

Ramsey County Workforce Investment Board
Executive Committee

July 21, 2006
Minutes

WIB Members Present

Craig Anderson
Patricia Brady
Kathleen Engesser
Doug Hubbard
Vinod Kumar
Tom Macy
Robert de la Vega

Members Absent

Kirk Hayes EA
Greg Lambert EA
Bill Lowe EA
Ellen Watters EA

Staff/Guests Present

Mary Jo Gardner, WIB CEO
Kate Bates, WIB Staff

Call to Order

The Executive Committee meeting was called to order at 9:33 a.m.

Approve Minutes

Motion was made by Tom Macy and seconded by Robert de la Vega to approve the minutes of the May 19 meeting.

Motion carried.

Accept April, May and June Financial Reports

Overall, we are doing well in terms of staying on budget. We have spent \$70,000 so far this year, versus the \$87,000 we were budgeted to spend. Below are more details for the three months submitted for acceptance.

April

Copying expense was up due to the copying cost of the Annual Report. There was a \$59 charge to equipment for getting new nameplates for our offices.

May

There were very few expenses this month because the Operations Specialist was on a leave of absence.

June

This month the registration fee for Mary Jo's attendance at the MWCA Annual Meeting was charged to conferences. Additionally, we paid two months worth of phone bills, which evens out the fact that no phone bill was paid in April. It appears that we have received extra income this year, versus what we had planned to receive, but it was clarified that we haven't, but rather are a different payment schedule than we had thought.

Motion was made by Bob de la Vega and seconded by Ellen Watters to accept the April, May and June Financial Reports as presented.

Motion carried.

Approve Consent Agenda

Approve WIB CDBG Letter

As agreed to at the last WIB meeting, Kathy Engesser sent out a letter to the City and County encouraging them to resolve the CDBG funding issue.

Approve WIB Letter on Rescission of WIA Funds

There is a proposal to rescind all WIA carryover funds from 2006 to fill a budget gap. The Ramsey County WIB is against this action as it takes much-needed funding away from clients whose services carryover from 2006. A letter was sent to Representative McCollum voicing our opinion. We have since learned that the Senate appropriations do not include this rescission.

Approve Vern Vick Award Structure

At the last Exec meeting, it was requested that WIB staff develop a more structured process on giving out the Vern Vick award. The structure was updated and reviewed and approved by the Vern Vick ad hoc and the Youth Council.

Motion made by Doug Hubbard with second by Tom Macy to approve the consent agenda as presented.

Motion carried.

Nominate Chair Elect

Paul Nelson has agreed to serve as the WIB's Chair-elect beginning August 1, 2006. Additionally, Vinod Kumar has agreed to be the WIB's Treasurer for another term.

Motion made by Tom Macy with second by Robert de la Vega to accept the candidates on the floor for the positions of Chair-elect and Treasurer of the WIB.

Motion carried.

Review Accountant's Report

In June an accountant from the accounting firm Wilkerson Guthman and Johnson came to review the Friends of the WIB financial books and procedures. The accountant went through everything with WIB staff step-by-step to ensure things were being done properly. She sent a letter highlighting what she found, and any changes that were necessary. The biggest change was the correction for incorrectly taxing staff's retirement contributions, which was corrected this spring. The accountant confirmed the correct steps were taken, and gave instructions for one last modification to make regarding this issue. She also reviewed the steps for receiving grants, and the requirements to have a yearly audit of the organization (this threshold is income over \$300,000, which the WIB does not have).

The committee asked if WIB staff would separate out the WIA funds from the County levy funds in the financial reports. There was also a question raised on the inclusion of in-kind services being reported on the monthly report. WIB staff normally does this at the end of the year, and it was agreed upon that this should still be the protocol.

Update on WorkForce Center Location

The County approved 540 Fairview Ave N as the new Ramsey County WorkForce Center. The Commissioners had questions on the financial aspects of the space. Sue Estes from the MN Real Estate Management division said that the lease negotiation is going well and is anticipating a lease signing very soon. Build out is expected to start in August, though there is a possibility that a move-in date may not be until February 1- Mary Jo will let everyone know when she knows more information. Currently, Mary Jo is working on developing the one-page document that would outline the process for getting partners in the new center. Also, there is more research being done on the mobile workforce center. Lastly, there is increased partner staff at Midway, with the resource room at the Downtown center closed.

Update on MFIP Fund Allocation

The WIB serves in an advisory role to the MFIP Program, and the program has come to the CAO committee in the past for guidance. Currently there is an issue of funding discrepancy with one of their service providers, Public Health. In 2003, Public Health was selected to serve the majority of the teens on MFIP and in 2004 they served 4% of the clients enrolled in MFIP and received 12% of the funding. This was originally done because Public Health lost a part of their funding (from another source) and MFIP supplemented them to keep the program whole. In the past few years, Public Health has been given progressively less funding, with a \$600,000 allocation planned for 2007 (in contrast with the \$900,000 given a few years ago), though they may not meet their performance measures with the reduced funding. Workforce Solutions is applying for a grant to assist with workforce training for these individuals.

