

Ramsey County Workforce Investment Board
Communication, Advocacy and Oversight Committee

September 8, 2006
Minutes

WIB Members Present

Nancy Hendrickson
Tom Macy

Members Absent

Patricia Brady
Amy Brenengen
Tom Klas
Jackie Mlynarczyk EA
Deborah Montgomery
Willie Nesbit

Staff/Guests Present

Mary Jo Gardner, WIB CEO
Kate Bates, WIB Staff
Susan Speetzen, MN Dept. of
Employment and Eco. Dev.

Call to Order

Nancy Hendrickson, Acting Chair, called meeting to order at 11:38.

Approve Minutes

Motion made by Tom Macy with second by Nancy Hendrickson to approve the minutes from July 14 as written.

Motion passed

Licensure of Foreign-Trained Health Care Professionals Grant

Susan Speetzen, MN Department of Employment and Economic Development, came to give more information on the foreign-trained healthcare professional grant for which the CAO committee will be serving in an oversight capacity. The International Institute and the African American Friends Association for Cooperation and Development (AAFACD) will each receive \$150,000 to assist foreign-trained healthcare professionals in getting licensure in this country. With the impending workforce shortage, and the current state of underemployment that these professionals are in now, make this project very important to the WIB.

The organizations will report quarterly to the committee, based on a list of things they need to track, provided by Susan Speetzen. The information that each organization will be tracking focuses around number of referrals and inquiries, connection made with clients, and the outcomes specific to the client. Each organization has set their own goals- the International Institute would like to take on 75 clients with these funds, and end with 20 MDs and 40 RNs. AAFACD would like to end with 15 MDs and 25 RNs.

Some of the specific things the organizations will be doing is meeting with the certifying boards for the various professions and helping the individuals navigate through the difficult process. Some of the biggest challenges faced by those trying to become certified in the US is finding a place to do clinicals or residencies. Many places don't have the supervisory staff to take on students. There is a pilot going on somewhere that is using a consortium of smaller facilities to do clinicals- students spend a short amount of time at each location, lessening the strain it puts on healthcare facilities.

The organizations may have numbers and reports for our November meeting. Susan informed the group that the three organizations are communicating with each other and will be able to transfer funds amongst themselves if necessary, ensuring that the funding doesn't get taken away or wasted.

Update on New WorkForce Center

The lease has been signed for the new center. Saint Paul College will no longer be using the adjacent space they were interested in before. The partners will attempt to find someone else to fill this space, though it was not included in our lease, and is not necessary for the successful completion and opening of the WFC. The partners are also considering having an open house for the new center- Tom suggested that this occur in May or June to give everyone enough time to get the office set up.

Suggestions were shared for filling the open space. Manpower could use the space for one of their locations, or a coffee shop could go in there. If this happened, Goodwill could possibly staff the location, making it a good fit for the center. All of these options would need to be discussed first with the building management.

Update on JPA

The County has sent a letter to the City requesting the revision or dissolution of the Joint Powers Agreement that consolidated their separate workforce programs, and created the Ramsey County WIB. If the agreement were to dissolve, it would take effect on 8/31/2007. The two entities are meeting and are considering hiring a mediator to resolve this issue. It was suggested that the WIB hire this individual, as a neutral third party.

Update on WIB Membership

There are currently nine business openings. The County has completed their reappointment process, and the City is still working on theirs.

Discuss WIB Legislative Agenda

The MWCA is making adjustments to their legislative agenda, and will probably have it out in the next few months. The WIB has always used this document to create their own legislative agenda, and will need volunteers to help adapt it when it is released.

"Addressing Diversity" (in the Workplace) Program

The Saint Paul Foundation started a program called "Facing Race" that encourages organizations to discuss racial issues in the workplace. If anyone is interested in having this discussion, they can contact the Saint Paul Foundation and get the materials necessary. They are in the form of CD ROMs that lay out the issues in a frank, uncomfortable way that forces people to talk.

In October, the WIB, Workforce Solutions, Job Service and the Business Service Specialists will host an event to address cultural differences in the work place. This will be a Q&A session with members of different cultural communities. The invite for this session will go out by the end of September.

MFIP Advocacy Position

A business member is still needed to serve in a "champion" role for the MFIP program.

Discuss Next Meeting Date

Mary Jo will be in a training session during the next meeting date. The group agreed to reschedule to November 3rd.

Open Forum

The group discussed the poor attendance and decided that asking for an RSVP would be helpful, as well as sending out a reminder a day before the meeting.

Adjourn

Upon completion of the agenda, the meeting adjourned at 12:31 p.m.

Next Meeting- Friday, November 3rd, Midway WorkForce Center