General Membership Meeting
Thursday, April 2, 2026, 2:30– 4pm
Ramsey County Environmental Center – 1700 Kent St, Roseville, MN 55113

WIB Members Present	Members Absent	Staff/Guests Present
Tom Aasheim	Ismail Ali	Shaina Abraham, City of Saint Paul
Jonathan Banks	Matt Bandstra-EA	Nicole Beane, Ramsey County
Sharon Blomgren-V	Becky Degendorfer-EA	Michelle Belitz, Workforce Solutions
Tami Cybulski-V	Ethel Garcia-EA	Kristi Cobbs, Ramsey County
Sara Garbe	Fidelity Goodlaxson	Carlo Franco, Saint Paul Right Track
Karen Gerdin	Chad Kulas-EA	Hannah Chan, Saint Paul Public Schools
Jennifer Germain	Traci Leffner	Brad Mahr, Workforce Solutions
Hanna Getachew-Kreusser	Kelly Miller-EA	Beatrice Meadows, Workforce Solutions
Katie Kapaun	Koami Pedado	Rebecca Milbrandt, Workforce Solutions
James McClean	Donna Rapacz	Rachael Molenaar, Ramsey County
Yolanda McIntosh	Sheri Riemers-EA	Kathleen, Murphy, Ramsey County
Don Mullin	Elisa Rasmussen-EA	Sarah Northrup, Center for Energy & Environment
John Perlich	Mary Rick-EA	Catrice O'Neal, Workforce Solutions
Trish Stevens	Jenni Severson-EA	Mary Russell, Executive Committee
Aalayha Traub		Matt Saari, Workforce Solutions
Tanya Velishek-V		Hanna Schmitt, Workforce Solutions
		Nardos Tesfalidet, Saint Paul Right Track
		Longkee Vang, Workforce Solutions
		Moua Xiong, Saint Paul Right Track

Call to Order and Announcements

Chair McIntosh called the meeting to order at 2:36pm and read the following announcements:

- Welcome to today's Workforce Innovation Board meeting at Ramsey County's new Environmental Center. This facility was built with efficiency and environmental stewardship in mind, featuring energy-efficient systems, reuse-focused programs, and design elements that reflect the community's commitment to sustainability. It offers year-round safe disposal of household hazardous waste, recycling for hard-to-process materials, and access to education on waste reduction and greener living. It seems fitting that we are meeting here today because we will be hearing from members of the WIB's Construction-Green Jobs Committee about environmentally focused initiatives that align with the WIB's priorities and the county's Climate Equity Action Plan.
- Today, we will also be celebrating our 2026 Youth Workforce Champion Award recipients. I want to welcome them, along with all our guests and partners joining us today.
- On today's consent agenda is the 2025 WIB-Workforce Solutions Annual Report. Thank you to the Partnership & Outreach Committee for their leadership and insights in developing this year's report. An email will be sent out to all WIB members with the link to the report. We appreciate your help in sharing it with others in your networks who are interested in learning about all the impactful work happening in workforce development in Ramsey County.
- Article 8 of the WIB's Bylaws state that "…members shall not cast a vote on any matter regarding the provision of services by the member or by an entity that the member represents or on any matter that would provide direct or indirect financial benefit to such member or the immediate family of such member". If you believe you have a conflict on any items on today's agenda, please abstain from discussion and voting.
- A reminder that all WIB and committee meetings are open to the public. Agendas and minutes for all meetings are posted on the WIB's webpage. Committee meetings are conducted virtually and instructions on how to join are also posted on the webpage.
- I hope you can all make it to the next WIB meeting on Thursday, June 4, 2:30-4 p.m. back at Plato Conference in Saint Paul. Details are in the calendar invite.

Land Acknowledgement
Mullin read the land acknowledgement aloud.

Approve Consent Agenda
April Meeting Agenda
February Meeting Minutes
WIB Financial Report
PY26/SFY27 Unified Local Youth Plan
2025 WIB-Workforce Solutions Annual Report
Prior to consideration of the consent agenda, Mahr shared a brief overview of the PY26/SFY27 Unified Local Youth Plan. Milbrandt then provided information about the 2025 WIB-Workforce Solutions Annual Report and thanked the Partnership & Outreach Committee for their guidance on the report design as well as the Workforce Solutions team for the outstanding work done in 2025.
Motion (Aasheim/Kapaun) to approve the consent agenda as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

Youth Workforce Champion Awards
Youth Committee Chair Traub introduced the 2026 award recipients, beginning with the Legacy Award. She described Tesfalidet's nearly two decades of leadership in youth development and her role in expanding Right Track into a nationally recognized program serving more than 1,000 youth annually. Tesfalidet expressed gratitude to the awards nominators and colleagues, and emphasized that youth development succeeds through collective dedication. Chan, speaking on behalf of Dr. Brea Galuska, shared additional reflections from Saint Paul Public Schools, praising Tesfalidet's compassion, team building, and commitment to equitable access. Traub also recognized Rising Star recipient Reynolds, founder of the Disinvested Youth Gaming Initiative. Although Reynolds could not attend, Traub spoke about his innovative work connecting gaming and esports to digital and tech career pathways for youth, particularly those underrepresented in traditional workforce programs. She emphasized that both honorees reflect the present and future of youth workforce leadership in Ramsey County.

ARPA Program Retrospective
O'Neal described ARPA as an opportunity that allowed Ramsey County to pilot new strategies, remove longstanding barriers and strengthen the youth workforce ecosystem. She explained that although ARPA funding is concluding, the county has used the Bellwether youth ecosystem mapping project to determine which efforts should be sustained or integrated into ongoing programming. Vang then presented outcomes from the Job Ready Supports program, which has helped more than 500 youth since 2024 access uniforms, certification costs, transportation support, tools, and essential documents such as birth certificates and Social Security cards. He highlighted emerging partnerships with charter schools and shared success stories, including youth who used small-business starter funds to launch their own ventures. Next, Saari discussed the Tech Squad program, noting that ARPA funding made it possible for the inaugural cohort to launch after an initially low enrollment. More than 60 participants ultimately completed training, with many gaining hands-on experience through Ramsey County Information Services. Saari noted that while the program has ended, the county intends to build on lessons learned to support future tech-oriented pathways. Meadows followed with updates on the Driver's License Academy, which has helped 184 young adults secure driver's licenses, removing a major barrier to employment, especially for suburban youth and youth facing systemic challenges. Meadows also shared results from the YouthLens360 and RoadTrip Nation partnership, which produced high-engagement digital career-story videos now housed on the YouthWorks portal, viewed nearly 2,000 times by users across Saint Paul, the county and the state. O'Neal closed the program portion by emphasizing that although ARPA funding is ending, the ecosystem it accelerated will continue. She noted that the county is committed to sustaining the most effective components through new funding sources, enhanced partnerships, and program integration across city and school district partners.

Director Updates
None.

Other
None.

Adjourn
At the conclusion of the agenda, the meeting was adjourned at 3:50pm. Attendees enjoyed cake in celebration of the Youth Workforce Champion Award recipients.

Next Meeting: June 4, 2026, 2:30-4pm – Plato Conference Center, 90 W. Plato Blvd., Saint Paul