

**Workforce Innovation Board of Ramsey County**  
**Executive Committee Meeting Minutes**  
Friday, September 25, 2020, 7:30-9:00am  
Meeting held using Zoom Video Conference

**Committee Members Present**

Chad Kulas  
Karin McCabe  
Jim McDonough  
Sean Mullan  
Paul Nikstad  
Elisa Rasmussen  
Mary Russell  
Ramona Wilson

**Members Absent**

Chris Tolbert

**Staff/Guests Present**

Ling Becker, Ramsey County  
Holly Pratt, Ramsey County

---

**Call to Order**

Chair Chad Kulas called the meeting to order at 7:32 am. Rasmussen, the new Partnership and Equity Committee Chair, was welcomed.

---

**Approve July Minutes**

**Motion (McCabe/Nikstad) to approve the July 22, 2020 minutes as presented. Motion carried unanimously by roll call.**

---

**WIB Financial Report**

Pratt explained that the strategic priorities dollar will carry over to 2021. Becker would like to see some of these funds used to support the business community.

**Motion (Rasmussen/McDonough) to accept the July/August financial report as presented. Motion carried unanimously via roll call.**

---

**WIB Membership**

*WIB Appointments:* Each application was reviewed and the strategic thinking behind the recruitment of each applicant was discussed.

**Motion (Nikstad/McCabe) to recommend the appointments of Susan Jambor, Yolanda McIntosh, Tom Aasheim, Trish Stevens, Chris Duffy and Julie Thiel to the WIB. Motion carried unanimously by roll call.**

*WIB Appointments:* **Motion (Nikstad/McCabe) to ratify the WIB Chair's appointment of Mary Sue Hansen to the Youth Committee. Motion carried unanimously by roll call.**

*Vacancy Report and Membership Dashboard:* The dashboard and vacancy report were reviewed.

---

**Director's Updates**

*CARES Act Funding:* Becker reported that the Career Labs are open. An advertising campaign is underway to spread the word about these services. Over 100 contracts were executed to get the funds out to the community. Special attention was paid to funding youth initiatives. A new initiative starting soon is the Workforce Community Resiliency Fund, modeled after the Small Business Relief Fund but for workforce organizations who are struggling to stay viable. McDonough recognized Becker and her team for their work to get these funds deep into the community. Becker showed the website which lists all the organizations who received funding. She also shared details on the TechPak initiative. PCs for People is coming on as a new partner. There have been nearly 1,000 applications. An ad campaign is being launched to get more donated computers. Becker hopes to spend all \$15M designated for workforce by

December 31. McDonough explained that any unspent city money in Ramsey and Hennepin Counties will roll up to the safety net hospitals rather than go the counties.

*Ramsey County Competitiveness & Inclusion Plan Next Steps:* Becker will be meeting with the County's Economic Development Director to continue discussions about this work. She would like to see some of the Plan's recommendation feed into the WIB's 2021 work plan.

*October WIB Meeting:* The draft agenda was reviewed. Meeting highlights include a presentation on the hospitality industry by Jacob Wascalus from MN Compass, CARES funded project updates from organizations receiving funding, information about regional virtual services and plans for a customer service survey.

*Other:*

- The Saint Paul City Council honored Butch Howard for his 13 years serving on the WIB.
- Becker shared updated unemployment data from across the state. Ramsey County has the highest rate of unemployment when viewed from a regional perspective. Unemployment rates are starting to level off after the peak of over 500,000 in May. Layoffs have disproportionately impacted youth, those with less education and BIPOC communities. Services at CareerForce Centers are still only being offered virtually. Conversations are taking place with the state to encourage them to make services more accessible for those with technology barriers. Maureen Ramirez could be invited to an upcoming WIB meeting to talk about the state's diversity vision.
- Becker will be making time on her calendar for 1:1 meetings with all interested WIB members. She plans to integrate the same questions the Governor's Workforce Development Board is asking their members.

---

### **Executive Committee Work Plan Dashboard & Committee Work Plans**

Becker shared an updated work plan dashboard. She will be reaching out to each committee chair in the next month to talk about plan updates for 2021. The progress made by the Executive Committee was reviewed. Russell commended Becker for the way she was able to pivot and respond to recent crises.

---

### **Other**

McCabe suggested the WIB/OSO provide additional mental health training and resources for partners' frontline staff. McDonough suggested connecting to the resources available through the Ramsey County and Suburban Ramsey Family Collaboratives. Nikstad will also reach out to his resources at Job Corps. Becker will take this topic back to the OSO Consortium for further discussion and planning.

McDonough called out the need to focus on disparities and inequities, particularly in Ramsey and Hennepin Counties. The diversity statement put out by DEED was shared in the chat. McDonough stressed the need to hold DEED accountable for putting action to words. He also highlighted the need to align the WIB's mission with the missions of other willing partners in the region to move equity work forward. Russell explained that MSPWIN is sunsetting this year and will be sharing a report on their key learnings. McDonough noted that there is a need to build trust in the community. The CARES contracts were key to building that trust. McCabe suggested the WIB host an equity workshop for local businesses.

Kulas mentioned plans for a vendor fair on October 27 in the Midway Area. This would be an opportunity for general contractors to meet with smaller, BIPOC owned businesses interested in contracting with businesses that were damaged during the civil unrest. A few other industries could also be involved in the event. Kulas will send the details to Becker to share with the WIB.

---

### **Adjourn**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:59 am.

**Next meeting:** October 28, 2020, 7:30-8:30 am Workforce Recovery Workshop  
November 18, 2020, 7:30-9:00 am Regular Executive Committee Meeting