

## Workforce Innovation Board of Ramsey County

### Youth Committee Meeting

September 17, 2020, 2:30-4:00pm

#### Members Present

Tom Aasheim  
Breanna Galuska  
Mary Sue Hansen  
Hyon Kim  
Gaye Adams Massey  
Robert Morse  
Paul Nikstad

#### Members Absent

Karen Gerdin  
Jennifer Germain  
Camila Mercado Michelli  
Sheri Riemers

#### Staff/Guests Present

Rachael Molenaar, Workforce Solutions  
CJ Stanton, Workforce Solutions

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#### Call to Order

Chair Paul Nikstad called the meeting to order at 2:33 pm. Everyone in attendance introduced themselves.

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#### Approve July Youth Committee Minutes

**Motion (Aasheim/Massey) to approve the July 16, 2020 Youth Committee minutes as presented. Motion carried unanimously by roll call.**

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#### CARES Act Youth Funding

Molenaar shared local and national statistics on youth unemployment rates during COVID. Unemployment rates for youth ages 16-24 are declining but not as fast as other age groups. There are likely more unemployed youth than are being reported due to a law restricting high school students from collecting unemployment benefits. Youth, those with less education and BIPOC communities are most affected by job loss. Molenaar provided an overview of how the county is spending its \$96M in CARES funding. The funds designated for employment support have been used to open six Career Labs, establish the TechPak initiative and invest in 96 community projects. Over half of the community projects are specifically for people ages 15-24, impacting over 2,300 youth. A team of county evaluators is tracking the programs to measure success. The county is also looking at the relaxed spending practices utilized during COVID to determine ways to improve processes post-COVID. Molenaar encouraged committee members to contact her if they are aware of youth that need services. She will send the presentation slides to the group.

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#### Updates

*Youth Industry Panels:* Stanton reported on a series of story-focused industry panels being offered for BIPOC youth. So far, the events have been well attended. The next one, focusing on small business/automotive/financing will take place in October. Hansen suggested these be recorded so they can be shared out.

*Youth Program Desk Monitoring:* Stanton reported that Workforce Solution (WFS) has been notified that it will be monitored by DEED this year. He will update the group when more is known.

*COVID-19 Impacts on Programs/Service Delivery:* This topic was covered in the CARES Act Funding update.

*Summer Youth Employment Program:* Stanton reported that 46 youth were served over the summer through a virtual format at 12 different job sites. Over 50% attended online personal development courses. Stanton provided demographic breakdowns of the participants. He also explained that the summer program focuses on younger/in school youth because the program is funded with more flexible state dollars.

*Outreach to Schools (OTS) 2020-2021:* Molenaar provided a brief explanation of the program. With school being so different this year, how the program will be delivered is still being discussed.

*Ramsey County Youth Works!:* This group continues to meet to work on its goal of promoting the value of youth working and opening doors for getting kids into their first work opportunities. Due to the current climate, implementing the strategic efforts is on hold. Hansen stressed the importance of letting the schools know what feedback came out of the community conversation with youth that took place over the summer. Nikstad will connect someone from Job Corps to this work.

*MN Youth Program Report:* Molenaar explained that the report was sent out to everyone. She suggested people read the success story.

### **WIOA Youth Performance Outcomes**

Molenaar reported that Ramsey County is currently meeting all measures. She explained that historically, federal benchmarks have been set by DOL and dictated to local areas by DEED. For PY20-21, DEED allowed local areas to negotiate their performance outcomes. Civil unrest in the Midway allowed Ramsey County to negotiate its Employment after Exit performance outcome down from 75% to 74%. Other measures have not been adjusted for COVID. There is concern across the state about the ability to meet these outcomes. Stanton explained that the threshold for negative financial consequences is fairly low; however, the economic climate at the time these youth will exit is unknown.

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### **WIOA Youth Dashboard**

Molenaar explained that youth counselors are focusing on those most impacted; primarily 18-21 year-olds who are out of high school but not in any post-secondary education and 14-17 year-olds who are struggling with distance learning. She shared a slide showing demographic data on youth being served by WFS and its contracted partners.

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### **Committee Dashboard Review**

Nikstad reviewed the current committee dashboard goals. Molenaar noted that WFS plans to do a customer service survey of participants across programs. Nikstad asked committee members to consider youth who could join the committee. He also asked members to consider other items to add to the dashboard.

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### **Committee Member Updates**

*YMCA:* Massey talked about the YWCA's monthly community conversations focusing on areas such as housing instability/homelessness, voting/civic engagement, domestic violence and education. The goal is to share information about how racism affects these systems. Massey invited everyone to attend.

*Suburban Ramsey Family Collaborative:* Hansen shared information about their work with homeless prevention practitioners. Training and employment are key components.

*Job Corps:* Nikstad reported that no new students have been allowed on campus since March. Job Corps anticipates allowing new students to start virtually next month.

*Saint Paul Public Schools:* Galuska expressed appreciation for the Earn and Learn program opportunities. They are focusing efforts on supporting teachers and families on distance learning.

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### **Other**

No other items were discussed.

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### **Adjourn**

Upon completion of the agenda, the meeting was adjourned at 3:59 pm.

**Next Meeting:** November 19, 2:30-4:00, Job Corps – Building 1, 1480 N. Snelling Ave., St. Paul or virtually