

Ramsey County Workforce Investment Board
Market-Driven Workforce System Committee

January 11, 2007

Minutes

Members Present

Kirk Hayes
Nancy Hendrickson
Mary McKee

Members Absent

Craig Anderson EA
Jesse Bethke Gomez
John Evans EA
Gerry Flannery
Lorrie Louder
Jerry McElroy

Staff/Guests Present

Mary Jo Gardner, WIB CEO
Kate Bates, WIB Staff
John O'Phelan, Workforce Solutions
Kathy Simmons, DEED Business Services
Terry Zurn, Workforce Solutions

Call to Order

Nancy Hendrickson called the meeting to order at 1:05 p.m.

Approve Minutes

Motion made and seconded by Kirk Hayes to approve the meeting minutes from September 14 as presented.

Motion carried

Update on Business Services Next Steps

Representatives from MnSCU, Business Services and Adult Basic Ed met again on December 5th at the Ford Plant. This time the attendees were split into three groups to discuss more in depth what their organization could bring forward to solve a problem for businesses- the three situations they addressed were the low availability of trained welders, CNAs and CNC machinists. This allowed for the individuals to get to know more about the other organizations and how they can work together. There is going to be a metro-wide meeting with a similar format in mid January. The group will meet again as Ramsey County in March- the planning/focus group has been talking to plan the next meeting. At the March session, the groups will again meet, but will have a full case study with which to work and solve as a collaborative group. Attendees agreed that these meetings were a good way to get to know their counterparts in other organizations, and there now needs to be an action plan created to define how everyone can work together.

Update on WIB Diversity Seminar

The diversity seminar held in October was a success, and the planning committee is planning another session for late April or early May. The plan for the follow-up session is to invite the previous attendees and other interested businesses and split the room into ten tables of ten people each- with two cultural reps and eight attendees- to have a more personal conversation on the cultural barriers found in the modern workplace. There may be some feeder questions or comments to get each group started, but based on the reaction from attendees of the first session, these smaller discussion groups will be a welcome format. Members asked what the evaluations of the last meeting said- Nancy Hendrickson, who synthesized the information, said that most commented that a follow-up session with a more conversational manner would be great.

The attendees will be limited to 80, and will be charged \$20 each. This will again go to cover the costs of running the session. There was \$200 left over from the last session that will be used for this session. The first half hour will be house keeping and introductions, and then attendees will be able to choose the table they sit at, and with which cultural representatives they meet. After an hour, attendees will be able to switch tables. There will be a break in between the two hour-long discussions, vendor tables, and someone of significance to kick off the session.

2007 Strategic Planning

The group reviewed the committee work plan, last updated in late 2004. Most of the items in the plan have since been completed. In reviewing each goal, the group wanted to continue working on some of the previously set goals. There is already work being done on the next steps of the business services pilot, as previously discussed. Resources are still being sought to improve the services to ELL individuals in our community, most likely focusing on those who working at long term care facilities. Initial work on the CEP products goal was unsuccessful and work was stopped, however, at the time, the job seeker guide developed through this group was very successful and the group may look into re-printing that guide. WIB staff will develop a new work plan and bring it to the next meeting for members' review.

Job Connect

John O'Phelan, Workforce Solutions, runs a network of 250-300 job counselors working together with businesses and their job seekers to fill openings at area businesses. John shares job openings, job fairs and other resources with his group, who then share the information with their job seekers, having an affect on thousands of job seekers in the metro area. The group also meets periodically at area businesses. Meeting hosts are booked through July of this year, but afterwards John will need to find businesses with job openings that can hold a meeting of about 25-30 people.

John is looking for suggestions on how to better utilize this large network. It is very successful for filling job openings and advertising job fairs, but it could do more. Staff will advertise this to the full WIB so they can benefit from it. It was recommended that the list also advertise business services available from vendors- a survey could be conducted with Job Connect members and the info could be given to businesses, by business services reps, when requested.

Through this group, John is planning a Midway job fair for small and medium sized businesses in the Midway area to advertise their organizations and their job openings. He plans to continue with these job fairs targeted to small and medium sized businesses and specific sectors (as the Ford job fair detailed below).

John, along with Karyn Berg from Workforce Solutions, also produces a quarterly newsletter featuring an in-demand career. It features interviews from employers and resources for individuals interested in the field from entry-level to professionals. The newsletter is distributed to job counselors for them to give to their clients. The last one was on welding, and the next one will be on the hospitality industry. All of the newsletters are available on Workforce Solutions' website.

Ford Job Fair

On February 23rd there will be a manufacturing job fair at the Ford plant with 2,000 Ford employers meeting with 15 manufacturing companies that are hiring a variety of positions.

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 2:51 p.m.

Next Meeting: March 8