

Ramsey County Workforce Investment Board  
**Executive Committee**

March 19, 2010  
**Minutes**

**Committee Members Present**

Patricia Brady  
Butch Howard  
Doug Hubbard  
David MacKenzie  
Robert Morse  
Mary Russell

**Members Absent**

Craig Anderson EA  
Robert de la Vega EA  
Dan Strittmater

**Staff/Guests Present**

Mary Jo Gardner, WIB CEO  
Kate Raleigh, WIB Staff

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**Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 9:09 am.

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**Approve Consent Agenda**

- Approve February Minutes
- Accept February Financial Report
- Approve Youth Plan

There was a brief discussion on the February financial report regarding the income overage. The WIB received more income than expected because of timing with the distribution of WIA funds- the WIA income will remain on budget at year-end. The text that accompanies the financial report in the Executive Committee pre-reading will be attached to the report directly to avoid confusion.

**Motion** made by Doug Hubbard with second by Dave MacKenzie to approve the consent agenda as presented.  
**Motion carried.**

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**Approve 2010 Strategic Priorities**

The WIB's 2010 Strategic Priorities were reviewed at the February full WIB meeting but were not approved. As a point of order, the Executive Committee was asked to formally approve the priorities.

**Motion** made by Doug Hubbard with second by Bob Morse to approve the WIB's 2010 Strategic Priorities.  
**Motion carried.**

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**Healthcare Initiative Update**

The Executive Committee was updated on the healthcare initiative. The project is moving along well with 16 participants currently active in the program. The partners are working on developing internships for the participants and one employer has confirmed their involvement and has created an orientation for the internships. After the students complete their coursework and internship, they take the Medical Billing and Coding certification test and then are able to apply for positions.

On March 8, Congresswoman McCollum asked for testimony from a WIB director and Mary Russell testified on the healthcare initiative. Additionally, the Vice Chancellor of MnSCU, Michael Murphy, requested a meeting with the initiative partners to discuss the project. The meeting was held on March 15; Michael Murphy was interested in hearing how MnSCU could partner in these types of collaborations. The partners may invite Michael to meetings in the future for further collaboration discussions.

Mary Jo asked the partners to calculate their costs for the initiative in order to estimate the true total program cost, which will factor in to discussions on continuation of the program. If continued, the Single Point of Contact (SPOC) is an important role that would need funding. The SPOC creates a one-on-one relationship with each

participant to provide him or her with supportive services. It is also appealing for a business to have a new hire that comes with outside support from a SPOC or a job coach.

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### **ARRA Funding**

Members discussed the possible ARRA funds coming to the FWIB from the County. At the February Executive Committee meeting, the members requested a written response from Workforce Solutions as to why the WIB's role in the healthcare initiative does not qualify for ARRA funding. In lieu of a written response, Patricia suggested WIB leadership meet with the County Manager to discuss this. Patricia explained that the WIB's proposal to receive ARRA funding for the healthcare initiative was questioned by the County and the outcomes were cited as too vague. Additionally, Patricia stated that the healthcare initiative would not qualify for ARRA funding because the work was started before the proposal was accepted. Bob Morse asked for a follow-up from the County on the possibility discussed early in the year for the WIB to receive an incremental \$48k in WIA funding instead of the same amount in ARRA funding. Patricia suggested that the WIB and the County discuss the process after the ARRA funding is finalized.

Members reviewed and discussed the idea for a new proposal for the WIB to receive ARRA funding. This proposal has the WIB staff playing a role in connecting employers to the metro area's RENEW grant. If the board feels this is a good fit with the strategic priorities, the proposal would then go to various County departments before it comes back to the WIB and the Ramsey County Board for final approval.

The proposal is for work to start upon County approval through June of 2011. Mary Jo went through the proposal with the committee. The RENEW grant provides \$4M to serve the most needy population in Saint Paul and Minneapolis by preparing them for and placing them in "green jobs." There are many community partners at the table with the project lead by Workforce Solutions and the City of Minneapolis. The grant aims to engage 500 disadvantaged citizens in the program with a minimum of 280 of these citizens placed in jobs. The proposal engages the WIB in a process of outreach to local employers to determine where job possibilities are. The WIB CEO would work with community partners involved in business outreach to coordinate the outreach efforts, in addition to the outreach done through the Blue Green Alliance program, which will focus on incumbent workers and 20 new hires for green manufacturing jobs. The WIB will conduct an environmental scan first to define needs for green jobs; the grant uses a broad definition of "green jobs". The WIB will focus on facilitating the business outreach effort and Workforce Solutions will place 20 of their participants in to jobs in their neighborhoods, allowing them to walk to work. Outreach activities could include connecting with Chambers, business advisory teams, business associations, etc. and educating them on the newly trained individuals that will be available for placement. The WIB's outcome is to identify 20 job openings.

Discussion on this concept included:

- How successful will placement be with the numbers of qualified unemployed individuals seeking jobs? How can these individuals be prepared to compete?
  - o The state will incentivize companies to be certified as "green" and hopefully they will create openings and opportunities for these individuals.
  - o Employers will also get wage subsidies.
  - o RENEW is working with a privately funded marketing firm to help with the outreach and to highlight the benefits of hiring these individuals.
- The WIB could create a road map for how to connect employers to "green" opportunities. There are probably companies in the focus areas (based on zip codes) that can turn "green" very easily if they knew this was available.
- In comparison with the WIB's mission- is this project relevant?
  - o Is this a project that will advance the mission or will it be done just for the money?
  - o Members feel the environmental scan is appropriate but identifying job openings may not be.
    - The scan would analyze supply demand and capacity but would not identify specific job openings.
- Members would like the expectations of the WIB identifying specific job openings minimized in the proposal.

- Members felt it was important to have more employers at the RENEW grant table- there is currently one employer partner involved.
  - o Patricia understands that each training partner involved in the project has an employer advisory group that they have been working with to ensure the business needs are met through this project.
- Members expressed gratitude to Patricia Brady and the County for being an active partner in determining what role is most appropriate for the WIB to play in this initiative.

Members agreed to move forward with the concept and requested they review the proposal before it goes to the WIB and County Board. The Executive Committee will receive this proposal via email prior to approval.

**Motion** made by Butch Howard with second by Bob Morse to proceed with developing the proposal language that will be sent to the WIB's Executive Committee for final approval before entering in to the contract phase.

**Motion carried.**

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#### **Other**

There was a suggestion that the WIB have a page on their website that highlights past accomplishments. Staff will work on this request.

Mary Jo will send out an email about supporting Senator Franken's SEED act.

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#### **Adjourn**

Upon completion of the agenda, the meeting adjourned at 10:45am

Next meeting: April 16, 2010