

Workforce Innovation Board of Ramsey County
Policy & Oversight Committee Meeting Minutes
Thursday, January 9, 2020
3:00-4:30 pm

Present:

James McClean
Sean Mullan
Sheila Olson
Shannon Watson

Absent:

Lisa Guetzkow
Ryan Hauschild
Greg Mellas-EA

Staff/Guests:

Ling Becker, Ramsey County
Karyn Berg, Workforce Solutions
Liz McLoone, DEED

Call to Order

Chair Sean Mullan called the meeting to order at 3:00 pm. All those in attendance introduced themselves.

Approve November Minutes

Motion (Watson/McClean) to approve the November 22, 2019 Policy Committee meeting minutes as presented. Motion carried.

Conflict of Interest Statement

Mullan explained that all WIB and committee members are asked to review the policy annually. Copies of the acknowledgement form were distributed for members to sign and return.

Rapid Response Presentation

McLoone provided an overview of the Rapid Response program and the steps DEED takes when notified of an impending layoff. She explained that Dislocated Worker and, in some cases, Trade Adjustment Assistance funds, are available to the affected workers. TAA provides a higher education spending max and is a lifetime benefit, but TAA is only available to those whose jobs were eliminated due to increased imports. The goal of Rapid Response is to prevent layoffs when possible, limit the impact on workers, and help the affected workers transition to new employment as soon as possible. McLoone noted that DEED would like to strengthen the language in the Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification (WARN) Act and Minnesota's Mini WARN Act, which requires that businesses provide advance notification of plant closings and mass layoffs. Currently, there are no actions taken against businesses who violate the Act. The Rapid Response process includes face-to-face meetings with the employer and group meetings with the employees where the workers are asked to complete a survey. Concerns about the complexity of the survey questions and the need to fill out multiple forms were raised. Becker also pointed out the drawbacks of the timing and the competitive process that prevents the public workforce system from engaging the impacted people until the layoff is designated an official project. She suggested there be a better system to reach the most marginalized workers faster, similar to what happened with Water Gremlin. McLoone stated that Rapid Response is doing a lot of good, but she acknowledged that there are pieces and situations that could be better aligned. She agreed to bring the feedback from the committee back to DEED staff. Mullan suggested this conversation continue at the regional level. Berg stressed the need for big community messaging to let people know that workforce services are available to everyone, all the time.

Committee Work Plan and Dashboard

Local Candidate Information Sheet: A sample information sheet was reviewed. Mullan suggested a small edit to how the WIB Chair and Chair-elects' titles are listed. Watson suggested this sheet be used when meeting with legislators or candidates. Becker will add a broad statement about connecting with candidates to the committee's dashboard to allow flexibility in determining how and with which

candidates these connections are made. Becker noted that training all WIB members on how to communicate the policy positions is on the committee's work plan. Plans for this training will be discussed at the next committee meeting and then presented to the WIB in April or June.

Policy Alignment Mapping: A chart developed by Watson to track information on local legislators was reviewed. There was discussion about the content of the chart and how information will be shared going forward. There was agreement that the chart is a valuable tool for identifying which legislators to target.

2020 Advocacy Efforts: Becker confirmed that MAWB is not planning a large 'day on the hill' event this year. McClean and Watson suggested scheduling introductory meetings with local legislators early in the session, ideally in February or March. They will identify the top ten legislators the WIB should try to meet. As soon as the list is created, potential dates will be selected. Becker suggested there be an announcement at the next WIB meeting to see if other business members are interested in attending.

Committee Dashboard: Becker will update the strategic outcomes dashboard based on the committee's progress. She also mentioned that Ramsey County is launching an economic development vision study. WIB members will serve as the workforce subcommittee. The County plan is expected to be done by the end of 2020.

WIOA Adult & Dislocated Worker Dashboards

The latest dashboard was reviewed. Becker mentioned several program highlights and explained that expanding partnerships will help reach more people of color. She reported that Minneapolis, Saint Paul and Hennepin and Ramsey Counties are working together on a JP Morgan Chase Advancing Cities Grant proposal that builds on the MSP Tech Hire model. McClean asked that data on income level at the time of layoff be added to the next Dislocated Worker report. Mullan recommended combining the federal and state Dislocated Worker dashboards into one and adding a pie chart showing the percentage of funding from each source. Olson would like to know the racial makeup of Ramsey County to help understand how this compares to who is being served.

Other

No other items were discussed.

Adjourn

Upon completion of the agenda, the meeting was adjourned at 4:28pm.

Next meeting: March 12, 2020 at MCIT, 100 Empire Drive, Suite 100 - Saint Paul