

Workforce Innovation Board of Ramsey County
Executive Committee Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, November 15, 2023, 7:30-9:00am
Meeting held using Zoom Video Conference

Committee Members Present

Susan Jambor
Chad Kulas
Tony Lusiba
John McClean
Don Mullin
Paul Nikstad
Elisa Rasmussen
Mary Russell
Chris Tolbert

Members Absent

Rena Moran-EA

Staff/Guests Present

Ling Becker, Workforce Solutions
Michelle Belitz, Workforce Solutions
Lisa Guetzkow, Workforce Solutions
Mariann Macalus, Workforce Solutions
Becky Milbrandt, Workforce Solutions

Call to Order and Land Acknowledgement

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

Approve September Minutes

Motion (Jambor/Nikstad) to approve the September 27, 2023, minutes as presented. Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

2024 Committee Meeting Schedule

Becker shared the proposed committee schedule for next year, stating these meetings will remain virtual on the 4th Wednesday of odd-numbered months from 7:30-9am. There will be no meeting January 24 due to the Inclusive Hiring Connections Summit which all WIB members are encouraged to attend. Becker mentioned that the proposed schedule might have to be changed if the new councilmember who will replace Tolbert on this committee is not available at the planned time.

WIB Financial Report and Strategic Funds Reports and 2024 Proposed WIB Budget

Becker and Milbrandt reviewed the financial report noting a large uncollected revenue balance for the allotment which will get captured on the next report. All other revenues and expenses are routine. For the supplemental report, Becker thanked everyone for their continued support to move projects quickly throughout the year by allowing more funds for strategic priorities and the flexibility given to spend down the dollars without having to meet for every purchase. The proposed budget for 2024 was reviewed, noting new budget dollars of approximately \$240,000. The overall budget of \$306,581 includes the 2023 carryover, including \$50,000 for next year's Inclusive Workplaces Cohort which was recognized this year but won't be spent until next year. If awarded, grants applied for on behalf of the WIB would change this budget.

Membership

WIB & Committee Demographics Dashboards: Jambor gave a summary of the membership dashboard, noting that demographics will continue to be tracked on the County's data portal. The WIB committee dashboard reflects the new Tech Committee members Cacioppo and Byrne (pending) and the transition of Traub from being a committee member to holding a seat on the WIB. The Vacancy Report was reviewed noting Traub and Rapacz appointments are scheduled for County and City approvals later this month. An application from Collova is pending for the County Business seat; there is the need to identify a prospect for the City Business seat, targeting a Saint Paul manufacturer; and DEED is in the process of hiring a replacement for Shym Cook, who then will apply for the One-Stop County seat. Becker shared there is

some help needed in reaching out to St. Paul manufacturers. Both Russell and McClean are willing to reach out to Ruth Bremer from Regions when it becomes an active search.

WIB Committee Appointment - Byrne (Tech); Getachew-Kreusser (Policy and Oversight): Jambor reviewed the WIB bylaws Section 6.5 on Committee Appointments before requesting a suggested motion on the recommendations of Getachew-Kreusser and Byrne.

Motion (Kulas/Jambor) to ratify the WIB Chair's appointment of Hanna Getachew-Kreusser to the Policy & Oversight Committee and Annie Byrne to the Tech Committee. Motion carried by voice vote.

Partner Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and Infrastructure Funding Agreement (IFA)

Milbrandt provided a brief overview of the MOU and IFA process. The current partner MOU expired on June 30, 2023, while DEED leadership held internal conversations around the IFA. She shared that the current IFA was originally signed in 2018 and then extended to cover the 2020-2023 MOU while DEED received guidance from the Department of Labor on a new format. Because of the conversations regarding the relocation of the comprehensive CareerForce site, DEED has agreed to a renewal of the current MOU and IFA through December 31, 2024. The signed renewal document will be taken to the WIB for approval in December.

High Performance Workforce Boards

Becker shared information from the National Governors Association on building high-performing state and local workforce boards. Next year, the WIB will do an assessment to determine how it is doing overall in becoming a high functioning board. She also provided updates on action plans and 2024 work plans.

Director's Updates

Becker provided updates on the following:

CareerForce Relocation Ad Hoc Committee: A lot of work being done on the local one-stop delivery system, including selecting a physical location, is driven by data that has been gathered throughout the preliminary process. The proposed timeline for opening a new CareerForce location is late December 2024. A hub and spoke model will ensure services are offered in the community if the comprehensive site is relocated downtown, recognizing it is not easy for residents who are not familiar with downtown.

