

Workforce Development Board Meeting Minutes  
May 22, 2025

**In Person**

Dan Bates  
Chris Casey  
Lindey Hays  
Matt Jones  
David Mansfield  
Joena Meier  
William Rees

**In Person**

Ben Beckwith  
Richard Gloede  
Robert Heape  
David Lacy  
Chuck McEvers  
Marsha Boehler (Mueller)  
Jennifer Russell

**Online**

Vicky McElroy  
Trevor Lawson  
Ruth Whitis

Chair Dan Bates called the meeting to order at 5:57 p.m. Roll Call was taken by self-introductions.

**Approval of Minutes**

Chair Bates asked if anyone had corrections or comments on the minutes from the February 27, 2025, WDB Meeting as provided in the meeting packet. There being none:

**Motion:** It was moved by Dick Gloede and seconded by Dr. Val Harris, to approve the February 27, 2025, Workforce Development Board Meeting Minutes as presented. All votes aye. **Motion carried.**

**Chair's Report**

Chair Bates commented on some of the work being done in northern Macoupin County, windmills, road work, etc. He then introduced Ruth Whitis, who has taken over for Annie Dorr at DCEO as Central Regional Manager. Ruth told a little about herself and her time prior to DCEO.

**Staff Reports**

Marsha reported the Carlinville Job Center traffic has picked up, a lot of it being UI claims. Matt mentioned Marsha has been very busy helping customers, along with her many other duties.

**Fiscal Officer's Report**

Ben Beckwith was called on to give the Fiscal Officer's Report. The report as of the end of April 2025 was included in the meeting packet. Ben reviewed the six current grants, which include two Formula Grants, QUEST, Supplemental, Home Illinois and IE Grant. He also reviewed key financial metrics, obligation percentages by funding streams, budgets, projected obligations and overhead costs, and the total projected and left to obligate. The results from the DCEO monitoring have been received. There was one finding on Reporting of Obligations and one Management Recommendation on Accounting Coding on Participant Travel Forms. A response to DCEO on resolving the issues has been submitted. Next, the participant mileage rate was discussed. With the uncertainty of the budget, Ben recommended grandfathering in current participants at the current rate of \$.50/mile with a maximum of \$60/day. For participants starting after July 1, 2025, the rate will decrease to \$.30/mile with a maximum of \$40/day. This should

allow us to serve more participants. He would like this to be set through December and to revisit the rate at November's meeting. Chair Bates then asked for a motion for this voting item.

**Motion:** A motion was made by Dr. Val Harris and seconded by Chuck McEvers to approve the milage rate proposal as presented in the meeting packet. This proposal grandfatheres in current participants at the rate of \$.50/mile with a cap at \$60/day. Participants starting after July 1st will receive \$.30/mile with a cap at \$40/day through December and will be revisited at November's meeting. All votes aye. **Motion Carried.**

### **Program Manager's Report:**

Chris Casey then reviewed the LWIB Program Oversight Report included in the packet. This report includes information as of May 9, 2025, showing 232 participants have been served. He reviewed the charts and numbers on the number of enrolled, exited, and completed participants per county, the overview of enrollment status of participants, the breakdown of enrollments by program area, the number of participants by education provider, the breakdown of enrollment by providers, the percentage of enrollments by Department of Labor categories, the overview of Paid Work Experience by county, the overview of Career Specialist caseloads, and the overview of past Core A Services. Chris then reported on the WCDC website. There are constant changes being made on the site. He reviewed the report showing the number of pageviews/visitors since May of 2023 with a breakdown by month. He discussed the average number of sites per visit, and a year-to-date overview. Chris explained some of the systematic items he has been working on. He has been working on surveys and updating forms. There are some policy changes coming down from DCEO, so Chris asked that all Policy Committee members be on stand by for a future meeting.

