented to the full WIB for approval in February.

Funding Request: 2025 Marketing & Events

Milbrandt shared that there will be a request to the WIB in February for up to \$50,000 in WIB Strategic Priority funds to support industry focused events and outreach activities throughout 2025. Events and initiatives supported by these funds will be tied to the priorities of the WIB’s committees.

Membership

WIB & Committee Demographics Dashboards: Milbrandt shared the WIB membership makeup, noting the dashboard has not changed significantly because the board is at its full complement of 33 members. The only change is due to the newly elected Local Elected Official, Commissioner Miller. That change will be reflected on the county’s data portal soon. Milbrandt noted the committee dashboard reflects 26 non-WIB

committee members and shared a summary of changes since the last dashboard. Overall demographic changes resulted in a decrease of one white male.

Ratification of Committee Appointments: Miller, Mohamed, Mercado Michelli, Boyer: Milbrandt gave an overview of those requesting appointment to various committees.

Motion (Russell/Lusiba) to ratify the WIB Chair’s appointments of Kelly Miller to the Executive and Membership Committees; Abdi Mohamed to the Tech and Youth Committees; Camila Mercado Michelli to the Youth Committee and Liz Boyer to the Construction-Greens Jobs Committee. Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

Committee Updates

Milbrandt shared:

WIB Policy Statements: A small group of Policy & Oversight Committee members convened to review the current policy statements. The recommendations of the work group indicated there are no significant changes in priorities. The changes to the 2025 statements are mostly in the format, presenting it in a simple and straight forward flyer layout rather than a document with a lot of text. There are six key legislative priorities for 2025, including the need to preserve the Dislocated Workers’ fund and asking for permanency of MN Youth Program funding. Once the final draft is completed, the policy document will be shared with legislators. The Policy Committee is also considering doing some legislative visits.

Youth Champion Awards: The Youth Workforce Champion Awards recognize people who have made a significant impact in supporting young people by fostering their person and professional growth.

Nominations for the 2025 Youth Workforce Champion Awards opened last week, with a deadline for submissions on February 19. The Youth Committee will convene in March to select recipients. The award presentations will take place at the April WIB meeting and at the Youth Works! networking event in May.

2025 Inclusive Workplaces Cohort: Applications for the fourth cohort opened this month. There will be an information session in February for interested businesses, with the application deadline being late February. Changes from the previous years’ cohorts include: 2-hour sessions rather than 1.5 hours, a fewer number of sessions, in-person cohort sessions starting in May, adding a historical data analysis, and the addition of a capstone project at the end of the cohort. The cohort recognition will be held at the December WIB luncheon.

Staff Updates

CareerForce Relocation: Milbrandt provided an update on the relocation effort, stating that the CareerForce location at 540 Fairview Ave. closed on January 9, 2025. The new location will open in late February/early March at Metro Square. Residents can still get help with their job searches during the move at the Saint Paul, Maplewood and Roseville career labs. A grand opening will be held this summer.

Upcoming Events: Milbrandt shared the following and asked that committee promote the upcoming WIB-supported events and initiatives:

- Inclusive Workforce Summit: January 29, 8am-1pm at the Science Museum of Minnesota. Volunteers from the WIB are needed to help in a variety of ways including greeting attendees and hosting breakout rooms.
- Top Trends to Watch in 2025 Webinar: February 19, Noon-1pm with RealTime Talent.
- Artist Job & Resource Fair: February 27, 2-5pm at Springboard for the Arts.
- Ramsey Green Expo & Career Fair: March 19, 10am-1pm at the Minnehaha Rec. Center.

February WIB Meeting: The plan for future WIB meetings is to have one of the committees take the lead to have their initiatives be the primary focus. The focus for February will be on the Policy Committee. There will be a legislative update and panel discussion, facilitated by Perlich. There will also be an update from the One-Stop Operator Consortium.

ARPA Project Showcase

Molenaar provided an update on the ARPA workforce investments. In 2021, \$25 million was allocated for high quality workforce programming. Nearly all the funds, which are available through September 2026, have been allocated or contracted out as of December 2024. There are a number of programs funded, including Driver's License Academy, Right Track Expansion, and Think Small Childcare Development, to name a few. Molenaar shared the amounts spent and the outcomes of each program. More information will be shared over the next year and a half when the funding ends.

Other

No other topics discussed.

Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 8:50am.

The next Executive Committee meeting is Wednesday, March 26, 2025, 7:30-9am.