The MFIP program has had a "champion" from the WIB in the past that met with the program director and was a voice in the community that supported MFIP, and this is something MFIP would benefit from again. A member of the CAO committee is interested in doing this, and we may be looking for another person in addition,

preferably a business rep. There was a recommendation that this is mentioned at the WIB meeting to find volunteers.

New Oversight Role for the WIB

Mary Jo informed the group that Rick Caligiuri, Director, Job Seeker Services, DEED, has asked the WIB to oversee a new grant project. The State received funding to help organizations that assist foreign medical professionals to obtain licensure in the US. The \$450,000 received by the state was granted out to three organizations, receiving \$150,000 each. Two of these organizations, the International Institute and the African American Friendship Association for Cooperation & Development, are located in Ramsey County. Rick asked that we serve as the oversight committee for these organizations, and hear reports from them quarterly and then report back to DEED. This is a one-year project, and the board will meet with the providers four times. We are not receiving funding for this, but all agreed it sounds like a very interesting project.

Craig Anderson said that Saint Paul and Century Colleges would be happy to help the organizations in this project. Mary Jo said that the serving organizations can come to the WIB and let everyone know what they have done in this arena, and what they are planning on with this project. Rick Caligiuri also wanted to thank Terry Zurn, Workforce Solutions for his solution on how to run this project.

Motion made by Robert de la Vega with second by Vinod Kumar to approve the new oversight role of the WIB.
Motion carried.

Update on Building Lives Funding Efforts

An ad hoc of the Youth Council, focusing on the program Building Lives, has met a few times over the past couple of months. The WIB will seek funding through a line item in DEED's biennium budget for 2007. At this point, Robert de la Vega, who is a member of the ad hoc, and Mary Jo are talking to stakeholders about this idea, and have received generally positive feedback. There was concern from the Exec committee that seeking this money, which may come out of the general workforce development fund, would be detrimental to others who receive their funding from this stream. This is part of the reason that Robert and Mary Jo have started talking about this early, so it doesn't come as a surprise to others when the WIB pursues the funding.

Motion made by Tom Macy with second by Robert de la Vega to support the continued efforts to obtain legislative money for the Building Lives program.

Motion carried.

Update on ELL Funding Efforts

In May, an ad hoc met to discuss trying to find additional funding for ELL, ideally \$300,000-\$400,000 to work like the incentive grant funding. Mary Jo recently met with ESI, who is very interested in partnering with the WIB on this project. Mary Jo and Janet Ludden discussed going after about \$1million and targeting small and medium businesses that didn't qualify for WIA funds. In this scenario, the Port Authority would be the fiscal agent, ESI would serve as project managers and the WIB would serve as the administrative arm. There was strong pushback from the Workforce Committee when this was discussed. Mary Jo will be inviting Janet Ludden to the next Workforce meeting to try and work this issue out.

Update on Business Services

Next Steps

The Workforce Committee discussed in May the need to bring business service specialists and MnSCU together. This meeting would serve to connect the two groups, ensuring synergy and collaboration in their future efforts. The majority of the time at this meeting would involve introductions of the two groups to each other, communicating on their services and defining referral opportunities for clients. Mary Jo brought a written plan on how this meeting would work and from this came a need for Mary Jo, Mary McKee and Craig Anderson to meet and discuss this before a meeting with all the reps occurs.

Mary Jo discussed the number of businesses the Ramsey County BSS are required to visit each month. Currently the number in our local plan is thirty visits to businesses per month by each full time BSS. This involves personally going to meet with a business and providing all the pre-work and follow-up for each business. DEED

chose this number as a starting point, as this is all new to them, and would be open to modifications if there were justification to change this goal. It is estimated that an easy call to a business from a BSS takes six hours of the BSS's time, with the majority of calls taking six to ten hours. Based on these estimates, 30 visits per month are extremely challenging to complete. We can make a recommendation to DEED to lower this number, probably to the more manageable 20, and revisit it in six months. The group agreed that 30 visits seemed too high, and some thought that 20 visits may also be too difficult. There was concern that quality was being sacrificed for quantity.

Business Services/WIB Interaction

Currently there is no formal process for sharing information with the WIB. There is a proposal for Business Services staff to report to the WIB quarterly with the number of businesses visited, what industries were visited, what the issues at the company were and the solutions provided. This would be delivered in a report and oral presentation of no more than five minutes. The report would be presented at the Workforce Committee before going to the full WIB.

Update on Membership

As of August 1st, we will need 15 new board members, 12 being business members. If anyone has names to suggest, it would be greatly appreciated.

Other

The terms of at-large Exec members are up. We will revote on this through email.

Doug Hubbard will be awarded the Youth Council Volunteer Award by DEED at the Tri-State Peer to Peer Youth Forum on August 23. Congratulations to Doug!

This is Kathy Engesser's last meeting as chair. She thanked everyone for their help throughout the year.

The Youth Recognition event by Workforce Solutions and HIRED was fantastic and every one should consider attending next year.

Everyone thanked Kathy for all her work over the last year.

Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 10:55 a.m.