### **Executive Director's Report**

Matt Jones began by thanking Chris and Ben for the great reports and Marsha for all the hard work she's put in doing her own job and taking Betty's place as well. All the voting items under Matt's report have already been voted on and approved by the WCDC. We currently have three Incumbent Worker Training Projects. The first three are service proposals that have already been approved by the Executive Committees of each board because of the submittal deadline. The fourth one is a project for after July 1<sup>st</sup>, but he thought he'd go ahead and present it for approval at this meeting. There are two more projects that one will start in August, the other one will be in September. The Executive Committees will probably need to meet by email to approve them so they can be submitted on time. The full boards can vote on them during the August meetings. The first two are dual projects. They are leadership programs with CCK Automations and Carolina Brands dba Rutland. These are being paid for out of our Supplemental Grant that Ben mentioned. The third project is with Dometic/Sierra International. The fourth project is Westermeyer Industries, Inc. This is the second project for Rutland through Incumbent Worker. This is a different project. At this time, Chairman Bates asked to entertain a motion to accept all four Incumbent Worker Program Projects as submitted in the meeting packet.

**Motion:** It was moved by Dick Gloede and seconded by Dr. Val Harris to approve all four of the Incumbent Worker Program projects as presented. All votes aye. **Motion carried.**

The next topic of discussion was the Workforce Development Board meeting schedule for PY 25 (July 1, 2025 – June 30, 2026). The meeting in November will need to be discussed at a later meeting since the meeting usually falls during Thanksgiving week. The Committee PY 25 schedule was also included. Chair Bates asked for a motion to approve the meeting schedules as presented.

**Motion:** It was moved by Willie Rees and seconded by Jennifer Russell to approve the meeting schedules for PY 25 as presented. All votes aye. **Motion Carried.**

Matt explained that the next two voting items were not included in the meeting packet. They are the MOU and Budget Submission. The MOU and budget have already been approved by all WIOA Partners. The MOU and budget must be submitted by the end of next week. We are just waiting on a few more signature pages. So, this is more or less just a formality to approve the submittal of the MOU and budget to DCEO by the deadline. Chair Bates again asked for a motion.

**Motion:** A motion was made by Dr. Val Harris and seconded by Jennifer Russell to give approval to West Central to submit the new MOU and budget by the deadline. All votes aye. **Motion Carried.**

The Jacksonville office will have to be out of their current location by the end of July. We have been looking for another facility to rent. We have been looking at many places while trying to keep within the budget. The Jacksonville Job Center needs only two private offices and a resource room. The final decision must be made by the end of June at the latest to give us time to move out of the current office. This will be the second time moving for Jacksonville and we had to move Litchfield's Job Center last winter. Matt was wanting approval by the board so that as soon as a place is decided on, we can immediately start moving Patti and Jenny. Chair Bates asked for a motion.

**Motion:** A motion was made by Dr. Val Harris and seconded by Joena Meier to give West Central approval to move the Jacksonville Office when a place can be found. All votes aye. **Motion Carried.**

Matt then referred back to the meeting packet. He reviewed the Workforce Development Board Organizational Overview. He pointed out that Montgomery County doesn't have a business representative serving on the board. He also updated the board on the Performance Measures, the Core A Services through the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month, the unemployment information for the month of March, and the Economic Development Report for the Central Region of the state. Matt shared the letter from DCEO regarding the agency's response to the monitoring. The corrective actions implemented and the supporting documentation provided have been accepted. Trevor commented on how great it is that Matt was able to come in and turn the agency around. He looks at the findings and the response as learning tools. Matt stated the last few items in his report are a workshop on June 5<sup>th</sup> provided by Debbie Westendorf, our IDIS person. June 5<sup>th</sup> will be in-person training and on June 12<sup>th</sup>, the workshop will be virtual. A follow-up on a success story about the Draper boys in Hillsboro was also included in the packet. He touched on

the federal budget and we should know more soon. The Supplemental Grant still has money in it. Since some of the incumbent worker training has been pushed back, we are going to use this money for Career Exploration and Virtual Reality (VR) Headsets. We are looking into a one-year lease purchase of headsets with the career exploration software, as a way to promote manufacturing, health care and other high growth sector jobs to youth in LWIA 21. Chris and Robert Heape have some Re-Entry Programs coming up at Graham and in Jacksonville. Every year Matt, Chris and Ben have to complete self-evaluations and be evaluated by the West Central Development Council Board, which was completed last month. The very last thing, on May 29<sup>th</sup>, Congresswoman Nikki Budzinski is doing a Regional Workforce Summit. It will be at "The Cave" in Belleville from 10:00 – 2:00, lunch will be provided, to go over WIOA Reauthorization and other workforce development items.

