

Ramsey County Workforce Investment Board
Communication, Advocacy and Oversight Committee

November 12, 2004

Minutes

WIB Members Present	Members Absent	Staff/Guests Present	
Greg Lambert, Chair	Bill Fritts	Kitty Gogins, WIB CEO	Tom Triplett, City of Saint Paul
Patricia Brady	Hyon Kim	Kate Bates, WIB Staff	Readus Fletcher, City of Saint Paul
Gary Christensen	Jackie Mlynarczyk EA	Ellen Watters, WIB Chair	
Tom Macy		Terry Zurn, Workforce Solutions	
Paul Nelson			
Willie Nesbit			
Phil Saari			
Councilmember Montgomery			

Call to Order

Greg Lambert, chair, called the meeting to order at 11:32am. Greg added an agenda item to elect a vice-chair to replace Teresa Tschida, who has left her employer. This item will follow approval of the 2005 legislative agenda.

Approve Minutes

Motion made by Tom Macy with second by Patricia Brady to approve the minutes of September 10 as written.

Motion passed

Approve Operating Rule on Guests at WIB Meetings

The Oversight committee drafted an operating procedure on how to deal with guests at WIB meetings, loosely based on the procedure used at the GWDC meetings. This was drafted from a request by WIB leadership, desiring a formal rule for the interaction of guests at WIB and committee meetings.

Motion made by Tom Macy with second by Patricia Brady to approve the operating rule on guests at WIB meetings.

Motion carried

Approve 2005 Legislative Agenda

The Marketing and Advocacy Sub-Committee drafted a state level "2005 Legislative and Other Advocacy Priorities" document. Overall, the changes from last year are not major. They include: (1) making points more broad; (2) some shifting of priorities between "top" and the "other" category [e.g. shifted Governor's Workforce Council local representation down since less urgent with new chair being from Ramsey County; and overall need for training was moved up and combined with need for locally controlled funds for incumbent worker training] and (3) some adjustments due to changes in the past year [e.g. Building Lives and East Metro Health Careers Institute are facing discontinuation due to lack of funding, the workforce committee recommends updating industry sector priorities, and DEED has another proposed change in the use of the Workforce Development Fund). A major piece in this document is to accomplish the priorities without raising taxes, emphasizing instead a shift in allocation.

There was discussion on what the WIB was doing for advocacy related to workforce development for individuals with disabilities. As opportunities arise, WIB staff will advocate as appropriate within the framework of this document. The comment was made that the state has recently asked all WorkForce Centers to have their staff go through training to learn how to better serve people with disabilities.

Motion made by Phil Saari with second by Paul Nelson to approve the 2005 legislative agenda.

Motion carried

Tom Macy abstained

Elect New Vice-Chair

Teresa Tschida, who had been the vice-chair for this committee, has left her organization and is no longer on the WIB. The role of the vice-chair is to fill in for the chair, and does not include significant incremental time.

Motion made by Gary Christensen with second by Tom Macy to nominate Gary Christensen as the vice-chair of the CAO committee.

Motion made by Patricia Brady with second by Phil Saari to close the nominations.

Motions carried

**Discuss and Make Recommendation on WorkForce Center Number and Site Selection Characteristics
Review Information on WorkForce Center Operation**

Currently there are three resource rooms in Ramsey County. It has become apparent that sufficiently staffing all three rooms will be difficult. Currently the cost is about \$225K per year to run and staff one resource room. The state Job Service Program (Wegner Peyser funding), which is a large contributor of funds to operate the resource rooms, has had stagnant funding for over 20 years. Purchase power of the funds has actually gone down by over a third during this period. This past year, local WIA Title 1 funds have had to be used to fund staff at the North St Paul WorkForce Center. Due to a formula allocation change in 2004, this was achieved without reducing the number of participants served by the Title 1 programs. If more program funds are used to support resource room operation, the number of people served by the programs will decrease. With the existing and expected funding, it seems that two resource rooms could be sufficiently staffed.

Review Demographic Information

A large diversity of information was shared about WorkForce Center locations, other locations offering resource room services to program clientele, demographic information for St. Paul and suburban Ramsey County, current WorkForce Center visitors and their mode of transport (survey done last week), program clientele, and bus routes. WIB staff will synthesize the vast array of information prior to the next meeting.

Discussion

The array of stakeholders present at the meeting all agreed that the WorkForce Center locations should best fit the needs of the clients. The City of Saint Paul would like to see a center remain in downtown and questions the need of the North Saint Paul site. They offered assistance from Readus Fletcher to locate space to house a center in downtown. All agreed that issues such as location of population, poverty and transportation were imperative to this decision, that all demographic information should be examined, and that all stakeholders need to be able to weigh in on this decision. A decision was deferred.

Next Steps

The two items that need to be decided on by this committee are: the recommendation to consolidate centers in Ramsey County from three down to two and to look at criteria important in making the decision of site selection. It was suggested that this committee meet again in one month, on December 10, to come to a conclusion on this topic. This time will allow for more stakeholders to have input and for the customer data to be organized.

Motion made by Willie Nesbit with second by Phil Saari to hold a CAO meeting on December 10 from 11:30-1:00 to bring closure to this issue.

Motion carried

Adjourn

Motion made by Phil Saari with second by Willie Nesbit to adjourn the meeting at 1:00.

Motion carried.

Next Meeting- December 10, North Saint Paul WorkForce Center