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**Sponsor:** Workforce Solutions

**Meeting Date:** 3/19/2024

**Title:** 2024 Unified Local Youth Plan for the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act and Minnesota Youth Program

**File Number:** 2024-014

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**Background and Rationale:**

Ramsey County Workforce Solutions operates youth employment services programs for low-income and at-risk youth, ages 14-24, which are funded by state and federal grant allocations. Each year, Workforce Solutions is required to submit an updated Unified Local Youth Plan (Plan) to the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED). The Ramsey County Board of Commissioners and the Workforce Innovation Board (WIB) must approve the Plan.

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and Minnesota Youth Program (MYP) continue to build momentum in career pathways partnerships, employer engagement activities and strategies for improved service delivery and participant outcomes. The service delivery model employed by Workforce Solutions is a federated model that focuses on sharing and partnering with community organizations, education providers, and employers with the goal of community alignment to eliminate economic, educational, and income disparities.

Workforce Solutions delivers Youth and Young Adult Employment Services through agreements with 10 organizations - of which the following eight currently receive WIOA and MYP funding: Hired, Face to Face, Goodwill Easter-Seals of MN, Change Inc., Hmong American Partnership, Restoration for All, Inc., Tree Trust, and Urban Boat Builders. Although these agreements will remain in place through June 30, 2027, Workforce Solutions will amend contracts on an annual basis to allocate new DEED-distributed funds.

The Plan for the Program Year 2024 (April 1, 2024, to March 31, 2025) and the State Fiscal Year 2025 (July 1, 2024, to June 30, 2025) is due to DEED on April 14, 2024. The Plan reflects recommendations, updates adopted and approval by the WIB Youth Committee on January 18, 2024, and the full WIB on February 1, 2024.

WIOA Youth funds for the 2024 program year have not yet been determined due to delays of information from the U.S. Department of Labor to DEED. Because of this delay, DEED has not included budget forms for this program in the annual plan. Once allocation amounts are provided, DEED will provide budget templates and Workforce Solutions will submit a budget to DEED for approval. However, allocations for the 2025 MYP State Fiscal Year have already been finalized. Therefore, the annual budget will be attached alongside the Plan. Lastly, although DEED has granted all Workforce Development Areas the ability to submit their own revised performance goals for the WIOA Youth program, Ramsey County has kept pace with or exceeded the performance levels of peer Workforce Development Areas in the Twin Cities under previously negotiated benchmarks and is not proposing changes to those established in 2023.

**Recommendation:**

The Ramsey County Board of Commissioners resolved to:

1. Approve the 2024 Unified Local Youth Plan for the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Youth and Minnesota Youth Program for the period of April 1, 2024, through March 31, 2025.
2. Authorize the Chair and Chief Clerk to execute the Youth Plan.
3. Authorize the County Manager to enter into agreements and execute amendments to agreements in accordance with the county's procurement policies and procedures, provided the amounts are within the limits of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act and Minnesota Youth Program grant funding.
4. Authorize the County Manager to enter into expenditure grant agreements and execute amendments to agreements in a form approved by Finance and the County Attorney's Office provided the amounts of funding are within the limits of the approved program budgets.
5. Authorize the County Manager to apply for and accept additional grant funds as they become available under the Grant Agreement.

A motion to approve was made by Commissioner Reinhardt, seconded by Commissioner Frethem.  
Motion passed.

Aye: - 7: Frethem, Martinson, McGuire, Moran, Ortega, Reinhardt, and Xiong

By:   
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Mee Cheng, Chief Clerk - County Board