### **Committee Reports**

*Business Services Team* – Robert Heape reported on the Business Services Team Committee meeting held at 3:00 p.m., before the WDB Meeting. During the meeting, the discussions centered around the customer satisfaction survey, purchasing the Virtual Reality headsets, and updating the PowerPoint presentation on the partner agencies and what services they provide through the Job Center.

*One-Stop Partner Committee* – Dr. Val Harris reported on the One-Stop Partner Committee Meeting held at 3:30 p.m. She thanked Chris for all the hard work he's put in behind the scenes to create the customer satisfaction survey. The survey is electronic and will gather great data. So, we are moving right along on our service integration goals.

*Policy Committee* – The committee did not meet today, but they will need to meet sometime prior to the next board meeting.

*Youth Committee* – Chuck McEvers reported on the Youth Committee Meeting held at 4:30 p.m. During the Youth Committee meeting, they are looking for another Youth Committee person. Ben discussed the budget for Paid Work Experience. Also discussed a Paralegal Program and other items.

### **Partner Reports**

**Dr. Val Harris, Lewis and Clark Community College – Adult Education** - She has been busy writing grants and having Illinois High School Diploma Graduation. The Youth Build is involved in a vital construction partnership, so the students are building tiny bedrooms that are heated and cooled for homeless people. The college is working with teens again this summer. Youth Build students are doing a teen camp and working on other projects this summer. Lewis and Clark's commencement was last night. They have a new Workforce Training Coordinator, Katie Dudley. The Climate Equitable Job Programming is coming to the end of its first year. Twenty-four people trained in solar panels and many of them have already been hired, seven Energy Auditors that are about to graduate, twenty-five people have gone through Construction Apprentice Training and twelve of them just completed their training.

**Dick Gloede, Private Sector** -- Shelby County is needing training for their police and firemen. Val stated that Lewis and Clark has a Criminal Justice Program and Firefighting.

**Lindey Hays, Private Sector** – They were awarded a 5-Star Rating. They have been short staffed with ten residents more than last year. CNAs positions in Jacksonville are paying up to \$34/hour and it's hard to compete for employees.

**Joena Meier, Private Sector** – There are a lot of housing projects proposed for the Jacksonville area.

**Willie Rees, Private Sector** – Solar panels are still hot. In Jacksonville, there was a fire a year ago at McClelland Dining Hall. They finally razed the building recently. The old McMurray Library will be a new event venue. The state-owned theater closed because mold was found.

**Jennifer Russell, U of I** – U of I is offering a two-part class coming up. It's on land banking. This is a program designed to help tax delinquent properties that need to be taken down or fixed up. These programs are available and this helps the housing industry to get some of these properties up and moving again. These classes are June 6<sup>th</sup> and June 26<sup>th</sup>. On June 12<sup>th</sup>, there is going to be a Business Round Table to network with other businesses.

**Vicky McElroy, Labor Unions** – Students are really loving the Apprenticeship Program in Litchfield. They were 800 apprentices and 786 applications statewide.

**Trevor Lawson, DCEO** – Trevor announced that he had no news on Rapid Response. Everyone here does a great job. Everyone works hard and they always work as a team.

**Ruth Whitis, DCEO** - Ruth stated she was really impressed by the things the board is doing. One of the best board meetings she's ever sat in on. The state has some available grant money, and they would like some ideas on how it can be used to help out communities in the area. Ruth advised keeping that in mind for some of the projects we may be looking at in the future.

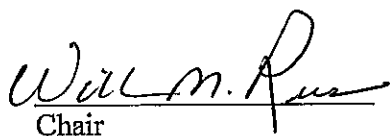
#### Next Meeting Date

The next Workforce Development Board meeting will be on August 28, 2025. A meeting notice will be sent out as a reminder. All committees will meet that same day at the usual times. Meeting notices will be sent out for those also.

#### Adjournment

There being no further business:

**Motion:** A motion was made by Dick Gloede and seconded by Dr. Val Harris to adjourn the meeting. All votes aye. Motion Carried.

  
Chair

8-28-25  
Date