

Ramsey County Workforce Investment Board
General Membership Meeting
Thursday, October 4, 2007 2:30-4:30
Minutes

Members Present

Craig Anderson
Amy Brenengen
Mike Chanaka
Robert de la Vega
Trixie Golberg
Kirk Hayes
Lee Helgen
Butch Howard
Doug Hubbard
William Lowe
Tom Macy
Jim McDonough
Mary McKee
Jackie Mlynarczyk
Robert Morse
Paul Nelson
Dean Shawbold

Members Absent

Patricia Brady EA
Carrie Coleman
Joe Crowe EA
Kathy Engesser EA
Gerry Flannery
Kristina Hamann
Bernie Hesse
Lorrie Louder EA
David MacKenzie
Rob McKenzie EA
Brian Miller
Mary Russell EA
Jane Sanem EA
Mark Sorenson
Libby Starling EA
Lori Stone EA
Rick Vazquez
Cynthia Yongvang

Staff/Guests Present

Mary Jo Gardner, WIB CEO
Janet Guthrie, Workforce Solutions
Kate Raleigh, WIB Staff
Carol Rydell, Kaposia inc.
Terrell Towers, DEED Business Services
Wendy Underwood, City of Saint Paul

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Paul Nelson at 2:36 p.m. A quorum was not reached and members will be emailed for their electronic vote on action items, in accordance with WIB bylaws.

Approve Minutes and Agenda

Passed via electronic vote 10/19/07.

Share Recognition and Announcements

Guests were introduced. Wendy Underwood introduced herself; she has been assigned as the workforce liaison from Mayor Coleman's office, and she will be attending meetings to ensure the connection between the WIB and City remains strong.

Members were recognized for their recent achievements. See Attachment 1.

Update on Kaposia's Latino Initiative

Carol Rydell was present from Kaposia, inc. to update the board on Kaposia's Latino initiative. Kaposia serves to find work for individuals with developmental disabilities and focuses on making a good job match and continuing services after their clients find jobs. The Latino initiative is a new project for Kaposia and they created a collaborative partnership to serve this population. Included in the partnership are ARC of the Greater Twin Cities, CLUES, Community Action Council, and Neighborhood House. Kaposia has found that the usual avenues finding referrals don't exist in this community and they have been focusing on outreach. They are holding advisory group meetings that are helping to guide and improve the program, and they have created marketing materials in English and Spanish. A goal was set to have 10-15 individuals contact them for services, and they have had 17 people so far. One of the biggest barriers they have faced in this program is the stigma attached to individuals with disabilities. To counteract this in the Latino community, Kaposia is presenting positive images of people with disabilities working.

Update on Joint Powers Agreement

The Joint Powers Agreement (JPA) is moving forward in a positive direction and will be finalized by the December meeting. There will be a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) as an attachment to the JPA citing specific changes. This will be done as an alternative to rewriting the JPA. The City and County are also looking to downsize the number of members required on the board, which will affect the WIB's recruitment efforts.

Discussion on Re-designation of Workforce Service Areas

Comm. McElroy hosted a session at the Dept. of Employment and Economic Development (DEED) Conference on September 26th to discuss the outcomes of the MN Competes sessions held over the summer. Approximately 900 people attended the eight sessions held. Comm. McElroy reviewed concepts that came out of the sessions, such as the importance of partnerships, focusing on outcomes as opposed to methods, and creating change through best practices. Also stressed was as need to better align workforce development with K-12 and post-secondary education, and the need for workforce and economic development to be done regionally. Comm. McElroy also reported that the local areas would decide their own workforce service area boundaries.

There will be small grants (called FIRST Grants) available to help develop regional collaborations, and the metro WIB will be meeting on this topic shortly, though the state still needs to provide further information. The Ramsey County WIB already works collaboratively with others in the region, and this grant would be an opportunity to expand these efforts. The PowerPoint presentation used has been sent out to attendees, and will be distributed to the board.

DOL Youth Award

Workforce Solutions was recognized by the Dept. of Labor for best practices in working with the Youth Practitioners Network, Job Corps and Building Lives.

Make Time for Youth

Terry Zurn distributed information on Workforce Solutions' Make Time for Youth Program, which serves to match youth with meaningful work experience. This summer many County departments hired youth and found it meaningful for the youth and the departments. Workforce Solutions is now looking for positions skilled youth could fill in the public and private sectors, with some subsidy for wages available if necessary. Tonya Yarbrough is the contact for this program.

MFIP Biennial Service Agreement

Janet Guthrie, Workforce Solutions MN Family Investment Program (MFIP) Manager, was present to discuss the MFIP Biennial Service Agreement. The County runs the MFIP, Food Stamps Employment and Training program, and Diversionary Work Programs. MFIP is a public assistance program serving all adults that apply for services, and participation in employment services is mandatory. Before releasing funds, the state requires the county to submit a biennial service agreement explaining services provided by the program. Before the plan is submitted to the state it must go through a public comment period, and is posted on the County's website now for community members to review and comment. The WIB has an advisory role with these programs, and members are invited to submit a comment. Along with all of the plan specifics, the County must also submit an improvement plan, as they did not meet their goals last year. The plan will be submitted to the County Board for approval prior to being submitted to the state.

The board discussed the Diversionary Work Program, which was started in 2004 by the state to give individuals extra help for the first four months they would be on public assistance. It was started in attempts to reduce the number of individuals needing to go on MFIP, though individuals who utilize this program and do not need to get on MFIP are not counted as a positive outcome for the program. The board was interested in commenting on this discrepancy, but the timing is difficult for a statement to be submitted on behalf of the full board. The timing provided by the state does not allow for full

development of the plan with 30 days for a public comment period. This is something the board may want to address with the state as well. The CAO Committee will be getting a more comprehensive view of the plan in November, to be previewed for the full board.