Industry Discussions: Employers need to be prepared to support job seekers into high growth and high wage areas of work; i.e., clean energy economy. There is an upcoming session to support employers regarding clean technology on December 4 at Sunrise Bank. In addition, Governor Walz suggested that Ramey County host a job fair for residents given his executive order removing college degree requirements for most state jobs. This creates an opportunity that the WIB can support along with the skills-based hiring movement to increase the knowledge and awareness on hiring candidates based on skills applicable to the job. Another aspect shared is to "tear the paper ceiling" to recognize the untapped potential of workers who are STARS – skilled through alternative routes. Employers need to be educated on how to assess skills-based hiring to help HR staff and structured based interviewing. Goodwill Easter Seals (GES) has resources to help with this and the hope is that GES will do an information session at the upcoming Inclusive Hiring Connections Summit. Given there has been outreach from manufacturers, there is also a need to recruit more manufacturing people on the WIB and this might be an opportunity to invest in manufacturing sector strategies in 2024.

Employer Services: There has been a lot of work done around employer services and continuing into 2024: (1) Successful Employer Training once a month; (2) Inclusive Employer Toolkit; (3) Inclusive Workplaces Cohort; (4) labor market information opportunities; (5) business retention and expansion opportunities; (6) Inclusive Hiring Connections Summit (January 24); and (7) Top Trends in Ramsey County's Workforce Landscape (January 17).

National Association of Counties (NACo) Visit: Commissioner McGuire, who is President of the National Association of Counties (NACo), is hosting the national NACo meeting in Ramsey County on November 30. This provides two opportunities to showcase the American Rescue Plan Act(ARPA) work, including a roundtable with President Biden's Advisor for Intergovernmental Affairs about the Learn & Earn

programs. Also, WFS' ARPA programs, specifically Youth Works! initiatives, have been selected to be the topic of the NACo Board's mobile tour event at 3M. Any WIB members interested in attending should let Becker know.

Drive for Five: The state released a grant opportunity for training in technology, labor, caring professions, manufacturing and educational and professional services. The WIB is partnering with Hennepin County's Workforce Board and the City of Minneapolis on an application. The other part of the grant is for chambers which would help with job placement services programs.

State, Regional and Local Plans: The planning guidance was received. There are new goals intended to ensure more coordination and alignment, employer-led industry-sector partnerships and inclusive, equitable and proactive workforce system. The local plan will come through several WIB committees in mid- to late March before being considered for WIB approval in April before being submitted to DEED.

December WIB Meeting: The agenda for the lunch time meeting was presented. It showcased the Inclusive Workplaces Cohort, recognition of Councilmember Tolbert, a feature of the Inclusive Employer Champions efforts and a preview of the two January events.

Program Snapshot: FAST and The People's Fellowship

Guetzkow gave a presentation on the Families Achieving Success Today (FAST) program. FAST helps Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP) families meet basic needs along with the Family Stabilization Services (FSS) where work requirements and timelines are adjusted for stabilization due to various factors to support families. By having all the partners coordinated together and focusing on stabilization efforts, there has been an increase in education, those looking for work, enrollment in social services and employment. Guetzkow shared the success of a participant who obtained a career in healthcare which had always been a dream of the participant and shared participant feedback. The FAST team was recently presented with the 2023 DHS Excellent Teamwork Award presented at the MFIP/DWP/Tribal TANF Conference. Belitz gave a presentation on The People's Fellowship (TPF). This is another whole family systems program which is focused on African American families on MFIP but also non-MFIP due to changes in funding over time. MFIP is a five- to six-month whole family model for family and community supports, culturally specific services, access to wealth and asset building opportunities and wrap around and employment supports. TPF is going strong with the start of the 11th cohort. There are legislative changes to simplify reporting requirements and stipends. Belitz shared testimonials about the impact TPF has had on participant's life. Becker shared that all the snapshots have been completed toward the Executive Committee's work plan.

Other

Rasmussen thanked Councilmember Tolbert for his leadership over the years.

Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 8:50am.

The next Executive Committee meeting is Wednesday, March 27, 2024, 7:30a-9am.