

**Workforce Innovation Board of Ramsey County**  
**Executive Committee Meeting Minutes**  
Wednesday, March 22, 2023, 7:30-9:00am  
Meeting held using Zoom Video Conference

**Committee Members Present**

Susan Jambor  
Chad Kulas  
Tony Lusiba  
Rena Moran  
Don Mullin  
Sean Mullan  
Paul Nikstad  
Mary Russell  
Chris Tolbert

**Members Absent**

Elisa Rasmussen-EA

**Staff/Guests Present**

Ling Becker, Workforce Solutions  
Michelle Belitz, Workforce Solutions  
Hua Moua, Workforce Solutions  
Mariann Macalus, Workforce Solutions  
Becky Milbrandt, Workforce Solutions  
Bobbi Vangrinsven, Workforce Solutions

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**Call to Order, Introductions and Land Acknowledgement**

Chair Kulas called the meeting to order at 7:32am and read the Land Acknowledgement aloud.

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**Approve November Minutes**

**Motion (Jambor/Nikstad) to approve the January 25, 2023, minutes as presented. Motion carried unanimously by chat vote.**

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**Review WIB Financial Report and Strategic Funds Report**

Becker shared the amended 2023 Budget which reflects the updated carryover and revenue/expenditure totals, She explained how the WIB is funded and that the Admin allotment is captured at different stages. Becker reviewed the supplemental strategic priorities that were previously approved by this committee, sharing the events that have taken place in addition to events coming up over the next couple of months; i.e., Tech Month activities, Fair Opportunities, and Youth Job Fair. Milbrandt noted that part of the reason for the increased carryover is from the 2022 Career Connect event that wasn't invoiced until 2023. Kulas suggested that it would be a good idea to promote the annual job fair at Allianz Field a few months in advance. Milbrandt stated the job fair is Thursday, June 29. Because there are so many events occurring over the next few months, Milbrandt will provide a chart of events with the meeting follow up. Also, Becker to let this group know in advance when upcoming events are posted so everyone can reshare.

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**Membership**

*WIB & Committee Demographics Dashboards:* Kulas gave a snapshot of the vacancy report, indicating the need to fill the seat vacated by Chris Duffy and that the application for Lauren Hunter had been reviewed by the Membership Committee. A potential prospect to fill Duffy's seat is Jonathan Banks, who partnered with Visit Saint Paul on the Restaurant Resiliency Program. If he is not interested, then a recommendation from Visit Saint Paul could be requested as there is a desire to have someone from the hospitality sector. Becker shared that Banks is interested and plans to apply even though he is not directly affiliated with the hospitality industry. Becker also shared that the Membership Committee talked about a new Chair Elect and will start working on who might be interested. Rasmussen will lead the outreach.

*WIB & Committee Membership Dashboard:* Milbrandt provided an update on the membership dashboard, noting there hasn't been much change since the last Executive Committee meeting, but noting the potential need for more medium-sized businesses. The committee member dashboard, which contains information on committee members who are not WIB members, was reviewed. Milbrandt noted the make-up is similar to the WIB, with a strong representation of individuals who are Black and a closer blend of genders.

*WIB Membership Recommendation: Hunter:* Milbrandt stated this committee is being asked to make a recommendation on the appointment of Lauren Hunter to fill the County-Business seat.

*Ratification of Committee Appointment: Tesfalidet:* Milbrandt explained that Nardos Tesfalidet has applied to serve on the Youth Committee and asked this committee to consider ratifying the WIB Chair's appointment.

**Motion (Jambor/Russell) to recommend the Ramsey County Board of Commissioners appoint Lauren Hunter to fill the County Business seat on the WIB for the term ending July 31, 2023, and to ratify the WIB Chair's appointment of Nardos Tesfalidet to the Youth Committee. Motion carried unanimously by chat vote.**

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### **Committee Updates**

*Action Plan Status Reports:* Becker provided an update of the committees' activities. Committee chairs provided additional updates on specific projects and discussion topics. Becker thanked everyone for their support with all the work that has been done. Becker also shared the May events that are being planned for Tech Month and explained the partnerships with Full Stack, the St. Paul Area Chamber, MnTech and the city's Planning and Economic Development department. Becker also provided an update on a new program being funded by ARPA called the Young Adult Career Academy. The first cohort was supported by the county. The next cohort of 18 individuals (March-June 2023) will be in partnership with the county and city. Participants will get to interact with the Ramsey County Board. Tolbert was asked if arrangements could be made to have them attend the April 20 City Council meeting. Becker will work on these arrangements. Another ARPA-funded project includes 18 women on public assistance who are participating in EMS classes.

*Vern Vick Award:* Nikstad recapped the award's process and shared that the Youth Committee selected one award recipient, Dr. Tolulope Monisola Ola, who will be invited to the Youth Committee meeting in May. The award will be presented at the June WIB meeting.

**Suggested Motion (Tolbert/Jambor) to award Dr. Tolulope the 2023 Vern Vick Award as presented. Motion carried unanimously by chat vote.**

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### **Director's Updates**

*Legislative Priorities:* Becker provided a legislative update noting that she testified for the increase in funding for the Minnesota Youth Program (MYP). This funding will help get more young people in internships and help in doing outreach to schools that the WIB has previously supported. Nari Thao, a MYP participant through Hmong American Partnership, was spotlighted before the legislature.

*Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA):* Becker provided information and stressed the need to grow the infrastructure workforce in preparation for the influx of IIJA funds. Not only will these funds rebuild crumbling roads, bridges, airports and public transportation systems, but it will also create and sustain hundreds of thousands of job. She also shared information about the May 1 in-person panel discussion event sponsored by the WIB for Ramsey County stakeholders interested in learning more about how IIJA will impact workforce development.

*Fair Opportunities Advisory Group & Activities:* Becker provided a summary of the April 20 event at Creators Space. This event is being sponsored by the WIB in partnership with the St. Paul Area Chamber.

*One Stop Partner MOU and IFA:* Becker reviewed the One-Stop Operator functions and provided an update as to the timeline/next steps, with June 30 being the targeted deadline for starting the new Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). The Infrastructure Funding Agreement (IFA) is the agreement that funds the comprehensive CareerForce site and determines how the expenses are divided. Milbrandt stated that a draft MOU is being reviewed by county staff and attorneys and work on the IFA is still occurring. Negotiations with the One-Stop partners will be initiated once the MOU and IFA are complete.

*CareerForce Operations & Service Delivery and Relocation Ad Hoc Committees:* Becker shared information on the Service Delivery Ad Hoc Committee, launching in March, and the Relocation Ad Hoc Committee, launching in May.

*April WIB Meeting:* Becker previewed the April WIB Meeting which will focus on youth employment. There will be a short presentation from Wildflyer, a new coffee shop that employs homeless youth.

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**Program Snapshots: Minnesota Family Investment Program**

Belitz, Moua, and Vangrinsven gave a presentation, along with statistics of those served in the Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP), an employment assistance program. Everyone who receives cash assistance works with employment counselors to support their career and family goals. Most families who receive cash and food assistance from Ramsey County will automatically be enrolled in this program. There are many benefits of the program such as learning how to look for and secure work, advancing in their job, receiving training to get a certificate or degree, securing work placement at a real work site, working on their resume and interview skills, attending parenting classes and budgeting. Several program success stories were also shared.

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**Other**

Kulas reminded everyone that the April WIB meeting is on the second Thursday.

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**Adjourn**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:02am.

The next Executive Committee meeting is Wednesday, May 24, 2023, 7:30-9:00am.