

**Workforce Innovation Board of Ramsey County  
December 7, 2017  
Meeting Minutes**

**WIB Members Present**

Michael Fondungallah  
Karen Gerdin  
Larry Gilbertson  
Trixie Golberg  
Kristin Guild  
Foster Hackett  
Butch Howard  
Chad Kulas  
Mike Lang  
Karin McCabe  
Sean Mullan  
Paul Nikstad  
Kate Probert  
Jennifer Roettger  
Mary Russell  
Chris Tolbert  
Ramona Wilson  
Tracy Wilson

**Members Absent**

Toni Carter-EA  
Marie Ellis-EA  
Clarence Hightower-EA  
Chris Kondo-EA  
James McClean-EA  
Don Mullin-EA  
Sheila Olson-EA  
Anivuin Xiong

**Staff/Guests Present**

Adesewa Adesiji, DEED  
Bridgett Backman, Workforce Solutions  
Mary Kay Boyd, Community  
Deb Bahr-Helgen, City of Mpls.  
Karyn Berg, Workforce Solutions  
Patricia Brady, Workforce Solutions  
Jackie Cooper, Community  
Robert Crawford, Washington County  
Robert Engle, Workforce Solutions  
Jennifer Germain, DEED  
Justin Hollis, Ramsey County  
Nerita Hughes, Workforce Solutions  
Vera Johnson, Workforce Solutions  
Julie Kleinschmidt, Ramsey County  
Gaye Adams Massey, YWCA  
Rebecca Milbrandt, WIB Staff  
Robert Morse, Mid Country Bank  
Noel Nix, Ramsey County  
John O'Phelan, Workforce Solutions  
Elizabeth Tolzmann, Ramsey County  
Jackie Waters, Ramsey County  
Patricia Yates, Community

---

**Call to Order**

Chair Butch Howard called the meeting to order at 2:31 p.m.

---

**Announcements**

Howard read the following announcements:

- Welcome to the Workforce Innovation Board of Ramsey County meeting. We especially welcome our partners and guests. Thank you for joining us today.
- Thank you to the staff of Goodwill-Easter Seals for hosting today's meeting.
- Mike Chanaka retired from CHS and the WIB on November 1. Mike was a charter member of this board. His knowledge and expertise in the workforce arena is irreplaceable.
- Tomorrow is Nerita Hughes' last day at Workforce Solutions. Nerita is returning to North Hennepin Community College where she will be the Interim Dean of Business, Technology, & Career Programs. Congratulations and best wishes, Nerita.
- All WIB members are invited to attend the joint meeting of the Minnesota Workforce Council Association and Governor's Workforce Development Board on December 13, 1:00-5:00pm at the Envision Event Center in Oakdale. Additional details, including a link to RSVP, can be found on the MWCA website.
- Please join us at O'Gara's Bar & Grill immediately following today's meeting as we celebrate Patricia Brady's retirement.
- The next WIB meeting is February 1, 2018, 2:30-4:30 at Goodwill-Easter Seals. We appreciate you making this meeting a priority.

---

**Approve Consent Agenda**  
**December Meeting Agenda**  
**October Meeting Minutes**  
**2018 WIB Meeting Schedule**

**Motion (Russell/Hackett) to approve the consent as presented. Motion carried.**

---

**WIB Financial Reports**

The September and October reports were reviewed. The purpose of the Strategic Priorities budget item was discussed. Brady stated that \$5,000 from Strategic Priorities was designated for the Outreach to Schools program in 2017.

**Motion (Golberg/Roettger) to approve the September and October 2017 financial reports as presented. Motion carried unanimously.**

---

**Proposed 2018 WIB Budget**

The proposed budget was reviewed. It was noted that any spending on strategic priorities and other initiatives will tap into the WIBs unallocated balance. Brady stated that the levy dollars come from Ramsey County. Mullan noted that the Policy Committee is looking at advocacy for SNAP funding and will discuss other initiatives the WIB may choose to support. McCabe noted that costs associated with regional board operations will not come from WIB funds.

**Motion (Mullan/Gilbertson) to approve the 2018 WIB Budget as presented. Motion carried.**

---

**WIOA Budget Update**

Brady stated that DEED absorbed a 43% cut in federal funding in 2017. Funding cuts in 2018 would likely have to be passed on to the local areas.

