

**Workforce Innovation Board of Ramsey County
Partnership & Outreach Committee Meeting Minutes**

Tuesday, March 12, 2024

2:00-3:00pm

Zoom Video Conference

Committee Members Present

Susan Jambor
Katie Kapaun
Chad Kulas
Pamela Maldonado
Donna Rapacz
Trish Stevens
Carly Voshell

Members Absent

Staff/Guests Present

Ling Becker, Ramsey County
Mariann Macalus, Ramsey County
Becky Milbrandt, Ramsey County

Call to Order & Land Acknowledgement

Chair Jambor called the meeting to order at 2:01pm. Jambor read the land acknowledgement aloud. All in attendance introduced themselves.

Approve January Minutes

Motion (Maldonado/Kulas) to approve the January 9, 2024, meeting minutes as presented. Motion carried unanimously by chat vote.

Committee Work Plan/Project Updates

2023 Annual Report: Milbrandt provided an update on the annual report. Adjustments were made from previous years with this year's format being similar to that of 2022. The report theme was adjusted to be "Building an Inclusive Workforce Together" which resonates throughout the report and supports the work of the WIB and Workforce Solutions. Next year's theme aligns with the County's budget theme of investing in people, partnerships and service delivery. Work continues on the graphic design so it can be kept for a couple years and the color scheme aligns with the other workforce communication materials and social graphics and incorporating more visualizations illustrations to increase visual appeal. There is still time to adjust things if anyone has any feedback or thoughts. Milbrandt then explained the timeline and the evolution of the social media campaign to drive visits to the website throughout the year. Metrics will be tracked to determine if the approach is successful.

Upcoming Events: Becker shared information on several upcoming events:

- Metro State STEM – March 27: Metro State, a One-Stop system partner, is hosting an event featuring the 3M chief scientist. Partnering on this event is a good way to expose more of Ramsey County's STEM or STEM-adjacent training program participants to this opportunity. Participants will attend the keynote speaker and then an add-on STEM panel of professors, light lunch and campus tour, sponsored by the WIB.
- Youth Job and Resource Fair – April 20 at Maplewood Mall. It is also Hmong Heritage Day at the Mall so that should help with traffic. Any members who want to host a table should let Milbrandt know as well as letting her know who should know about this event to get the word out. Voshell expressed interest in having a table to share about Adult Basic Education services.
- Green Careers Fair & Environmental Resource Fair - May 1 at Wilder Foundation. This event will be in partnership with the county's Environmental Health department. Maldonado and Kulas will connect with Milbrandt to be part of this event.
- Launchpad 2024: Journey Beyond High School – Tentatively May 9. This is a new event requested by the schools for high school graduating seniors and their families who do not have a plan to go to college or other post-secondary plans. Voshell is interested in tabling at this event. Milbrandt will connect with her as the planning stages progress.

- Tech Month – May. Planning is underway by the Tech Committee. Becker asked this committee to help promote events once information is finalized. Voshell will reach out to Molenaar who is working on some of these events.

Leveraging Ramsey County Means Business: Becker shared the following special projects to leverage the Ramsey County Means Business (RCMB) website;

- Local Initiatives: There has been interest in using this tool in a more flexible way for specific projects (e.g., East Side St. Paul, Hillcrest, maybe Allianz Field redevelopment). The idea is to build out a more localized platform based on the “Building Your Own Future” model which would help residents in the community leverage opportunities and have that intersection with construction and other contracting jobs as well as other things happening locally. This pilot could include iconic photos, links to the Hillcrest and Hamm Brewery projects, a calendar of hiring events in the community, and a county contact to talk to community groups about construction pathways in the local community.
- Film Incentives: Commissioner Frethem is passionate about film production. Minnesota passed a Film Production Tax Credit and is the only state in the Midwest, other than Michigan, to have this. It provides an assignable 25% income tax credit to production companies that expend at least \$1 million in a consecutive 12-month period for eligible production costs. This would be another platform to build out for production companies to look at for resources. The goal is to make Ramsey County attractive since it is a diverse small business and workforce ecosystem.
- Employer – Childcare Start-ups: Another RCMB platform could provide childcare resources for opening a childcare center. New data shows Minnesota is experiencing a childcare crisis noting nearly 30% of families are without access to childcare. In Ramsey County, the situation is more dire. Also, important to consider is the need for non-traditional hours of childcare for shift workers.

Committee members thought adding these is a great way to support employers in obtaining resources and recognizing how everything is connected in establishing a business.

Director Update

Becker highlighted the following:

- MN Skills-Based Hiring Accelerator: This program is being offered in partnership with Goodwill Easter Seals, Urban League Twin Cities, and the Minneapolis Regional and Saint Paul Area Chambers. It offers a hands-on assessment and reconstruction of organizations’ hiring, onboarding and talent management processes to move beyond traditional hiring approaches to focus on the true skills and abilities needed to do a job, particularly with people who face systemic barriers to job opportunities. Two committee members have attended the one-day in-person workshop and found it very beneficial in helping their organization build a plan that will attract, hire and retain the best talent. One thing that might be a struggle for non-state employers is changing the requirements as currently the skills-based requirements are only for state positions. Ramsey County is entering into a partnership as a region with the other workforce boards in the metro area to support this new program. More details will be sent soon for a one-hour orientation for regional workforce board members. The WIB should advocate for the 2025 platform to push the state to make changes to their legislation so that employers can use the same guidelines the state is using. Also, a feature in the WIB newsletters could be an endorsement for the skills-based initiative. Another issue is that schools should have an understanding that they should be teaching more of a skills-based approach and ensuring their students have the skills needed for these jobs as they approach graduation.
- Job Quality Initiative: The Department of Labor (DOL) has been sharing out to employers the idea of job quality. The need is to engage employers on job quality overview, recruiting and hiring, growth opportunities, benefits and wages, working conditions and inclusion. This discussion will continue at the next committee meeting as the DOL asked WIBs to be leading champions in talking about this.

Becker announced the award of a Drive for Five grant in partnership with the Minneapolis and Saint Paul Area Chambers.

Due to time constraints, a written update will be sent on the rest of the agenda items:

- Inclusive Employer Champions Update
- Strategize Toolkit Features

Other

No further items were discussed.

Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 2:59pm.

Next meeting: Tuesday, May 14, 2024, 2-3:00p via Zoom