Further discussion was around the DWP and how it seems counter intuitive to punish a program that helps individuals before they need the public assistance. There is also no differentiation across the state in regards to the difficulty of the populations needing services. The clients served in the metro area are very different from those served in outer MN. The group discussed possibly creating a letter to respond to these issues, submitted by Paul Nelson on behalf of the board.

Motion by Trixie Golberg with second by Kirk Hayes to underscore the effectiveness of the Diversionary Work Program as positive, though it has a negative impact on MFIP performance outcomes; and to support a policy that reflects the appreciation of the metro area for serving the majority of MFIP clients, and does not financially punish underperforming areas.

Passed via electronic vote 10/19/07.

Update on WIB Committees

Paul Nelson stressed the importance of participation on committees, as this is where the majority of the board's work happens.

Craig Anderson gave an update on the Workforce Committee. The Metro Manufacturing Sector Initiative (MMSI) is moving along with the manufacturing training program they are piloting at Saint Paul and Anoka Technical Colleges, based on the MPowered Program at Hennepin Technical College. Each college will train 20 new and incumbent workers starting in January with a 12 week classroom training followed by a mentored OJT program. Let staff know of any employers that may want to participate. The WIB and Workforce Solutions are working to expand the occupational English program they started at four Saint Paul hospitals. Meetings are being held with hospital administration to gauge interest in expanding this program from working with environmental services to working with general customer service. The hospitals are also being asked for funding to increase this program.

Bob de la Vega gave an update from the CAO committee. An update on membership was given, though this may be affected by the reduced board size in the MOU to the JPA. Staff began updating the WIB website on site and an ad hoc is meeting to redesign the site. The committee also started talking about reexamining the WIB's strategic plan, which is five years old. Staff may apply for a grant to get a consultant to help with this process. Anyone interested in serving on an ad hoc for this would be appreciated. Members reminded the board that a consultant, Lynn Moline, was used in the last process and it may be beneficial to ask her to help again. The committee also talked about fundraising and the possibility of seeking a grant to get help developing the fundraising plan. Finally, an ad hoc is meeting to develop the WIB's legislative agenda.

Kirk Hayes gave an update from the Youth Council. Terry Zurn and Youth Council members Peter Jessen-Howard and Joy Yungers attended the "Helping America's Youth" regional conference at the Saint Paul campus of the U of M. WIB members donated funds and give away items to Workforce Solutions to be given to the 89 youth recognized at the Second Annual YouthLEAD Recognition Event held on August 22nd. Also reported was the YouthLEAD program outcomes, which exceeded every goal set for the program in PY06. The State and County are still in negotiating the PY07 goals. The City of Saint Paul will attend the October 25th Youth Council meeting to report on the outcomes of their summer youth employment program.

Update on Century College/Human Services Grant

Mary McKee gave an update on this program. Century College was awarded a contract from the Dept. of Human Services to train child welfare workers. Century is utilizing the MnSCU network to provide

training to all 87 counties across the state. This is a good example of regional collaborations and conserving funds by using existing buildings for training, as opposed to using hotels as the previous trainer did.

Other

Congratulations to Amy Brenengen for her new position as the Director of the Office on the Economic Status of Women.

Adjourn

Motion made by Mike Chanaka with second by Dean Shawbold to adjourn the meeting at 4:30 p.m.

Next Meeting

Thursday, December 6, 2007

2:30 to 4:30 p.m.

Ramsey County Parks and Recreation.

Attachment 1: Recognition and Announcements

Recognition:

- Thank you to Terry Zurn, Workforce Solutions, and Youth Council members Peter Jessen-Howard and Jody Yungers for attending the “Helping America’s Youth” Regional Conference on August 2nd and 3rd at the University of Minnesota in Saint Paul. This conference was an effort lead by Mrs. Laura Bush to raise awareness about the challenges that youth face and asking Americans to become engaged in helping youth become healthy adults.
- Congratulations to Workforce Solutions YouthLEAD program for being awarded the U.S. Dept. of Labor-Employment Training Administration’s “Recognition of Excellence” award for serving the neediest youth. The award focused on Workforce Solutions’ Building Lives program model.
- Thank you to WIB members, Commissioner McDonough and Doug Hubbard, who attended the Second Annual YouthLEAD Recognition Event on August 22nd.
- Thank you to WIB members who donated items and/or funding to the YouthLEAD Event:
 - Craig Anderson
 - Bob de la Vega
 - Councilmember Helgen
 - Bernie Hesse
 - Butch Howard
 - Bill Lowe
 - Jackie Mlynarczyk
 - Paul Nelson
- Congratulations to Workforce Solutions’ YouthLEAD program for exceeding all of their WIA performance goals for PY ’06.

Announcements:

- The WIB and its WorkForce Center partners are hosting their third diversity seminar on November 1st, “Addressing Cultural Barriers in the Workplace: Cultural Accommodations.” Commissioner McDonough will be the opening speaker for this event. Contact Kate if you would like to attend.
- The Chair-Elect position is open for the Youth Council and two business positions are open on the Executive Committee. If you are interested in these positions, please contact Mary Jo.
- The National Association of Workforce Boards 2008 Forum runs from February 23-26. Registration is now open at <http://www.nawb.org/forum/>; register by December 14th to get the Early Bird rate. There is funding available for those interested in attending the conference. Please contact Kate for details.

- The Workforce Committee has changed their meeting to the FIRST Thursday of every odd month; their next meeting will be on November 1st 1:00-2:30 at the Ramsey County WorkForce Center- Saint Paul.
- The next WIB meeting, December 6th, 2:30 – 4:30, will take place at Ramsey County Parks and Recreation, 2015 N. Van Dyke, Maplewood.