

Ramsey County Workforce Investment Board
Market-Driven Workforce System Committee

January 8, 2004
Minutes

WIB Members Present

Ginny Sullivan, Chair
Mary Brunkow
John Giovannini
Phil Hanson
Kirk Hayes
Scott LeMire, Vice Chair
Kevin Locke
Lorrie Louder
John Mohr
Bob Veilleux

Members Absent

Mary McKee EA
Ellen Watters EA
Tené Wells

Staff/Guests Present

Kitty Gogins, WIB CEO
Kate Bates, WIB Staff
Mark Van der Schaff
Kyle Uphoff, DEED
Janet Ludden, Employer
Solutions, Inc.

Call to Order

Ginny Sullivan called the meeting to order at 1:03 pm.

Approve Minutes

Motion made by John Mohr with second by Mary Brunkow to approve the minutes of November 12 as written.

Motion passed

Update on New Ad Hoc Structure

When the Workforce Committee was created last spring, there were four original ad hoc sub-groups formed:

- The Community Employment Partnership sub-group, which focuses on the products that CEP produced, including the employer guide, the job seeker guide and volunteer job coaches pilot. This sub-group does not meet on a regular basis, but on an as-needed-basis.
- The Labor Market and the customer sub-group, which combined into one committee in July, and disbanded in late-fall with completion of their charters.
- WorkForce Center Optimization sub-group, which combined the WorkForce Center Core Partners and WIB members. In discussions focusing on how to more efficiently run this group, the WIB and core partners agreed to share the meetings only once per quarter, allowing the Core Partners to focus more on operational issues at their monthly meetings. Kitty Gogins will attend the quarterly meeting and will report back to the appropriate group about what was discussed.

Recently created ad hoc sub-groups formed from this committee are as follows:

- The Immigrant Acculturation group focusing on language and acculturation in the Healthcare industry
- A group dealing with the ease of transference of credits between MNSCU schools in the Healthcare field.
- The Biosciences Workforce sub-group working on the Bioscience Workforce Link project.
- A Business Services sub-group working on the piloting of business services in Ramsey County.

There was discussion around whether the scope of the committee and the number of ad hoc sub-groups is getting too large for the Workforce Committee. The committee also discussed the ramifications of the large influx of new members and the expectation that many will want to join this committee. The group agreed that the process of getting updates from ad hocs at the bi-monthly meeting is effective, and the group will continue to operate, unless other issues arise.

Update on Health Care MNSCU Transfer of Credits

Mary McKee, from Century College, Marilyn Krasowski from Saint Paul College, Betsy Scheller from EMHCI and Kitty Gogins met to discuss the transfer of Health Care credits through the MNSCU system. Significant progress has been made by MNSCU over the last decade on the transferability of credits. However, even with the

agreement between institutions on transferable credits, students still run into problems with credits not counting toward their degree when transferring MNSCU schools. Proposed action is to make a request to MNSCU to prepare charts that would compare admission requirements and program requirements. This chart could then be examined at the MNSCU schools' Health Care directors monthly meeting to address problems.

A key question was raised about frequency of the problem, which will be forwarded to Workforce Solutions and the International Institute, who are helping to better define specifics around the problem.

Ginny Sullivan offered to provide resources to allow for MNSCU to work through the compromises needed. Suggestions were made to engage other organizations in addressing the concern, such as the Employer Services Partnership, Minnesota Workforce Council Association, and the Governor's Workforce Development Council. Further contacts for researching this problem were identified as Renee Sass and Mary Rosenthal. Four problems were identified in conjunction with this issue- differing admission requirements, credits not transferring according to agreement, students earning their Masters and BS have to repeat general education requirements, and there are not enough clinical sites for training.

Update on Immigrant Opportunity

Many agencies took part in the first ad hoc sub-group meeting to discuss immigrant acculturation including John Mohr (Lifetrack); Terry Zurn, Betsy Scheller and Jim Zentner (Workforce Solutions); Jane Graupman and Carol Dabruzzo (International Institute); Janet Ludden (Employer Solutions Inc.); Willie Nesbit (Hubbs Center); Betsy Johnson (HealthEast Care System); and Kitty Gogins. The group reviewed programs, discussed best practices and began identifying issues/opportunities. Best practices include:

