

Workforce Innovation Board of Ramsey County
Executive Committee Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, May 22, 2024, 7:30-9:00am
Meeting held using Zoom Video Conference

Committee Members Present

Cheniqua Johnson
Chad Kulas
Tony Lusiba
Rena Moran
Don Mullin
John Perlich
Elisa Rasmussen
Mary Russell
Aalayha Traub

Members Absent

Susan Jambor-EA

Staff/Guests Present

Ling Becker, Workforce Solutions
Mariann Macalus, Workforce Solutions
Becky Milbrandt, Workforce Solutions
Stevenson Morgan, Commissioner's Office

Call to Order and Land Acknowledgement

Chair Rasmussen called the meeting to order at 7:33am. She read the land acknowledgement aloud.

Approve March Minutes

Motion (Kulas/Perlich) to approve the March 27, 2024, minutes as presented. Motion carried unanimously by chat vote.

WIB Financial and Strategic Funds Reports

Becker reviewed the March/April 2024 financial report noting the spending and obligated upcoming expenses in the the Strategic Priorities budget. A summary of WIB-sponsored events will be shared at the June WIB meeting.

Membership

WIB & Committee Demographics Dashboards: Milbrandt provided an update on the WIB membership makeup, noting a decrease by one in Hispanic/female/city representation because of Mercado Michelli changing jobs. Her new position is not with a community-based organization, so she had to resign her WIB seat. She will stay involved as a committee member. Committee level changes include two new members (Nayman-Tonn and Mercado Michelli) which increases the white and Hispanics representation each by one. Milbrandt also provided an overview from the vacancy report noting the application of Kuzel is pending Executive Committee recommendation. Two vacancies remain in the business and community-based organization categories.

WIB Member Reappointments: Milbrandt shared that she reached out to all the current members whose terms are ending on July 31. Members who have opted not to seek reappointment are Jambor, Kim and Mercado Michelli. Milbrandt shared that all WIB and committee members have been fully engaged in participation with the WIB. She thanked everyone for their dedication to the WIB. Milbrandt stated that an application has been received from Tami Cybulski from Blaze Credit Union as recommended by Jambor.

Motion (Kulas/Russell) to recommend the reappointment of Tom Aasheim, Jonathan Banks, Jennifer Germain, Hanna Getachew-Kreusser, Katie Kapaun, John Perlich, Donna Rapacz, Elisa Rasmussen, Mary Rick and Trish Stevens to the WIB for the 2024-2026 term. Motion carried unanimously by chat vote.

WIB Applications: Cybulski, Kuzel: Milbrandt asked this committee to consider recommendations for the appointments of Tami Cybulski (Assistant Vice President Human Resources-Blaze Credit Union) and Bryan Kuzel (HR Director at Mississippi Market). Becker stated that Kuzel has strong interest in the disability area. She also mentioned that Marvin Smith, president of Bogar Construction may be interested in the WIB. She will speak with him soon to see specifically what his interests are related to the WIB.

Motion (Perlich/Mullin) to recommend to the Ramsey County Board of Commissioners the appointment of Tami Cybulski to fill a county-Business seat, and to recommend to the City of Saint Paul the appointment of Bryan Kuzel to fill the city-Business seat. Both appointments are for terms commencing on August 1, 2024, and ending July 31, 2026. Motion carried unanimously by chat vote.

One-Stop Operator Selection

Milbrandt reviewed the One-Stop Operator (OSO) functions and provided an update indicating the WIB approved the OSO Request for Quotes at its April 4 meeting and then released by the County's Procurement Department on April 5. She noted that as of the May 3rd deadline only one proposal was submitted from a consortium consisting of four core WIOA title partners. Three of the partners are part of the current OSO consortium and this time St. Paul Public Schools ABE was added. A team of WIB members reviewed the proposal and recommended the selection of the proposing consortium. If approved on June 6, the WIB will enter into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the consortium, with the term being July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2028, the four-year maximum allowed by WIOA law.

Motion (Kulas/Russell) to recommend that the WIB enter into an MOU with the recommended consortium through June 30, 2028. Motion carried unanimously by chat vote.

WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker Vendor Selection

Becker provided an update of the WIOA Adult and DW vendors selection. The new contracts for Adult Services (Goodwill Easter Seals, Hired, Karen Organization of MN and Avivo) and WIOA/State DW Services (Hired and Goodwill Easter Seals) that will be executed June 30, 2024, for services to begin on July 1, 2024. More details were provided in a memo from Becker.

Motion (Mullin/Perlich) to recommend that the full WIB approve the vendor selection recommendations made by the evaluation team as follows:

- **Adult Services: Goodwill Easter Seals, Hired, Karen Organization of MN and Avivo.**
- **WIOA and State Dislocated Worker Services: Hired and Goodwill Easter Seals.**

Motion carried unanimously by chat vote.

