

Workforce Innovation Board of Ramsey County
December 3, 2015
Meeting Minutes

WIB Members Present

Mike Chanaka
Carrie Cisek
Bob de la Vega
Judy Donohue
Amy Filice
Michael Fondungallah
Clarence Hightower
Chris Kondo
Chad Kulas
Karin McCabe
Sean Mullan
Don Mullin
Tim O'Brien
Kate Probert
Mary Russell
Danielle Taylor
Dee Torgerson
Ramona Wilson
Tracy Wilson
Jim Wroblewski

Members Absent

Michael Belaen
Amy Brendmoen
Toni Carter-EA
Larry Gilbertson
Trixie Golberg-EA
Butch Howard-EA
Louis Jambois-EA
James McClean-EA
Sheila Olson-EA
Joe Richburg
Mike Zipko

Staff/Guests Present

Bridgett Backman, Workforce Solutions
Michelle Belitz, Workforce Solutions
Karyn Berg, Workforce Solutions
Patricia Brady, Workforce Solutions
Tom Cook, Metro State University
Nerita Hughes, Workforce Solutions
Greg Mellas, Metro State
Rebecca Milbrandt, WIB Staff
Devinder Malhotra, Metro State
Jessica Paquin, Workforce Solutions
Larry Raddatz, Century College

Call to Order

Past Chair Bob de la Vega called the meeting to order at 2:38 p.m. All in attendance introduced themselves.

Announcements

De la Vega read the following announcements:

- Welcome to new WIB members Ramona Wilson from Knutson Construction and Chad Kulas from the Midway Chamber of Commerce.
- We'd like to welcome two of our education partners who are joining us today: Devinder Malhotra and Greg Mellas from Metropolitan State University, and Larry Raddatz from Century College.
- Workforce Solutions will be presenting on the MN Family Investment Program and Diversionary Work Program during a workshop with the Ramsey County Board of Commissioners on December 15 from 1:30-2:30 at the Ramsey County Courthouse. The purpose is to update the Board on the implementation of a program that is receiving national, state and local attention. All WIB members are invited. Please RSVP to Becky if attending.
- Thank you to those who attended the MWCA Winter Meeting earlier today.
- The next WIB meeting is Thursday, February 4, 2016, 2:30-4:30 at Goodwill/Easter. We appreciate your efforts to attend!
- Please help yourself to some refreshments. Happy Holidays!

Approve Consent Agenda

December Agenda

October Minutes

2016 WIB Meeting Schedule

WIB Website and Brochures

WIB Standing Committee Structure

Motion (Chanaka/Filice) to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. Motion carried

Approve WIB Financial Report

Motion (Chanaka/Kondo) to approve the October financial report as presented. Motion carried unanimously on a roll call vote 18-0. Cisek and Tracy Wilson were not present at the time of the vote.

2016 WIB Budget

Motion (Mullan/O'Brien) to approve the 2016 WIB Budget as presented. Motion carried unanimously on a roll call vote 18-0. Cisek and Tracy Wilson were not present at the time of the vote.

2015 Accomplishments and Highlights

MFIP/DWP: Probert shared highlights of the MN Family Investment Program (MFIP) and Diversionary Work Program. She noted that caseloads are at historic lows but those remaining have significant barriers and are very difficult to employ. Current MFIP projects include FAST, the Lifelong Learning Initiative, and the National Academy. Probert also reported that Ramsey County MFIP was one of three metropolitan counties to receive a Consolidated Fund Bonus.

WIOA Adult and Youth: Hughes provided highlights of the Youth program, including progress on the RFP for youth program services, receipt of a Youth at Work competitive grant, and details of the 2015-16 Outreach to Schools program. Highlights from the WIOA Adult program included the RFP for adult services, exceeding all PY 2014 performance standards, and identification of four strategic areas to enhance services to program participants. Airport Connect and Construct Tomorrow were two highlights for the Business Services Unit.

Everybody In: Hughes reported that there will be an education Super Connector Forum on January 23. She also stated that conversations are taking place with regional employers and the philanthropic community on ways to close the racial employment disparities gap.

2016-2017 WIB Strategic Planning

Paquin reviewed the timeline and next steps in the strategic plan refresh.

Committee Accomplishments to date: A representative from each committee shared their accomplishments.

