

Ramsey County Workforce Investment Board
Market-Driven Workforce System Committee

August 14, 2003

Minutes

WIB Members Present

Ginny Sullivan, Chair
Mary Brunkow
Jan Curtis
John Giovannini
Scott LeMire, Vice Chair
Mary McKee
John Mohr
Ellen Watters
Tené Wells
Terry Zurn

Members Absent

Dick Anfang
Kirk Hayes
Kevin Locke
Lorrie Louder
Howard Orenstein

Staff/Guests Present

Kitty Gogins, WIB CEO
Janet Ludden, Employer
Solutions Inc.
Kyle Uphoff, DEED

Call to Order

Scott LeMire called the meeting to order at 1:15.

Approve Minutes

Motion made by John Mohr with second by Mary Brunkow to approve the minutes of July 10.

Motion passed

Sub-Group Updates

Customer

John Mohr shared highlights from a customer sub-group meeting held August 6 with Dr. Tom Gillespie, State Demographer:

- He helped the sub-group focus on defining the workforce in Ramsey County. The question they focused on was: Is the workforce those who reside or those who work in Ramsey County? Historically, DEED has focused on the demand side of the workforce, but currently there is more workers than jobs.
- He reviewed trends and factors in Ramsey County. Two highlights are:
 - The workforce is aging. This points to downturns on the number of County workers age 45 or less.
 - Immigrants are making the County's workforce demographics look more like the nation's workforce.
- To categorize population and data in useful ways, Dr. Gillespie suggested the WIB think about the class of the worker. Data indicates that private, for profits have highest compensation and not for profits have the least compensation. He also suggested looking at the data in terms of life cycle, immigrants, retirees, educational attainment, and disability rates.

There was discussion around whether to focus on the job seeker or the source of demand. Some members of the committee stated that a focus on the employer was more tangible.

Labor Market

Kyle Uphoff shared information on a Labor Force Assessment he is currently working on for Ramsey County. The comprehensive assessment will entail a look at both supply and demand sides in the seven county Twin Cities metro area, looking at occupations that add value to the area. The Humphrey Institute is also interested in the assessment, which will be completed by the end of September.

Community Employment Partnership (CEP)

Terry Zurn reported that the volunteer job coaches grant did not come through, but they are looking at the West Suburban Resource Hub and the North Saint Paul Workforce Center as two sites to pilot the program.

Work Force Center

JOB SEEKER

For his sub-group, Scott LeMire reported that to be a value added partner, the WIB should focus at a higher, not operational, level. Ways the WIB can do this include:

- Focus on the Universal Job Seeker
- Share information on new economic development plans
- Share research and best practices
- Link WIB business partners to the Work Force Center

Scott noted the WIB needs to look at funding streams from Ramsey County and how to effect services.

Next steps include WorkForce Center Partners conducting a customer satisfaction survey. Variables for the survey include number of customers, services sought by customers, and whether or not customers received their desired services. The survey results will help determine what changes are needed and compare clientele to data collected 18 months ago.

BUSINESS SERVICES

Is another area of interest and will be developed further at the next sub-group meeting, September 15 from 2-4 p.m.

Job Services, which is part of the new Department of Employment and Economic Security (DEED), is looking at shifting resources they currently use to service the universal customer to service employers. Discussion focused around the concern of taking away from the already under-served Universal Customer, resulting in even worse service to them and not enough money for a strong business service program either. Mary Brunkow added that they could look at job seekers as a product offering to employers. The committee discussed that this is the kind of thing the WIB has an opportunity to influence. The question is how to do business services. One idea was that DTED industry specialists take on the workforce component.

Short Term Linkages/Opportunities

East Metro Health Careers Institute (EMHCI) follow-up

Ginny reported on an upcoming meeting with the Mayor's office on healthcare workers. She is concerned about finding ways to get future skilled workers interested in continuing their education through the institute without guaranteeing jobs after their graduation.

The committee probed if there are other potential healthcare users outside of the EMHCI partners. Ginny indicated that senior and acute care jobs are hard to sustain right now.

Discussion broadened to technology's role in the changing demands for workers, with Jan Curtis providing the printing industry as an example of technology permanently reducing the workforce needed. The committee asked themselves if there were things that could be inferred from the current role of technology and whether the present state means the economy is not recovering or if this is, in fact, the "new" economy.

No action planned at this time.

Interpreter/Community Healthcare Workers (CHW) Shortage

Ellen Watters asked the committee if they are aware of shortages in Community Health Workers and interpreters and if this may be an opportunity to explore. Committee members indicated that there are many people out there interpreting, but they do not have the credentials to do the job. Two programs came up as working to provide credentials, the University of Minnesota has a four-year program through the medical school and Century has a \$300,000 grant to train people within Fairview Health Systems to become medical interpreters.

There was interest in understanding the breadth of demand. Ginny said that HealthEast does not have a shortage. Their recent challenge is developing a model of care that involves culturally sensitive, diverse practices.

The committee decided to revisit this subject in a couple of months. Mary McKee will provide an update from her work.

H1B Technology Grant

Ellen Watters provided an overview of H1B. She stated that it is a federal program that sets aside and re-grants money that employers pay to get visas for overseas talent that they can not find locally.

Kitty stated that she will forward an email on the H1B technology grant to the committee. She asked that the committee read the email to see if 1) there is an interest 2) an opportunity exists to connect interested community partners.

Other

Tene Wells added that more people should know about the breadth of opportunities available in the growing healthcare industry. Her organization, Women Ventures, is currently working to give its customers knowledge of these opportunities.

Discussion of Meeting Times and Sub-Group Structure

Kitty proposed that the full-committee meet every other month instead of every month (to allow more capacity for ad-hoc work) and that the Workforce and Customer committees be combined until they are much further along. The committee thought this was a good idea.

Adjourn

Motion made by Ellen Watters with second by Scott LeMire to adjourn meeting.

Motion Passed

Meeting adjourned at 2:45.

Remaining Meetings in 2003

October 9, 1:00 to 2:30, Midway Hospital

December 11, 1:00-2:30, Midway Hospital