

Ramsey County Workforce Investment Board  
**Communication, Advocacy and Oversight/Workforce Committee**

January 8, 2010

**Minutes**

**WIB Members Present**

Joe Crowe  
Butch Howard  
Scott North  
Joe Stratig  
Dan Strittmater

**Members Absent**

Patricia Brady  
Bob de la Vega  
Kathy Engesser EA  
Amy Filice  
Trixie Golberg  
Lee Helgen  
Janet Ludden EA  
Rob McKenzie  
Barb Mednick EA  
Paul Nelson EA  
Jim Schultz EA

**Staff/Guests Present**

Mary Jo Gardner, WIB CEO  
Kate Raleigh, WIB Staff

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**Call to Order**

Meeting called to order at 10:08 a.m.

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**Approve September and December Workforce Minutes**

**Motion** made by Joe Crowe with second by Scott North to approve the September Workforce Minutes as presented.

**Motion carried.**

**Motion** made by Joe Stratig with second by Joe Crowe to approve the December Workforce Minutes as presented.

**Motion carried.**

**Motion** made and seconded by Butch Howard to approve the November CAO Minutes as presented.

**Motion carried.**

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**Introductions**

Members introduced themselves.

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**Nominate Merged Committee Chair**

Nominations were called for Chair of the new committee.

**Motion** made by Scott North with second by Joe Stratig to nominate Dan Strittmater as Chair of the newly merged CAO/Workforce Committee.

**Motion carried.**

Dan Strittmater accepted the nomination and assumed the Chair.

Members discussed the best timeframe for this meeting and agreed on meeting the second Friday of each month from 10:00-11:30a.m. WIB staff will contact all members to let them know of the meeting time.

The committee will address the role of Vice-Chair at the next meeting.

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### **Annual Report**

The WIB's 2009 Annual Report assignments have been sent to partners, with their information requested by mid-February. The plan is usually due to the County Board by April 15<sup>th</sup>, but that date may be pushed back this year to allow for partners to collect accurate program year-end data. The plan will come to this committee before it goes to the WIB for approval.

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### **Legislative Agenda**

Mary Jo updated the committee on the work done around the legislative agenda. The WIB reviews the MN Workforce Council Association's (MWCA) Legislative Agenda, which was approved in late December, as they create their own agenda. There is much discussion at the federal level regarding WIA reauthorization, and Mary Jo is waiting for information before going forward with the WIB's legislative agenda. Volunteers are being requested to serve on the ad hoc that will review and respond to the WIB's Legislative Agenda draft.

Members discussed the extra funds that have come in to workforce development and how that has affected programs. There is discussion among workforce development professionals about ongoing efforts after the recovery funds are spent. There is also concern about what WIA reauthorization will look like.

A member shared information that the Job Skills Partnership Board is meeting on Monday, January 11 to consider requests from some of the WSAs who have requested additional funding from the board to serve clients. With the current economy, some WSA have run out of funding but have maintained an increased level of clients.

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### **WIB/County Partnership Agreement**

Mary Jo updated the committee on the Partnership Agreement between the WIB and Ramsey County. This document establishes the WIB's operating structure and relationship with Ramsey County. The agreement is renewed every two years, and the last Partnership Agreement ended on December 31, 2009. The WIB and County are finalizing negotiations on the new two-year agreement, and the document will be reviewed by the Executive Committee before going to the WIB for approval. The last step in this process is County Board approval, which is expected on February 16<sup>th</sup>.

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### **Healthcare Initiative Update**

Mary Jo gave background on the Healthcare Initiative, which trains job seekers and incumbent workers for a career in Medical Billing and Coding. The initiative was created in response to needs expressed by healthcare employers and received \$25,000 from the Governor's Workforce Development Council to develop a model of various community partners working together across silos. The training offers blended instruction provided by Saint Paul College and Saint Paul Public Schools' Adult Basic Education (ABE), and the initiative is supported by many other community partners. Additional funding came from DEED (\$35,000 FastTRAC grant), and partners Quality Career Services and Goodwill/Easter Seals helping to cover tuition costs. The project is now fully funded.

The curriculum is delivered in three sections, each focusing on a different aspect of Medical Billing and Coding. The first section is complete, and all students passed. Program completion is planned for June, at which point students will be prepared to take the certification exam prior to career placement. Employer partners have been involved in the development and implementation of this initiative, and are still active in initiative meetings. The first report on this project is due to the legislature in February, and the committee will review the report at their next meeting on January 20.

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**Committee Merger**

In their pre-reading, members received the CAO and Workforce Committees' charters and charges. This information was used as a base on which to build the new committee work plan. Mary Jo reviewed each of the documents with the committee. Tasks accomplished by the CAO included oversight of WIA Adult and Dislocated Worker programs, communication and marketing, advocacy and membership. The Workforce Committee was responsible for reviewing the labor market information to determine business needs and initiative focus. With this information, members discussed the charge of the new committee, suggesting that the CAO and Workforce charges could be combined. Members felt the key work of this committee would be defining community needs and utilizing the WIB's resources and partnerships to address these needs. Members also expressed that the new committee's work plan must be aligned with the larger strategic plan of the WIB. There was discussion on creating a 2010-2011 work plan due to timing.

Staff will draft a charge/charter for the new committee and send it out to members for their feedback prior to the next meeting. Once a charge and charter has been accepted by the committee, they will take on the task of naming the committee.

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**Other**

The City of Minneapolis Employment and Training Program, in partnership with Ramsey County Workforce Solutions, received a \$4M Pathways Out of Poverty grant through the U.S. Department of Labor. The grant will support training activities for 500 disadvantaged citizens, with a focus on the economic development opportunities present in the emerging green industry.

The Blue Green Alliance received a \$5M U.S. Department of Labor grant that will focus on Minnesota's manufacturing sector with a goal of training more than 2,000 workers to secure manufacturing jobs in the clean energy economy. The activities of the grant will focus on the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area, Southwest Minnesota and the Iron Range. The committee had a larger discussion on what green manufacturing is.

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**Adjourn**

Meeting adjourned at 11:13am.

**Next Meeting-** February 12<sup>th</sup>