Alignment/Policy – Mullan:

- Had a conversation with St. Paul Public Schools about technical training
- Developed a policy agenda with input from the other committees and MWCA
- Attended the Day on the Hill event
- Served as the Corridors-to-Careers (C2C) Advisory Board
- Evaluated the initial strategic objectives and handed one to the Integration Committee
- Changed the name to the Policy Committee

Integration – Russell:

- Used labor market information to identify key sectors (healthcare, manufacturing, IT and construction) and high demand occupations within those sectors
- Explored real time data available using Wanted Analytics
- Supported the Pathways projects and other initiatives
- Held an employer panel discussion with Workforce Solutions staff on what employers are looking for, how that has changed, and tips to avoid new hire trip ups/pitfalls
- Started an inventory of skills training programs and WIB supported initiatives

Marketing - de le Vega:

- Developed and released new brochures and website
- Created new messaging and a marketing plan structure – WIB members will be asked to help with direct personal outreach to community groups

Youth - O'Brien:

- Changed to a Youth Committee
- Focused on ways to increase opportunities for youth, especially suburban youth
- Expanded Outreach to Schools program to have interns at five schools – Como, Humboldt, Creative Arts, Roseville and North Saint Paul High Schools

- Toured all vendor agencies
- Supported the Youth at Work Grant application (Project MOSAIC)

Analyze Trends: Paquin asked the WIB to **consider assumptions that will impact workforce development over the next two years**. She proposed seven initial assumptions and then asked WIB members to share additional assumptions.

Initial Assumptions:

- Regional approach to workforce development – collaboration matters
- When unemployment is low, workforce funding decreases
- Competitive fund distribution will increase while allocations to Workforce Service Areas will decrease
- The shrinking labor force will critically impact economic vitality unless skills and opportunities are addressed
- Sector-based approaches will be supported
- Collaboration between economic development and workforce development will increase
- There will be more focus on performance outcomes

Additional assumptions:

- As the economy shifts, employers will have to step up efforts to get and retain employees
- The workforce system needs to refine methods of defining job seeker skill sets in order to send employers the right people
- Need to continue to educate youth and help them understand the array of opportunities available to them; employers need to create realistic job descriptions of what jobs entail
- Legislative support for workforce may change
- The labor force isn't going to grow – businesses will be competing for workers in a new and significant way
- The unemployment rate does not reflect the unemployment rate for ethnic groups – there will continue to be unemployment disparities
- Technology will create some jobs and eliminate others
- Immigration will be restricted; fewer workers coming in to the US
- WIOA funds can't go to the same places it went in the past; need to understand the restrictions and identify gaps
- Individuals will change careers with more frequency
- The pendulum is swinging back to technical training; two year degrees becoming more appealing

WIB members were asked to respond to the question, **“What other trends or events will impact our workforce development efforts over the next two years?”** Responses were categorized by Political, Social, Economic, Technological and Other.

- Political:
 - 2016 elections
- Social:
 - Younger workers/millennials have different priorities – want immediate information, flexible work schedules
 - Networking and human interface is still important for job seekers
 - MN will fall further behind if the student to counselor ratio doesn't improve
 - There will be new immigrant communities
 - Conversations about employing people with criminal backgrounds is changing
 - Aging population is going to need more care and different models of care
 - The number of people outside the economy/community will increase
- Economic:
 - Baby boom generation continues to retire
 - Food security/world is getting hungrier – emerging occupations in agriculture

- New soccer stadium in Saint Paul
- Businesses implementing leaner processes and other efficiencies increasing
- Technological:
 - Constant communication changes
 - Customer service will become increasingly self-serve
 - Mandates for renewable energy/climate change
 - Difficulties staffing technical talent will continue or increase – no pipeline
- Other:
 - Workforce Centers combining/location changing
 - WIOA performance measurement
 - Structural racism likely to continue
 - Challenges for women over 50 with no retirement, have caretaker roles

The final discussion question was, **“How do you envision these assumptions and trends will impact the WIB’s work with businesses and job seekers over the next two years?”**

Businesses:

- Will businesses be able to expand/grow?
- Businesses will have to develop creative recruitment, training and retention models
- Big business will have to allow for workers’ life balance, may need to incentivize workers
- Businesses have to better define what they want/need in workers/new employees
- The WIB will have to decide what it wants to focus on/what is its core philosophy
- Business must define what skills they are seeking
- Need to distinguish needs of big, mid and small businesses. Need to get closer to mid and small businesses to learn about their hiring needs – customize what is needed by sector and size
- Support a policy position that addresses transportation issues

Career Seekers:

- Determine what keeps people from getting a job (transportation, child care, etc.)
- Address difficulties placing middle-aged/older workers, especially women over 50

Next Steps: Paquin suggested that the WIB consider ways it can impact these challenges over the next two years. Conversations about this will continue at the committee meetings in January.

Adjourn

Upon completion of the agenda, de la Vega adjourned the meeting at 4:24 pm.

The next WIB meeting is February 4, 2016, 2:30-4:40, at the Goodwill/Easter Seals–553 Fairview Avenue N.