

Ramsey County Workforce Investment Board  
**Youth Council Meeting**

February 22, 2007

**Members Present**

Andrew Freeberg  
Kirk Hayes  
Lee Helgen  
Peter Jessen-Howard  
David MacKenzie  
Dale Maristuen  
Dean Shawbold  
Jody Yungers

**Members Absent**

Billy Collins  
Abe Hassan  
Courtney Henry  
Doug Hubbard  
Sheldon Jensen  
Peg Killen  
Rick Polanski

**Staff/Guests Present**

Mary Jo Gardner, WIB Staff  
Kate Bates, WIB Staff  
Dwayne Green, Workforce Solutions  
Allan Ige, Workforce Solutions  
Mireya Smith, Workforce Solutions Intern  
Terry Zurn, Workforce Solutions

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**Call to Order**

Kirk Hayes called the meeting to order at 3:35 p.m.

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**Approve Minutes from January 25<sup>th</sup> Meeting**

**Motion** made by Dean Shawbold and seconded by Dale Maristuen to approve the meeting minutes from January 25<sup>th</sup> as presented.

**Motion carried.**

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**Update on Building Lives**

Peter Jessen-Howard gave an update on the Building Lives efforts. Mary Jo and Bob will be meeting with Sen. Cohen next week to discuss supporting a bill, and Peter has met with Rep. Johnson and Sen. Moua to let them know about the program and what the Youth Council is doing. More information will be known next week. Peter gave background on the program for the new members, and indicated that individuals contacted in Saint Paul and Ramsey County have been very supportive of the program.

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**Addition Agenda: Summer Youth Employment Funding Requests**

Councilmember Lee Helgen was in attendance and requested that an item be added to the agenda to discuss the legislative requests for summer youth funding from the County and City. Ramsey County asked for \$750K for summer youth employment and the City asked for \$500K for the same purpose. Both of these bills have the same authors and are going to same legislative committees for discussion. The request to the Youth Council is to support merging the two bills into one request for the total amount, \$1.25 million. There are a lot of bills in the legislature and it is felt that the request will be more effective together. There was a larger question on the City running their own programs; Councilmember Helgen welcomes the opportunity to discuss this question, but wanted to focus on the issue of merging the two bills at this meeting. There was a question on how the money would be divided between the two entities should the full request not be granted. Councilmember Helgen indicated that this is a discussion to have after the bills are merged.

**Motion** made by Dave MacKenzie with second by Dale Maristuen to support merging the county and city summer jobs request to the legislature into one bill and to ask the county commissioners and lobbying staff to work on this effort.

Further discussion was on the wording of the merged bill- there is concern that it be written specific enough so there is no question and where the money goes and how it is divided between the two entities. The Youth Council would like to ensure that the new merged bill is written to be mutually acceptable to both the City and County.

**Motion carried**

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### **Update on Youth Resource Mapping**

Jody Yungers gave some background and an update on the Youth Resource Mapping project. Jody is currently discussing a collaborative resource mapping project with City of Saint Paul Second Shift, United Way's 211, the Youth Council, and the PACER Center. They are looking at the software program that Pacer is using for their Project C3. This program was geared to people with disabilities, and we would like to continue the work started with Project C3 and expand it to all youth. The benefits of the program that Pacer is using are the GIS technology and the administrative technology it has to electronically update registered organizations through email. The partnering organizations are scheduling another meeting in the near future.

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### **Update on Outreach to Schools**

DEED funded a project, based on a pilot project from St. Cloud, which provided money to local areas to train an intern and place them in career centers at local high schools. Mireya Smith is the intern in Ramsey County; Mireya was trained on WorkForce Center concepts, resources, and software and works in two local schools- Roseville High School and Guadalupe Alternative Programs (GAP). In these schools, Mireya works with kids to get them interested in careers exploration and post-secondary options. The program will end this year on May 30<sup>th</sup>.

Mireya give update on how each program is going. At both schools she helps students explore careers, fill out college applications, fill out FAFSA forms, and apply for scholarships. At Roseville Mireya is supervised by a counselor and works with career center advisor. She meets with students one on one for 30 minute sessions and discusses what they want to do after school ends. Mireya often works with the ELL and international students and recently met with Minneapolis Community and Technical College and the U of M to find out the process for international students to stay in the US after school ends. At GAP Mireya is teaching two classes on Thursdays to students who were initially not interested in continuing their education after high school; they are learning the benefits of continuing education and learning what they need to do to get there. Colleges come and speak with the kids, and Mireya helps them fill out applications, as well as helps parents fill out FAFSA forms. Mireya also shared stories from some of the students she has helped.

The group asked questions of Mireya, and Dwayne Green of Workforce Solutions who works with Mireya. Dwayne indicated that the vast majority (about 95%) of the DEED funds went to Mireya's wages. Some schools were hesitant to take on what they see as the extra work of having an intern. Mireya was asked how helpful it was in her position that she is bilingual- she indicated it was extremely helpful, as it helped her relate to all ELL schools and she was able to translate for others at times. She thinks that it would be beneficial to have two interns next year because it is difficult to build relationships with the students when only being in the school twice per week. There is money in the DEED budget for this to be funded again.

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### **Other**

Dean Shawbold discussed the Career Skills Day held last week in White Bear. Over 60 kids showed up and did activities relating to interviewing skills, general knowledge tests, job applications and problem solving skills. He thanked Terry and David, who helped with judging. Next week he is meeting with others to see how it can be better next year.

Jody recently met with a teacher from Minneapolis North High School who works with a program called Education of Constructions Careers Coalition. Through this program, students from Central and Johnson high schools (among others) go through 6 or 8 week training programs in the trades, complete a summer project in their communities, and are exposed to the good careers that can be found in construction. This project is funded through the Association of General Contractors, which is actively recruiting women and youth of color to participate. This project is very timely with the prospect of losing a lot of good workers from retirement in the near future. If there is another meeting, Mary Jo would like to be involved. The website for this project is: [constructioncareers.org](http://constructioncareers.org).

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### **Adjourn**

The meeting adjourned at 5:01 p.m.

**Next Meeting:** March 22, Saint Paul WorkForce Center