- Tangible, specific, non-academic English instruction
- Combining language and literacy services with job skills training
- Providing case management services (coaches) to help set expectations, access resources, work on soft skills and overcome barriers encountered
- Close partnership with employers
- Staff members who understand participant language and culture
- Bilingual programs are considered a best practice in many areas but are not viable in our community due to the diversity of languages and cultures

The sub-group is scheduled to meet to do further work on identifying opportunities. Early thoughts on issues/opportunities are:

- Address gap between English language learning in high school/ABE and English needed for community/technical college
- Job Coach (broker role) to help with acculturation
- Employer Resources to enhance hiring and retention
- Adding additional levels in career ladder e.g. separation of labor intensive elements
- Enhance success in MNSCU

Update on Biosciences Workforce Link

The WIB helped bring the City, County and Chamber together for developing the Biosciences Workforce Link project. The project was awarded \$153 K grant by DEED in December. Janet Ludden, Howard Orenstein, Ellen Watters, Terry Zurn, Jim Zentner, Renee Sass and Kitty Gogins from the sub-group. About \$120 K is still needed for the full project, but the current funding is sufficient for understanding industry needs, developing the program and working with the preliminary 10 job seekers.

Next steps for this project are going through alternate funding sources for the remaining \$120K needed (i.e. local and national grants), doing employer focus groups, benchmarking, identifying employers and developing a database. Later in spring the group will focus on program design, identifying job openings, creating training, etc.

Discuss Business Services

The state has been looking to improve business services, including the connection between employers and the coordination of these services. WIB members have spoken with Commissioner Matt Kramer about piloting business services in Ramsey County and have agreement in concept to proceed. On Friday, the Business Services ad hoc group is meeting with Bonnie Elsey and Bob Hand to discuss plans. Early thoughts on this topic include:

- Demand-side driven mentality, focus and expertise (begin with the employers needs)
- One point of contact for employer customers
- Leverage existing competencies and capacity of public and private sector partners (do not reproduce)
- Customize services and deliver when, how and where customers wants them
- The process should involve assessing employer needs, developing a customized solution package and value proposition, bringing together correct solution provider(s) to meet needs, managing the project to ensure services are delivered and following up that needs are met
- The key questions the pilot needs to answer are defining a sustainable funding-business model and defining the delivery model

It was suggested that there are several resources available to help define available resources in the community including our Memorandum of Understanding (Defines WIA Partner services) Community Employment Partnership work (Jean Hammink was part of a similar discussion in the past), Employer Solutions Inc preferred supplier list (Janet Ludden) and past work by Rolf Middleton and Luke Weisberg. Kitty will be attending a conference a Department of Labor conference next week that deals with this topic. She will bring her findings back to the board.

On the general topic of ad hoc groups, more members are needed for the MNSCU ad hoc. Ginny volunteered to find someone in her organization.

Discuss Short Term Linkages

The Department of Immigration has okayed the immigration of 14,000 Hmong from a refugee camp into the US, with a possible 5000 relocating to Ramsey County. The initial challenge will be meeting basic needs. Employment services will lag considerably. WorkForce Center staff has been asked to identify staff that speaks Hmong and Laotian.

DEED has developed a survey to send to Bioscience employers, but status is unknown. Kate will follow up with Jean Goddard on status.

Business Retention and Expansion is potentially preparing a proposal to do something with a community in north Ramsey County. They do an intensive survey of all business issues in a community e.g. drainage, workforce, taxes, low interest loans, etc. They identify red-flag issues and prepare a response for the community to each issue within two weeks. If they come into Ramsey County, can we be a mechanism for quick response and be part of the community's solution? This is a major opportunity for WIB-WorkForce Center visibility and impact. Kevin Locke volunteered to find out more about their plans and how the WIB could link in. Sheldon Jenson is also involved.

There was a commitment in December from the partner hospitals of EMHCI to continue funding for three years. This commitment will allow for further grants to be attracted. The funding will be at a low level for year one, with review of workforce needs and potential ramping up in future years based on need.

A future suggested topic for discussion is the emerging workforce—how we move people into new jobs as well as filling openings from retirements.

The upcoming Youth Career Exploration Day at Saint Paul College has a large number of workshops that focus on biology and science.

Adjourn

Motion made by John Giovannini with second by Kirk Hayes to adjourn the meeting.

Motion Passed

Ginny Sullivan adjourned the meeting at 2:30 p.m.

Next Meeting- March 11, 1:00-2:30, Midway Hospital