

Ramsey County Workforce Investment Board

April 2, 2009

Minutes

WIB Members Present

Steve Carlson
Toni Carter
Mike Chanaka
Kathy Engesser
Trixie Golberg
Kirk Hayes
Lee Helgen
Doug Hubbard
Dennis Johnson
David MacKenzie
Rob McKenzie
Barbara Mednick
Bob Morse
Mary Russell
Jane Sanem
Dan Strittmater

Members Absent

Craig Anderson EA
Patricia Brady EA
Amy Brenengen
Joe Crowe EA
Robert de la Vega EA
Bev Fritz EA
Butch Howard EA
Paul Nelson EA
Scott North EA
Jim Schultz EA
Lori Stone EA

Staff/Guests Present

Mary Jo Gardner, WIB CEO
Kate Raleigh, WIB Staff
Carli Stark, WIB VISTA
Terry Zurn, Workforce Solutions

Call to Order

The WIB meeting was called to order at 2:34 p.m.

Recognition and Announcements

- See Attachment 1 for Recognition and Announcements.

Approve Consent Agenda

- **Approve Agenda**
- **Approve Minutes from February Meeting**
- **Approve Youth Plan**
- **Ratify Letters of Support– Saint Paul College, Century College**
- **Approve 2008 WIB Annual Report**

Mary Jo Gardner requested an addition to the agenda after Strategic Plan Follow-Up to discuss the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funding.

Motion made by Mike Chanaka with second by Dave MacKenzie to approve the consent agenda as amended.
Motion carried.

Committee Updates

Youth Council

Kirk Hayes gave an update from the Youth Council. The Youth Plan was approved in the consent agenda- Kirk thanked all who helped develop the plan. The program year (ending March 31, 2009) was the last year of the three-year contracts with the YouthLEAD vendor. Workforce Solutions has three year contracts with vendors, with the option to renew contracts twice for one year each time, and an RFP must be issued every five years for program vendors. The Youth Council has recommended renewing the current vendor contracts for one year.

There was a Building Lives hearing at the House Higher Education and Workforce Development Finance and Policy Division on Thursday, March 19. Representative Sheldon Johnson introduced the bill (H.F.0315), Mary Jo and Peter Jessen-Howard testified in support of the bill, and Doug Hubbard attended in support. The County has also applied for a federal earmark to support the program, sending a request to both Representative McCollum and Senator Klobuchar.

The YC had their March meeting at Boys Totem Town, a residential treatment center for adjudicated youth at high risk of reoffending. Four participants of the program spoke about their experience and progress. The participants stressed the importance of job attainment as a key factor for changing their previous behaviors.

CAO

The workforce partners are developing the Local Plan, which will be brought to the WIB for approval in June, prior to submission to DEED. The Committee reviewed the WIA Adult and Dislocated Worker programs. Workforce Solutions is meeting the majority of their performance outcomes. If all outcomes are met, Workforce Solutions can earn incentive funding, which they generally use for professional development of their staff.

Education

The Education Committee has accepted a new member, Deanne DeGraff, Principal of Northeast Metro 916 Intermediate School District. The charge of the committee is focused on connecting education, business and workforce development and the committee has developed the strategic plan goal around education and business alignment, identified as: To convene industries to clarify their workforce and training needs. Focus industries included green industries, healthcare, manufacturing and early childhood development.

There was discussion on making sure the identified needs are based in data. Councilmember Helgen suggested partnering with local economic development and others in the community with access to and an interest in this information. He and Mary Jo will coordinate a meeting to initiate this partnership.

Workforce

Mary Russell presented on the WIB's healthcare initiative. There are four phases: conducting a needs analysis of the industry, defining the project, implementing the initiative and reporting results. The WIB is currently in phase two with plans to move to phase three in the next six weeks. The goal will be to help connect employer needs with what the workforce has to offer, with a focus on jobs with growth possibilities. There is a possibility of not only training new workers, but also collaborating with schools and the private sector to train entry-level workers to move in to skill-intensive careers.

Conditions in healthcare are changing at a rapid pace, creating a need for flexibility and change in meeting employer needs. A nationalized healthcare system, for example, would change the initiative dramatically. The industry is also being affected by the increasing cost of healthcare.

2009 Strategic Priorities Update

Mary Jo gave an update on progress toward meeting the priorities established for 2009. Below are priorities for the year and what has been accomplished for each priority.

I. Strengthen the WIB's role as a strategic leader in workforce development.

- The Annual Report has been approved.
- The Youth Plan has been approved.
- The WIA Youth, Adult and Dislocated Worker programs were reviewed at the committee level.
- The WIB's strategic plan is in process.
- The healthcare initiative is in process.
- The Fund Development and Marketing ad hocs are working on ways to better market the WIB and FWIB, including the possibility of developing a quarterly newsletter from the FWIB report.

II. Utilize the FWIB's 501(c)(3) status to secure funds for WIB operations and initiatives.

- Marketing efforts will aid in the pursuit of funding the WIB and initiatives.
- The WIB continues to seek funding for initiatives such as Building Lives and the healthcare initiative.
- Legislative meetings for Building Lives were held.

There was discussion on the concept of raising funds for operations or raising funds for initiatives. Foundations may not be willing to support what could be seen as "governmental responsibilities" and the issue of public

funding for WIB operations needs further discussion. This is being discussed in conjunction with the Partnership Agreement discussions with the County.

III. Actively engage in local and regional workforce collaborations to meet the needs of employers and job seekers in Ramsey County and beyond.