Committee Updates

- **Tech Month:** Becker and others provided highlights of the Tech Month events:
 - Ramsey Green Expo & Career Fair: For job seekers to learn about and apply for green collar careers in emerging industries, as well as conventional business and trades who have shifted to more sustainable practices. The event was well attended.
 - Future of Work: A panel discussion for workforce professionals to learn about how technology is reshaping industries and transforming traditional work practice. Erin Olson from RealTime Talent led a great conversation on how artificial intelligence is changing job search. This would be a good discussion with the WIB in the coming months.
 - Public Pathways Tech Workforce Panel: The audience was people interested in public sector technologist careers or in training/education programs. Speakers were from the Office of Technology at the City of Saint Paul; Ramsey County CIO; Metropolitan Council CIO and Minnesota IT Service CTO.
 - Tech Trainer Roundtable: On May 29, RealTime Talent will facilitate a discussion with 18 leaders from local organizations that provide training, credentialing and career navigation support for entry-level technology talent.
 - United We Transform: A large AI-enabled networking event for industry professionals sponsored by Full Stack Saint Paul.
- **Full Stack/WIB Workforce Collaboration:** Becker provided a recap of the Full Stack-WIB coordination. With the alignment between the Full Stack Workforce Committee and the WIB's Tech Committee, more members will likely be added to this committee. There will likely be a Full Stack member who will serve as a type of co-chair connection with the Tech Committee. The Full Stack

Bylaws are being developed to provide a framework and clarity on this structure. Lusiba shared that more collaboration with the Minnesota Technology Association is needed. If anyone has any concerns on the collaboration, contact Becker for further discussion.

- **Equity Board Training:** Becker reminded that in previous discussions there was interest in equity training for the WIB in 2024. She shared that the county has already developed, implemented and is monitoring a county-wide racial equity plan. This is an opportunity for the WIB to support the county's goal to provide equity training for all of its multiple boards and commissions. The proposed plan is to have this training in October as part of the regular WIB meeting. The remaining time could be used for networking. Becker can follow up with members who can't attend the training.
- **Inclusive Employer Toolkit:** Becker shared that Ramsey County is refreshing the Ramsey County Means Business webpage. This is an opportunity to do a site redesign for Workforce Solutions to have a more unique identity in partnership with the Community and Economic Development department. She shared audience overview data from Google Analytics for the last quarter of 2023, when the Toolkit was launched online. There was discussion at the Partnership & Outreach and Equity Committees about the opportunity to deepen the outreach for the Toolkit. Some suggestions were: testimonials, Lunch & Learn, and a shorter cohort series.
- **Upcoming Events:** Becker shared following:
 - **Tech Trainers Roundtable:** May 29 as part of Tech Month and sponsored by the WIB Tech Committee. The conversation will be facilitated by RealTime Talent Senior Director of Strategic Research Erin Olson to help identify the most critical challenges faced by education and training partners, and brainstorm innovative, cross-sector solutions to improve job placement outcomes for that talent with a focus on early-career non-traditional students.
 - **Youth Works! Networking:** May 29. WIB members are invited to join Workforce Solutions, school partners, employers and others across the youth employment ecosystem for some food, fun and conversations as well as celebrate the 2024 Youth Workforce Champion Award recipients again, share the County's Youth Systems Building plan and celebrate the work happenings in schools, employers and community-based organizations across Ramsey County.

Director's Updates

Becker provided updates on the following:

Legislative Update:

- **Taxes Conference Committee:** A mega omnibus bill that is over 1,400 pages was created from every bill waiting to pass.
- **Jobs/Workforce Bill:** It includes \$300,000 for three Ramsey County Workforce initiatives: digital navigators, justice impacted navigators and a pass-through grant to a community group.
- **State DW:** The State DW Program added language that improves flexibility and expands eligibility to best meet the needs of Minnesota employers. The important piece is the language "is an adult with a low income, is a recipient of public assistance or is deficient in 16.8 basic skills." This will open up more funds for the low-income individuals because this was only allowed through the Adult program previously.

CareerForce Relocation: The three groups that have responsibilities for this relocation (WIB/WFS as the administrative entity, One-Stop Operator and other mandatory partners) continue to meet. The relocation timeline was shared with the hope of the new CareerForce location opening in December 2024.

Cannabis: The county board had a recent workshop to discuss the county's approach to cannabis. Public input is being developed for four state programs. The programs will provide technical assistance, financial capital and workforce training to qualifying individuals, businesses and organizations to support successful outcomes in the new legal industry in the state.

Youth System Building Academy: Saint Paul Public Schools, Saint Paul College and the City of Saint Paul are working together toward a collective impact model to expand opportunities for youth workers through the community. The idea is to; 1) ensure Youth Works partners work together cohesively, enhancing

efficient and effectiveness, 2) co-create a talent pipeline strategy with employers for long-term success, and 3) implement a collective impact model.

FLOW: 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 a significant Department of Energy grant as the production plan will need skilled piping, welding, and electrical personnel. FLOW plans to offer career paths to employees including training, education assistance and leadership opportunities. They are looking to locate in the Midway District. Commissioner Moran and Becker are attending an open house next Tuesday. If anyone is interested in joining them, let Becker know.

June WIB Meeting: The next WIB meeting is June 6 at the Plato Conference Center. DEED's Assistant Commissioner for Immigrant & Refugee Affairs, Abdiwahab Mohamed, will be sharing the work the Office of New Americans. There will also be a panel of employers focused on employment support and opportunities for New Americans/Immigrants.

Other

No other topics discussed.

Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 8:48am.

The next Executive Committee meeting is Wednesday, September 25, 2024, 7:30a-9am.