

Workforce Innovation Board of Ramsey County

Youth Committee Meeting

Thursday, January 18, 2024

3:00-4:00 PM

Members Present

Tom Aasheim
Breanna Galuska
Jennifer Germain
Mary Sue Hansen
Hyon Kim
Sheri Riemers
Nardos Tesfalidet
Aalayha Traub

Members Absent

Staff/Guests Present

Ling Becker, Workforce Solutions
Kristi Cobbs, Workforce Solutions
Mariann Macalus, Workforce Solutions
Bradley Mahr, Workforce Solutions
Rachael Molenaar, Workforce Solutions
Ginny Nayman-Tonn, HHH Jobs Corp. Center

Call to Order & Land Acknowledgement

Becker called the meeting to order at 3:02pm. Introductions were made. Hansen read the land acknowledgement aloud.

Approval November Minutes

Motion (Aasheim/Hansen) to approve the November 16, 2023, Youth Committee meeting minutes as presented. Motion carried by chat vote.

Conflict of Interest Acknowledgement

Becker shared the policy with the Committee and reminded everyone that any WIB and committee member who has a conflict of interest abstain from the discussion/voting. The process has been simplified so that not everyone at the committee level will be asked to sign the acknowledgement but acknowledge their responsibility in abstaining as necessary. It will be presented at the full Workforce Board prior to the February meeting.

2024-25 Unified Local Youth Plan

Mahr provided an update on the Local Youth Plan seeking approval from the WIB on the new Program Year. There are no significant changes in programming structure as the contracts signed in 2021 continue through March 2027. These items were noted: DEED added new documents to their list of required plan attachments; Workforce Solutions (WFS) will not seek revision of DEED's preestablished PY 2024 WIOA Youth performance outcomes; WFS established a local definition of an individual who is "basic skills deficient; work being done with Roadtrip Nation and Youth Lens 360 to develop a new career exploration and readiness website which will launch in spring 2024; WFS to expand service offerings for both "youth with language and/or cultural barriers to employment" and "youth involved in the juvenile justice system; and WFS is hiring an Outreach to Schools Program Specialist (blended funding). Board members reviewed the plan and the Full Board will approve the Youth Plan at its February meeting.

Committee Work Plan/Project

Youth Workforce Champion Awards: Becker provided background of the Vern Vick Award which was awarded to someone in the community who works with youth. In previous Committee discussions, it was determined to rename the award so the WIB could be clear on what was being represented. Starting this year there will be two awards – Legacy and Rising Star -- for people who have made a significant impact in supporting young people. Nominations are due by March 14 followed by selection of award recipients by the Youth Committee. The awards will be presented at the WIB meeting April 4 at the High School of Recording Arts. The link for nomination will be sent and members are asked to spread it throughout their networks.

Youth Works! 2024 Plan

Ongoing Activities: Becker recapped the ongoing activities of the Youth Works:

- Ongoing month: monthly newsletter, orientation, supervisory training
- Looking ahead: Driver's License Academy – more focus on evaluation for larger state-wide systems change impact

- Power Within Us and Unleash Potential: outreach and recruitment; outcomes and evaluation
- Employer Services Efforts: industry month alignments, inclusive resources
- Inclusive Hiring Connections Summit – January 24, 2024
- Inclusive Workplaces Cohort – start of the third cohort

Members were encouraged to sign up for the newsletters, attend one of the orientation sessions and the January 24 Summit.

Job Fair: Molenaar shared that plans for the 2024 Youth Job Fair will begin February. If you are interested in being a part of this great event, please connect with her.

ARPA Update

Right Track Expansion: Becker shared that the County will be leveraging the Right Track program to serve suburban Ramsey County young people with county funding. The County will also be leveraging its resources and partnership to expand employer sites for Right Track both in the city and throughout the county. Molenaar and Tesfalidet shared their excitement to provide this new opportunity. Application opened ahead of schedule and already there are over 200 applications. The goal is 900 internships this number, a hundred more than last year. If you or know of employer partners who are interested in hosting, let Tesfalidet know. Employer toolkit will be shared with this Committee.

Department of Labor Youth Systems Building Academy

Molenaar shared that Ramsey County has been selected as one of the nine communities by the Department of Labor Youth Systems Building Academy to expand opportunities for youth workers across the nation and improve their employment outcomes. The inaugural meetings will be in Washington DC mid-February. The “communities” will exchange knowledge and ideas, address common challenges, share best practices and receive ongoing consultation and technical support to develop strategies that improve youth employment outcomes. Ramsey County Workforce Solutions is the community lead with the City of Saint Paul, Face-to-Face, Youthprise, Saint Paul Public Schools, Saint Paul college as community partners.

Tech Squads

Molenaar shared information on the new pilot program. It is an opportunity for people in Ramsey County ages 18-24 to earn a stipend while studying and receiving Comp TIAA+ certification. If you have any young people interested, have them connect with Molenaar as the living in low-income census tract is tricky. This program will start in March with two other sessions, one in late summer and one next winter. A program specialist is being hired to support the young people as they go through the program. Galuska, Becker and Molenaar will connect for next year.

Committee Chair

Becker shared that after the employment change in this Committee’s chair, the WIB needed to comply with having a representative from a private organization. She shared that Traub has agreed to be the Chair of this Committee. Traub provided a brief background of her work experience and her passion around youth and is looking forward to being part of this Committee and the WIB.

Motion (Hansen/Galuska) to approve the election of Traub as Chair of this Committee. Motion carried unanimously by chat vote.

Committee Member Updates/Other Business

Hansen shared that she would like to have a better use of the employer directory tool for the new fiscal year. Becker reminded everyone of the January 24 Summit and the Top Ten Trends webinar link will be sent in the follow up email.

Adjourn

Upon completion of the agenda, the meeting was adjourned at 3:49pm.

Next Meeting: March 16, 2024, 3:00-4:00pm via Zoom