

Ramsey County Workforce Investment Board
Communication, Advocacy and Oversight Committee

November 14, 2008
Minutes

WIB Members Present

Patricia Brady
Kathy Engesser
Trixie Golberg
Lee Helgen
Butch Howard
Barb Mednick
Jim Schultz
Bob de la Vega

Members Absent

Staff/Guests Present

Mary Jo Gardner, WIB CEO
Kate Raleigh, WIB Staff
Carli Stark, WIB VISTA

Call to Order

Bob de la Vega, Chair, called the meeting to order at 11:33am.

Approve Minutes

Motion made by Lee Helgen with second by Kathy Engesser to approve the September minutes as presented.

Motion carried.

There was further discussion on the Legislative Agenda approved at the last CAO meeting, including action the board should take. It is felt there is a need for advocacy of an extension of unemployment benefits, in light of the current economy. Additionally, there is an increased need for services for the universal customer. What role can the WIB play in this- should the board send a letter to the state to get more funding for unemployment? Mary Jo and Patricia will work on an advocacy position and email it out to this group to see if it is something the committee wants to move forward with.

Motion made by Lee Helgen with second by Kathy Engesser to have staff work on drafting a letter citing the demands these programs are facing, the current unemployment rates, and stating the need for increased funding to this area.

Motion carried.

Nomination for Chair

The Committee is in need of a new Chair to take over for Bob de la Vega, who is focusing his time on the board's fund development efforts. Nominations for Chair were called.

Kathy Engesser nominated Butch Howard to serve as the Chair of the CAO Committee.

Nominations closed.

The committee has also been without a vice chair and nominations were called for this position.

Patricia Brady nominated Barb Mednick to serve as Vice Chair of the CAO Committee.

Nominations closed.

Butch and Barb were unanimously approved to serve as Chair and Vice Chair, respectively.

Update on WIB Website

Barb Mednick gave an overview of the progress with the new website. The volunteer web designer from Grassroots.org has not been in contact with staff and Carli took on the task of designing the site and incorporating content developed by the Marketing committee.

There was also discussion on adding a "Donate Now" button to the site to increase donations; it was decided that it will be readdressed after the initial launch of the site.

Other discussion was on testing the usability of the site and on marketing the site. Marketing ideas included sending out targeted e-newsletters, e-mails etc. Members will be sent the link to further review the site and let staff know of any changes to be made before the official launch on December 31.

Approve WIB Fund Development Plan

The Fund Development Plan was developed by consultant Michael Henley and reviewed by the Fund Development ad hoc. The document is less of a work plan and more of a directional list of opportunities to gain WIB operating support, rather than just program/project support. Its purpose is to direct the focus of the staff on fund development. If approved by the CAO committee, the plan will go to the Executive Committee and then to the full board.

Concerns were expressed about the reliance of the plan on volunteers and whether it is realistic to have a constant volunteer position filled to implement the plan, and if there isn't a volunteer, the use of staff time for fundraising will be an issue. There was discussion about the cost/benefit ratio of implementing some fundraising activities because although many actions have no monetary cost, there is a lot of staff time involved. There was also a question raised on how realistic it is for the WIB to receive grant money for operating costs.

The committee reviewed funding requests and grants made this year, in addition to donations received and money earned through fiscal agent services. Additionally, the committee would like to see a summary, cost detail, timeline and priorities added as well as goals and investments.

It was brought up that there are a great number of influential people on the board and we should use their expertise. The business members should be using their networks to help with the fundraising efforts, as they have a vested interest.

Other

On December 4th the Port Authority's Employer Solutions Inc. is partnering with the Saint Paul Area Chamber of Commerce on an event from 7:30-9:00a.m. at the Chamber offices. There will be a panel of employers addressing an audience of Corrections employees, discussing their openness to, or barriers against, hiring individuals who come out of Corrections. They are looking for more employers to represent either side of the debate. If you are interested in participating, please let Mary Jo know.

Adjourn

Upon completion of the agenda, the meeting adjourned at 12:27 p.m.

Next Meeting- January 9th, 2009