

Ramsey County Workforce Investment Board
Market-Driven Workforce System Committee

May 13, 2004
Minutes

WIB Members Present

Ginny Sullivan, Chair
Scott LeMire, Vice Chair
Jerry McElroy
John Mohr
Bob Veilleux
Ellen Watters

Members Absent

Phil Hanson
Kirk Hayes
Nancy Hendrickson EA
Lorrie Louder EA
Mary McKee
Joe Richburg EA
Tené Wells EA
William Yang

Staff/Guests Present

Kitty Gogins, WIB CEO
Kate Bates, WIB Staff
Terry Zurn, Workforce
Solutions
Kyle Uphoff, DEED

Call to Order

Scott LeMire, vice-chair, called the meeting to order at 1:05 pm.

Approve Minutes

Motion made by Bob Veilleux with second by Scott LeMire to approve the minutes of March 11 as written.

Motion passed

Member Introductions

All members introduced themselves and their organizations.

Report on Education Sector

When the WIB decided on priority industries last fall, Education was included as a high demand sector for further study. Kyle Uphoff from DEED presented information on the Education sector in Ramsey County. Education has a large presence in our area, having seven percent of all employment in Ramsey County. It is a growth sector, having added 2,000 positions in 2000-2003 (although part of this growth is just an artifact of re-categorization). The average salary is \$670/week, which is lower than the County average (\$795). Sixty-one percent of Twin Cities' educational job vacancies do not require education past high school. Education related industries include Colleges and Universities, Business Computer and Management Training, Other Schools and Instruction, Educational Support, and Education including elementary and secondary education. Vacancies are at about half the level of 2000, with vacancies centered in K-12, not in post-secondary. The sector is expected to need 6,000 new employees by 2010, with about half being new positions and half being replacement workers.

Key challenges discussed were:

- The changing nature of positions due to increasing numbers of Limited English proficiency students (Corollary question: How to encourage more diverse students to go into teaching?)
- The aging workforce and high level of expected retirements
- The shortage of math and science teachers generally in the US. Ellen volunteered to follow-up with the Minnesota Teacher Federation about whether there are sufficient accredited math and science teachers in our area.

Vote on Chair and Vice-Chair

Ginny Sullivan and Scott LeMire volunteered to serve another term as chair and vice-chair of the Workforce Committee.

Motion made by John Mohr with second by Ellen Watters to approve Ginny Sullivan and Scott LeMire as Chair and Vice-Chair, respectively, of the Workforce Committee.

Motion passed

Charter Ad Hoc to Revise Work Plan

Kitty requested that a couple of committee members work with her to develop a draft of a revised work plan for this committee, as many pieces of the original plan have been completed, or have shifted priority. The group suggested reserving an hour or so of the next meeting for planning so that all members can be involved. It was agreed that the next Workforce Committee meeting would focus on revising the work plan. To start the process off, Kitty will provide members an update on plan elements that have been completed, plan elements that are no longer a committee priority and current ad hoc committee plans.

Discussion of Linkage with other Healthcare and English Language Learner Initiatives

The Mayor and the City of Saint Paul are moving forward with the Collaboration for Healthcare Learning. The board will meet for the first time next week and includes healthcare employers, Minnesota Colleges and University Institutions, the East Metro Health Careers Institute, the Capital City Partnership, the WIB and the City of St. Paul. The City is considering proposing the first project to be with the "Twin Cities Pilot Cities Initiative" on Payne Ave. The City sought our input on an early draft of this project. It was suggested that Workforce Solutions should be part of this collaborative to represent the workforce of unemployed and underemployed citizens.

The Governor's Workforce Development Council is defining how to spend the state's \$750 K incentive funds earned by meeting state goals for the workforce centers, adult basic education and vocational programs. Current plans call for using for existing ELL programs that are employer directed. This could be particularly helpful with the influx of Hmong immigrants in our community.

Update on Bioscience Workforce Link

The paperwork for this project has finally been approved. It took longer than expected because the Chamber is a non-traditional state grant recipient. Next steps are to work with employer HR staff to define their hiring needs, their career paths, etc. The project will then link with training partners to utilize programs that respond to employers needs. Those entering the program are expected to be from economically challenged areas of the city. There is more fundraising to be done for this project, and the scope of it should become clearer once under way.

Update on Business Services

The Business Services Pilot is on track to begin this summer. The focus groups are complete, and the main issues businesses identified were around hiring and work environment-organization. They stressed the need for a globally sensitive staff at all levels and all ethnicities, and many employers are seeking assistance with English Language Learner (ELL) employees. The businesses indicated it was important that the pilot involve a fluid system with good customer service and knowledge of the companies seeking assistance. Businesses were interested in pilot staff identifying similar needs across companies and working towards solutions that all could collectively utilize.

Proposed pilot goals were reviewed. The goals focus on increasing awareness and usage of the system, and generating high user satisfaction. It was discussed that phone or email surveys could be an accurate way of tracking satisfaction.

Funding for the business mentor is being sought from the St. Paul Foundation, with a proposal due to them in early June. They are the only foundation that replied favorably to our letter of inquiry. The WIB is planning on partnering with Employer Solutions, Inc. to administer the business mentor program. Approval for the proposal will be requested at the June WIB meeting.

Answer Any Questions on WIB Faith and Community Based Organization Grant

The WIB applied for a grant through the DOL to obtain funds for running the Volunteer job coach project, in collaboration with the Saint Paul Council of Churches. No questions were asked.

Short Term Linkages

Kyle Uphoff is working on the Vadnais Heights Economic Development Council (VHEDC) project with the University of Minnesota Business Retention and Expansion Project and will keep us informed of progress. WIB

Staff will follow up with WIB members that are also members of VHEDC to request WIB-WorkForce Center involvement in the evaluation process and follow up calls with specific businesses that have a workforce need.

The project to increase manufacturer linkage with skilled dislocated workers is underway (originated from a previous short-term linkage discussion). Interested manufacturers are sent mini-resumes on dislocated manufacturing workers by Workforce Solutions. The announcement includes a hotlink to the counselor working with the candidate. The contact person for this project is Marilyn Strands. Within 24 hours of the first email, TapeMark had requested more information on two of the candidates. Ellen Watters offered to publicize the opportunity to other St. Paul Chamber manufacturers in their weekly fax.

It was suggested that the next meeting be moved because of the Fourth of July holiday. WIB staff will facilitate this change and notify the committee by email of the change in date.

Adjourn

Ginny Sullivan adjourned the meeting at 2:21 with the completion of the agenda.

Next Meeting- July 12, 1:00-2:30, Conley Conference Room, Midway Hospital