- The healthcare initiative is underway.
- The MMSI partnership is working to meet employer needs in the current economy.
- The WIB is a partner in the metro FIRST grant to coordinate manufacturing initiatives- an update will be provided at the next WIB meeting.

Strategic Plan Follow-Up

There has been significant involvement from board members on the strategic planning process. The work at the session on March 5th brought about two key focus areas- increasing the alignment between education systems and employer needs, and building awareness and engagement of business. Work is underway on the SMART goals that will fit under the two focus areas. A group of members met to finalize the updated Vision and Mission statements for the board and these will be included the full plan, which will come to the board in June before seeking final approval by the County Board.

Stimulus Funding Update

Under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, Ramsey County will receive \$1.1 million for the Dislocated Worker program, \$600,000 for the WIA Adult program, and \$1.7 million for youth programs, in addition to the regular WIA allocations. There will also be additional funding through Wagner-Peyser to assist in staffing resource rooms in WorkForce Centers and Unemployment Insurance offices, adding five temporary staff to the Ramsey County WorkForce Centers- two in Saint Paul and three in North Saint Paul. The stimulus funding is issued with four guidelines: transparency, timely spending, using data and information to guide strategic plan, and service delivery.

The funding should be available by mid-April, with reporting expected to DEED weekly. Program participants will be encouraged to take advantage of short-term training opportunities for careers that are expected to grow. Unemployment Insurance claimants will receive reemployment services, with a focus in the green industries. Additionally, a larger portion of these funds will go to supportive services such as transportation, healthcare and child care. Services in the libraries through Goodwill/Easter Seals will at least be doubled, including adding services in suburban Ramsey County libraries.

Ramsey County will receive \$1.7 million in stimulus funding for youth services in addition to the regular WIA allocation, to be spent or obligated by June 30, 2010. These funds will be used to expand the current year-round program and add a summer work experience program for about 500 youth in the summer of 2009, with funds available from May 1-September 30th. Half of the summer program participants will be recruited from suburban Ramsey County with the other half coming from the City of Saint Paul. Current year-round program vendor YWCA of St. Paul will subcontract with established local organizations to place youth in meaningful work experience with on-site trained supervisors. The subcontractors will need the capacity to take on large numbers of youth and provide payroll services for them. Another current vendor, GAP, will engage 105 youth in their YouthBuild program to rehab two houses on the West Side. Additionally, the County will provide payroll services for some smaller work experience placements where a site has been identified, along with an identified group of youth. The youth will earn the new minimum wage of \$7.25/hour and will work about 20 hours per week for six to ten weeks.

There was discussion on marketing materials used to recruit employers for youth work experience placements. The vendors for the summer programs utilize their own marketing materials and systems. The City has Youth Job Corps applications on their website currently. Workforce Solutions is able to accommodate year-round work experience placements, taking on one or two youth at a site with subsidized wages. Workforce Solutions has marketing materials for this program that the WIB can distribute. Any members with job opportunities should contact Terry Zurn.

Updates on stimulus funding will be delivered at committee meetings, with the Youth Council reviewing the youth programs and the CAO committee reviewing the adult programs. All members are welcome to attend these meetings.

Other

None.

Adjourn

Motion made by Kirk Hayes with second by Toni Carter to adjourn the meeting at 4:12 p.m.

Motion carried.

Next meeting: Thursday, June 4, 2009

Attachment 1: Recognition and Announcements**Recognition:**

- Welcome new members Steve Carlson, Hedback, Arendt, Kohl & Carlson, PLLC and Amy Filice, City of Saint Paul Planning and Economic Development.
- Thank you to the following individuals who have supported and/or testified at the Senate and House of Representatives for Building Lives bills- Commissioner Toni Carter, Peter Jessen-Howard, Robert Morse, Doug Hubbard and Mary Jo Gardner.
- Thank you to the following people and organizations for their work on the WIB's 2008 Annual Report: Kathy Engesser, Barbara Mednick, Robert Morse, Workforce Solutions, DEED Job Service, DEED Business Services and DEED Rehabilitation Services.
- Thank you to Tom McGinn, John Bruner and the youth participants at Boys Totem Town for hosting the Youth Council's March meeting.
- Thank you to Kirk Hayes for his assistance with the DEED youth monitor's visit.
- Thank you to Brenda Goldman, Kirk Hayes, Dave MacKenzie, Robert Morse and Paul Nelson who helped with further developing the Vision and Mission statements.
- Thank you to all WIB, Youth Council, Education Committee and Friends of the WIB members, as well as the City of Saint Paul representatives, who participated in the Strategic Planning session on March 5th.
- Thank you to Brenda Norman, Tim Vogt and Victor Thompson for facilitating the Strategic Planning session.

Announcements:

- Members are encouraged to visit the WIB's website to provide input in the continued development of the WIB's Strategic Plan. A discussion board has been established for members to develop education goals and another will be established to develop business-focused goals. Links to these pages can be found on the WIB's homepage (www.rcwib.org).
- Senator Moua and Representative Johnson have introduced bills in the Senate and House respectively to support Building Lives. The bills are S.F.0411 and H.F.0315. You can track these bills at https://www.revisor.leg.state.mn.us/revisor/pages/search_status/status_search.php?body=Senate
- The 4th Annual YouthLEAD Recognition Event is scheduled for June 18th from 6-7:30 pm at Harriet Island Pavilion. All members are welcome to attend this event.
- The next WIB meeting is June 4, 2:30-4:30.