

Ramsey County Workforce Investment Board
Communication, Advocacy and Oversight Committee

January 9, 2009
Minutes

WIB Members Present

Kathy Engesser
Lee Helgen
Butch Howard
Barb Mednick
Jim Schultz

Members Absent

Patricia Brady EA
Bob de la Vega EA
Trixie Golberg EA

Staff/Guests Present

Mary Jo Gardner, WIB CEO
Kate Raleigh, WIB Staff

Call to Order

Butch Howard, Chair, called the meeting to order at 11:37am.

Approve Minutes

Motion made by Jim Schultz with second by Barb Mednick to approve the November minutes as presented.

Motion carried.

Marketing Update

The WIB's new website is live and has replaced the old website at www.rcwib.org. Kathy Engesser and Barb Mednick were thanked for their work on this effort. Members are encouraged to look through the site and contact staff with any changes needed.

The Marketing committee has started work on the Annual Report for 2008; this committee will review the report at the March 13th meeting.

There was a discussion on the general promotion of the WIB. Ideas for marketing the WIB and FWIB include modifying the FWIB's quarterly report to use as a newsletter, making connections with the newspapers for press releases and story ideas, and serving as "experts" on workforce articles. The WIB should identify its goals for marketing and look into partnering with the marketing efforts of the WorkForce Centers. The Marketing committee should look into these options.

Legislative Support- Building Lives

Mary Jo gave an update on the push for legislative support for Building Lives. Though it is not likely that Building Lives will be funded to the desired level in the current economy, it is important to keep the efforts going. Mary Jo asked for volunteers who would be willing to be contacted about advocating for the program at the legislature if necessary. Members willing to do this will be provided with talking points about the program and if it is necessary to go to the legislature, staff attends as well and answers questions on program detail. Barb Mednick and Butch Howard agreed to be on the contact list for this effort.

There was also discussion on an article that appeared in the Pioneer Press saying that the Unemployment Insurance fund will exhaust its reserves shortly and not be able to cover the unemployment claims. If this happens, the federal government would get involved and it could affect how much businesses are charged for Unemployment Insurance.

Motion made by Lee Helgen with second by Barb Mednick to recommend to the Executive Committee that issues around Unemployment Insurance, Dislocated Workers and the unemployment rate be considered and the Minnesota Workforce Council Association should be encouraged to communicate with the state legislators, DEED, staff and the federal delegation to work on benefit issues.

Motion carried.

WIB Fund Development Plan

Mary Jo gave an update on contributions made to the Friends of the WIB in 2008. The fund development ad hoc are meeting in late January and will discuss the FWIB case statement, a donor recognition event and the board contribution campaign for 2009.

The grant received from the Saint Paul Foundation to support the WIB's creation of a fund development plan ends in late January and approximately one-third of the funding remains. Mary Jo contacted the foundation to see if the FWIB could have an extension to spend the funds; the foundation agreed to a six-month extension to use the remaining funds. Michael Henley, the FWIB's consultant, has agreed to be "on call" for the next six months to work on further fund development efforts. The committee agreed that this is a good plan.

WIB Membership

There are a couple of business members in process of being appointed to the WIB, though there are still openings. Members should let Mary Jo know of any suggestions for business membership.

WIB/County Partnership Agreement

Mary Jo and Patricia are working through the WIB/County Partnership Agreement. Items they are discussing include the roles of each organization regarding workforce programs and initiatives and the need for sustainable funding for WIB operation. The discussions will most likely conclude in spring.

Other

There was further discussion on the public relations aspect of the board; it was suggested that full board meetings have a "public relations intention" by focusing on different relevant issues at each meeting.

Adjourn

Upon completion of the agenda, the meeting adjourned at 12:39 p.m.

Next Meeting- March 13, 2009