

Workforce Innovation Board of Ramsey County
Youth Committee Meeting
March 19, 2020, 2:30-4:00pm
2266 2nd Street N., North Saint Paul, MN 55109
Call-in: 651-266-6900 - Meeting Number 66025

Members Present

Tom Aasheim
Karen Gerdin
Larry Gilbertson
Hyon Kim
Gaye Adams Massey
Robert Morse
Paul Nikstad
Sheri Riemers

Members Absent

Breanna Galuska
Jennifer Germain-EA
Camila Mercado Michelli-EA
Allan Mwamba
Tim O'Brien

Staff/Guests Present

Ling Becker, Workforce Solutions
Rachael Molenaar, Workforce Solutions
CJ Stanton, Workforce Solutions

Call to Order

Chair Paul Nikstad called the meeting to order at 2:32 pm. It was noted that due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the meeting was held via conference call.

Approve January Youth Committee Minutes

Motion (Gilbertson/Gerdin) to approve the January 16, 2020 Youth Committee minutes as presented.

Motion carried unanimously by roll call. Morse was not in attendance for this vote.

2020 Vern Vick Award Nominations

Nikstad announced that two nominations were received: Vinh Chung (Beyond Walls) and Mary Sue Hansen (Suburban Ramsey Family Collaborative). The recipient will be invited to the May Youth Committee meeting and the award will be presented at the June WIB meeting.

Motion (Nikstad/Gilbertson) to approve the selection of Mary Sue Hansen as the recipient of the 2020 Vern Vick Memorial Award. Motion carried unanimously by roll call. Morse was not in attendance for this vote.

PY 2020 Unified Local Youth Plan

Molenaar explained that the PY19 Plan was updated after the federal monitoring visit last summer. Items of note in PY 20 Plan included:

- Permission from DEED to submit the Plan without the budget due to allocations not being known yet.
- DEED requested youth performance measures from each area. Employment after exit, wages, credential attainment and measurable skills gain measures were based on previous results and trend data.
- Information on the subgrantee partnerships with HIRED, YWCA and Hmong American Partnership.
- New partnerships with Ramsey County Economic Development and RealTime Talent.
- Released of an RFP for community services to support the thirteen elements. Nine proposals were received. Molenaar asked for volunteers to review the proposals.

Becker anticipates that a Plan modification may be needed in the near future to address the impact of COVID-19.

Motion (Massey/Reimers) to recommend approval of the PY 2020 Unified Local Youth Plan as presented.

Motion carried unanimously by roll call vote. Morse was not in attendance for this vote.

WIOA Youth Dashboard

No update.

Youth Homelessness

No update.

Updates

Ramsey County Youth Works! Initiative: No update.

Outreach to Schools Program: No update.

Right Track/Ramsey County Partnership: No update.

MN Youth Program – 2019: No update.

Maplewood Career Lab: No update.

Committee Dashboard Review

No update.

Committee Member Updates

Members shared information about how COVID-19 is impacting their organizations:

Workforce Solutions (WFS): Becker announced that Ramsey County has ceased all walk-in services this week to allow time to redesign service delivery. The North Saint Paul site will stay closed and most staff will work from home. Trainings and work experiences have halted. A hotline and online page will be set up for clients. Becker explained that there has been a huge spike in Unemployment Insurance (UI) claims; however, they won't filter into workforce programs for several weeks. Becker will send out information about county resources.

Ironworkers 512: Gilbertson explained that all training has been suspended for two weeks and possibly longer. Some job sites have slowed down but many are still going.

Job Corps: Nikstad reported that Job Corps is on a four-week break. All but thirteen students returned home.

Saint Paul Public Schools ABE: Gerdin stated that the teacher's strike ended last week. All teachers are now back to work and providing distance learning from home. The state ABE program has established a "hold harmless" rule for funding. A concern going forward is how they will finish out their grants.

Finishing Trades: Aasheim reported that all classes have been suspended for four weeks. This could be pushed out which will be challenging due to the required lead times for these trainings.

Ain Dah Yung: Reimers explained that homeless youth may not understand the severity of the situation. Many are overwhelmed and struggling due to lack of a support systems. Eliminating face-to-face contact is causing a lot of issues on site. There may be a need to reduce the numbers by 50% so each resident can be isolated.

MN Best Inc.: Kim highlighted the need to follow the social distancing advice and expressed concern about the lack of testing. Her business allows her staff to work remotely although she had to cancel her Korean refugee who was coming to train. There is fear in the Asian community about a backlash related to the virus origins.

YWCA: Massey reported that the Y closed its fitness center. Program staff have been transitioned to work at home. Most training sessions have been halted but they are looking into distance options. Massey requested guidance on how to maintain the flow of support services to program participants while still tracking for audit purposes. Molenaar noted that WFS is having the same concerns. Questions have been posed to DHS but no guidance has been given yet. Molenaar will share information with Massey when it becomes available.

MidCounty Bank: Morse stated that the branch location is closed. A declaration about Small Business Administration loan programs is expected soon. Banks are reaching out to clients to help meet business needs.

Other

No other items were discussed.

Adjourn

Upon completion of the agenda, the meeting was adjourned at 3:36 pm.

Next Meeting: May 21, 2:30-4:00, Job Corps – Building 1, 1480 N. Snelling Ave., St. Paul