

Workforce Innovation Board of Ramsey County

Policy Committee Meeting Minutes

October 17, 2019

3:00-4:30 pm

Present:

James McClean
Sean Mullan
Sheila Olson
Shannon Watson

Absent:

Ryan Hauschild
Greg Mellas-EA

Staff/Guests:

Ling Becker, Ramsey County
Jeanna Fortney, MAWB
Becky Milbrandt, WIB Staff
Jennifer O'Rourke, Ramsey County

Call to Order

Chair Sean Mullan called the meeting to order at 3:03 pm.

Approve February Minutes

Motion (Watson/McClean) to approve the May 9, 2019 Policy Committee meeting minutes as presented. Motion carried.

Local Plan Updates

Becker reported that the PY2018-19 Local Plan is being updated to include several items already approved by the WIB, including:

- Contracted services
- Incumbent worker training
- The local priorities of service approved by the WIB in October

The updated Plan will go to the full WIB for final approval in December.

Motion (Watson/McClean) to recommend approval of the updated PY18-19 Local Plan as presented. Motion carried.

SNAP Changes

Becker distributed a letter from the DHS Commissioner to the U.S. Department of Agriculture with comments on a proposed SNAP rule change. The proposed change to the broad-based categorical eligibility guidelines would increase the income threshold by over \$7,000, causing approximately 5,000 Ramsey County residents to no longer be eligible for SNAP benefits. Becker explained that this would have minimal impact on Workforce Solutions (WFS), a provider of the voluntarily SNAP E&T Program, but it would have a direct impact on other County departments. O'Rourke will inquire about comments submitted by Ramsey County, including a letter from County Board Chair McDonough to Rep. McCollum. McClean stated that HealthPartners also submitted comments on the proposed rule change.

MAWB Platform Update

Fortney introduced herself as the new Executive Director of the MN Association of Workforce Boards (MAWB). MAWB's legislative committee is scheduled to meet next week to begin work on their 2020 priorities. Fortney provided a copy of MAWB's 2019 funding and policy priorities. There was discussion about bringing the local and statewide WIBs together to have a stronger voice at the Capitol. Becker will talk to Andrea Ferstan about having a local Day at the Capitol. MAWB will be discussing a statewide Day on the Hill at their meeting next week. It was suggested that a Workforce Day at the Capitol be considered. To build relationships with local legislators, WIB members could also be invited to participate in existing legislative receptions/meet and greet events hosted by area chambers. Watson will compile a list of local events and invites will be sent to the WIB. It was suggested that Rep. Mahoney be

invited to the December WIB meeting. O'Rourke and Becker will create an invite on behalf of the County, WIB Chair and Policy Committee Chair. Mullan will contact McCabe to ensure she is supportive of this idea.

2020 WIB Legislative Platform

The 2019 WIB platform was reviewed. There was discussion about items the WIB could consider supporting in 2020, such as:

- Additional funding for school career counselors. It was suggested that the committee find a bill to support when talking with legislators. O'Rourke suggested the committee look at the bill being authored by Senator Kent; however, 2020 isn't an appropriation year and it is unlikely that there would be a special appropriation for this.
- Changes to Human Resources laws related to youth workers/trainees.
- River's Edge and other economic development bonding bills that have workforce implications.

The committee will spend more time at the next meeting talking about 2020 priorities. The committee will review MAWB, GMWC, Ramsey County and the City of Saint Paul's platforms to ensure alignment.

WIB Strategic Planning

Mullan introduced a proposal to expand the committee's purpose to include the role of program oversight. Becker plans to make this and other committee structure recommendations to the Executive Committee next week. A list of the new structure was handed out. There was discussion about what the oversight role would entail. Becker provided examples of two reports WFS is developing; one a high-level overview and one containing more program details. She suggested the committee review the high-level reports on every program and a detailed report on one program at each meeting. Comments on this change included:

- The committee will need more members to take on this additional work.
- Committee members would benefit from having a deeper knowledge of the programs and would be able to share/explain them better to other WIB members.
- There would be greater accountability while allowing the full WIB to focus on more interactive engagement.
- This would address concerns raised during the audit.
- There would be an additional link/information reporting back to the Executive committee.
- Reviewing the reports could feed into policy ideas.
- The reports are going to be done regardless because they are being used internally.

Committee members were agreeable to taking on the oversight role. The committee meetings will shift to an every other month schedule for 2020. Becker will look into having the meetings at the Association of MN Counties office or someplace closer to downtown.

Other

Becker mentioned that Senator Smith released a bill and her office is checking to see if there is alignment with local boards. Becker will send the bill out to the committee to make sure there are no negative impacts; however, the bill is not expected to go very far.

Fortney announced that she will be lead staff on a new committee on economic development and workforce. Becker has applied to be a member.

The November meeting will be rescheduled to November 22 at 2pm in North Saint Paul.

Adjourn

Upon completion of the agenda, the meeting was adjourned at 4:09 pm.