---

**Presentation to the City of Saint Paul**

WIB members received an overview of the report presented to the Saint Paul City Council in October by Brady, Carter and Tolzmann. The presentation included details on the WIB's structure, as well as information on Workforce Solutions' finances, racial equity initiatives and performance outcomes. Brady explained that a second report containing responses to the questions asked at the meeting was sent to the City Council in November. Tolbert stated that the current Council and incoming Mayor are very interested in moving the needle on poverty and this meeting helped strengthen the partnership between the City and County on that issue. Guild felt the discussion around a minimum wage increase and its impact on participants was very insightful. Kulas indicated that the Midway Chamber is having discussions about poverty as well and he hopes this will continue to be a topic that the WIB addresses. Both presentations are available on the WIB website.

---

**Poverty Report**

Hollis presented information found on the Open Performance Portal. The online portal allows the public access to County performance reports which align with the County's four goals. Highlights included:

- Median household incomes don't meet the cost to live in Ramsey County.
- Job creation is trending with the other metro counties.
- The percent of full time workers below the poverty line is increasing.
- Poverty rates for people of colors are higher than those of other metro area counties.
- Emphasis is being placed on inclusion of minority and female contractors.

Hollis also provided data from the 2012-2016 American Community Survey released by the Census Bureau today. The statistics compared two non-overlapping 5-year samples; 2007-2011 and 2012-2016. Significant findings in Ramsey County included:

- Families with small children saw a 5.5% decrease in poverty.
- There was a 1.4% decrease in poverty among seniors.
- Labor participation among parents with children went up by 2.3%.
- Median household income increased by \$1,285

- Median earning for workers fell by \$1602

After some discussion, Hollis agreed to check into how Ramsey County compares with other metro counties and report back. McCabe suggested the WIB learn more about the American Community Survey at a future meeting.

---

## **Updates**

*Regional Board:* Backman reported on the recent activities of the regional board, chaired by Commissioners Carter (Ramsey) and Sivarajah (Anoka). The next meeting is on December 11. Backman explained that there are now staff members in place; one full time and one part time. The board received \$220,000 from the MN Job Skills Partnership for sector academies in construction, manufacturing, IT, healthcare, public sector, and business services. Tolbert stated that the board's focus has been on gathering information and supporting the good work of the locals. They will continue to look at what local boards do currently, determine who the other partners in this work are and consider ways to work together for the collective good without duplication.

*WorkForce Center Construction:* Lang reported on the construction at the WorkForce Center, which is now scheduled to be done February 1. A new model is being implemented in the reception area and will be rolled out across the state. Staff are undergoing training on the new model. They are also taking steps to improve customer service and assessment skills and engage with the community more effectively. Lang welcomed questions or feedback.

*Workforce Solutions Strategic Planning:* Tolzmann provided an update on the strategic planning underway within Workforce Solutions (WFS). She reported that a Deputy County Manager has been hired to lead the Economic Growth and Community Investment service team. Tolzmann anticipates completing her internal assessment in January and submitting a report with the common themes and trends that have emerged. The next steps will be to release a Request for Quotes for a consultant to conduct an external assessment and create a strategic planning and hire the new WFS Director. It is hoped the new Director will be in place in March or April, with the gap filled by a transitional Director.

---

## **Acknowledgement of the Executive Director**

Frank Brady and Donna Cook, Brady's children, joined the meeting via video conference. They shared stories and congratulated Brady on her retirement. Also recognizing Brady were Nix (on behalf of Commissioner Carter), Crawford, Jacobs, Kleinschmidt, and Howard. Kleinschmidt also announced that Brady will receive special recognition at the January 23 County Board meeting. Howard and McCabe presented Brady with gifts from the WIB. Brady thanked the WIB and stated that working with the Board was one of the highlights of her career.

---

## **Other**

Refreshments were served.

---

## **Adjourn**

**Upon conclusion of the agenda, the meeting was adjourned at 4:15 pm.**

The next WIB meeting is February 1, 2018, 2:30-4:30, at Goodwill/Easter Seals--553 Fairview Ave. N.