

Ramsey County Workforce Investment Board
Market-Driven Workforce System Committee

September 6, 2007
Minutes

Members Present

Craig Anderson
Butch Howard
Mary McKee
Jane Sanem

Members Absent

Gerry Flannery EA
Kirk Hayes EA
Lorrie Louder
Rob McKenzie
Lori Stone
Cynthia Yongvang

Staff/Guests Present

Mary Jo Gardner, WIB CEO
Kate Raleigh, WIB Staff
Cheryl Beaumier, DEED Business Services
Doug Petty, Wilder Research
Chris Stoehr, DEED Business Services
Jim Zentner, Workforce Solutions

Call to Order

Craig Anderson called the meeting to order at 1:05 p.m.

Approve Minutes

Motion made by Butch Howard and seconded by Craig Anderson to accept the minutes from May as presented.

Motion carried

Twin Cities Compass

Doug Petty, Wilder Research, attended the meeting to follow-up on the Twin Cities Compass project discussed at the August WIB meeting. This project will attempt to serve as an online report card for the Twin Cities region, measuring relative health in a variety of metrics, such as housing, education, economy and workforce. The site will also compare the Twin Cities with similar metro areas across the country.

Wilder has conducted a few meetings with economic development and workforce stakeholders, and through these meetings, three key measures in determining the Twin Cities' economic and workforce health were identified. These are the real gross metropolitan output (of the 13 county area), real per capita income and the employment population ratio. Some of the "other" measures, which will be reviewed but not used as heavily to indicate regional health, are the unemployment rate, income disparities, education levels, cost of living, accessibility to jobs, etc. The group discussed the desire to identify what jobs will be available and what training will be needed for these jobs, though all agreed this would be incredibly difficult to determine. The group also discussed connecting this information with the work that is being done on industry clusters, or to identify the different types of jobs within an industry. Also discussed was the need to market careers outside of the traditional four year university setting to youth.

DEED Business Services

Chris Stoehr and Cheryl Beaumier, DEED Business Services Specialists, were present to discuss needs they are hearing from businesses. They have heard a lot of positive feedback about the Metro Manufacturing Sector Initiative concept, particularly from smaller businesses that don't have a dedicated HR department, or funding for training. Other business needs relate to retention issues, ESL barriers, numeric skills, and problem solving.

Update on Manufacturing Sector Grant

The Governor's Workforce Development Council gave the Greater Metro Workforce Council (GMWC) a planning grant for the Metro Manufacturing Sector Initiative, which the GMWC is using as an implementation grant to implement the MPowered Program currently running in Hennepin County. This is a fast track training program to address the training and hiring needs of local manufacturing companies. The partners involved, under the umbrella of the GMWC, are the WIB, the Anoka Co. WIB, the Washington Co. WIB, Anoka Technical College, Saint Paul College, and Anoka and Saint Paul Adult Basic Ed. The first phase of the program is a 12-week classroom based "Manufacturing 101," followed by on-the-job training and a final phase

of more customized advanced training. There are six businesses from Anoka interested in participating and five from Ramsey and Washington counties. At this time, the businesses need for training is much greater than the program's current capacity. Throughout the process, the partners will look for further funding to develop the program.

This program is employer-driven, with the curriculum developed by employers. The planning group is identifying the individual needs of the employers, and will discuss the curriculum and timeline for the training. The committee asked if there was a cost to the employers- there currently is not, but it is an option in the future if employers are interested in running a fee-based program.

Update on WIB Diversity Seminar

The WIB and its partners are moving forward on the next diversity seminar. The focus of this session will be the legal aspects of diversity in the workplace. It will be held on Nov. 1st at the Neighborhood House from 8:30-10:30, with speakers Commissioner McDonough and Gary Gorman from the MN Dept. of Human Rights. The group will begin advertising in a few weeks.

Update on Hospital ELL Program

There was a pilot program in four Saint Paul hospitals, providing occupational English to their ELL employees. The WIB and Workforce Solutions are looking to expand this project from working with environmental services individuals to work with customer service in general. Meetings are being conducted with the CEOs of the hospitals, gauging their interest and commitment to expanding the program.

Work Keys

Workforce Solutions has been working internally to find ways to improve services to job seekers and businesses. One way they have found to do this is to employ the use of Work Keys, an assessment system by ACT that identifies individuals in respect to their basic skill ability in a variety of areas. Workforce Solutions would like to implement this assessment for program clients and the universal customer, as well as promote it to business so they are able to use it to identify potential workers to fill positions. DEED is currently piloting the National Work Readiness Credential, which is competition for this assessment. Workforce Solutions looked into many of the assessments and credentials, and they feel that this one is most valuable, but will be of no value if businesses aren't aware of what the assessment can do for filling future vacancies.

Adjourn

Motion made by Mary McKee with second by Butch Howard to adjourn the meeting at 2:48 p.m.

Motion carried.

Next Meeting: Thursday, November 1, 2007