

Workforce Innovation Board of Ramsey County
Constructions-Green Jobs Committee Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, May 14, 2024
3:00 – 4:00pm
Zoom Video Conference

Present:

Becky Brink Ray
Chris Duffrin
Don Mullin
Elisa Rasmussen
Mary Rick

Absent:

Joseph Adamji
Russ Stark

Staff/Guests:

Ling Becker, Workforce Solutions
Mariann Macalus, Workforce Solutions
Rachael Molenaar, Workforce Solutions
John O’Phelan, Workforce Solutions

Call to Order & Land Acknowledgement

Becker called the meeting to order at 3:03pm. O’Phelan read the land acknowledgement aloud.

Approve March Minutes

Motion (Rasmussen/Rick) to approve the March 12, 2024, minutes as presented. Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

Committee Work Plan

Becker et al. shared the following:

Construction – Green Jobs Related Events

- Ramsey Green Expo + Career Fair: The expo/fair focused on organizations that are creating green jobs in emerging industries or shifting to more sustainable practices. There were over 100 job seekers with over 70% being Ramsey County residents and great feedback received from employers. The video will be shared in the follow up email.
- Clean Energy Economy MN: Becker and Rick attended the MN Energy FactSheet Launch Event at the Science Museum of Minnesota (SMM). The FactSheet outlines key trends influencing national and state investment and economics, energy supply and energy demand. There were local industry experts digging into the trends and shared how they will impact Minnesota’s clean energy future. A link will be provided in the follow up email. A behind-the-scenes tour of their innovative energy systems, this is one of the many ways SMM supports the clean energy economy, might be something this Committee would be interested in doing.
- PCAT: Small Business Outreach.: This event aimed at small business construction contractors to continue efforts to promote and support CERT vendors. County staff who are directly involved in construction projects were available for conversations with small businesses.
- MN Construction Crew: This hiring event happened this morning at the North Central State Regional Council of Carpenters. Attendees could meet with contractors that are or will be hiring soon as well as talk to construction union representatives to learn about their unions and benefits.
- Federal Reserve Regional Economic Conditions: Construction Sector Outlook virtual event on May 21st to learn about supply costs, labor costs and various tools to help in understanding the macroeconomics of construction.

Build Your Own Future Campaign: Molenaar shared:

- The Opportunity Project for Cities: The WIB and the City of Saint Paul applied for this program which supports the distribution of information and awareness of construction and green career pathways. The program provides a pro bono technology solution to a problem by understanding a local problem, improving open data stewardship, designing equitable technology and collaborating across sectors. The problem the WIB and Saint Paul identified is around the lack of information

about construction and green careers. This would help augment what is already on the Build Your Own Future Campaign website. This project could help in building out the community kiosks previously discussed.

- Construction Trailer Concept: Becker shared the opportunity to launch a physical place (possible a trailer), for example, The Heights, to leverage interest for outreach and engagement while also providing hands on application for construction in that particular geographic area. Outreach could be at different locations as construction projects occur. Rasmussen shared that Xcel has a “tiny house” that could be used as well. Mullin and Becker will connect on concerns before continuing conversations.
- Success Stories/Showcase: Becker shared the idea of an opportunity to showcase success stories as the East Metro has significant opportunities to highlight as it relates to climate change/green energy. Rick and Becker to discuss further as to audience and partnerships. Further discussion around having the legislators be part of a roundtable to share the happenings around the community.

Director Updates

The following updates were provided:

- Flow DOE Opportunity: Flow Environmental Systems, Inc., is an engineering, technology and manufacturing company established to bring commercially viable and environmentally responsible HVAC&R solutions to global markets. Flow is looking to create manufacturing space and jobs including office, training facilities and warehouse to enable production of commercial heat pumps. This is an opportunity to leverage significant Department of Energy Grant as the production plant will need skilled piping, welding, and electrical personnel. They plan to offer career paths to employees including training, education assistance and leadership opportunities. They are looking to locate in the Midway District.
May 28th County Board Workshop: Becker shared the topic of this workshop is leveraging inclusive strategies for construction projects. The Best Value Work Team includes Public Works, Workforce Solutions, Ramsey County Attorney’s Office and Procurement. This is an opportunity to evaluate contractors for specific skills, techniques, experience using a qualitative method. It highlighted the Public Works Best Value Pilot Project which is to be solicited in early 2025 (County Road D project).

Other Committee Updates

Brink Ray shared they had eleven graduates, half of the Ramsey County cohort, with 100% graduation rate; Rick shared there are 900 Right Track interns; Becker shared the additional Tech events occurring the rest of the month.

Adjourn

Upon completion of the agenda, the meeting was adjourned at 3:57pm.

Next Meeting: September 10, 2024, 3-4pm via Zoom