



## Meeting Minutes

Thursday, November 21, 2024, 8:00 AM

University Center

1200 University Center Dr, Grayslake, IL 60030

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**Present:** Ken Swanson, Lisa Johnson, Kristi Long, Tasha Shell, Dr. Lori Suddick, John Castillo, Yvette Ewing, Josh Fischer, Jennifer Serino, Kimberly Wimer, Dr. Carlotta Roman, Kathy Nellis, Kevin Considine, Noelle Lepper, Ed Gallagher, Rachel Loberg, Julie Savitt, Tim Dempsey, Dennis Kessler, Dr. Ann Maine, Marcus Jordan

**Not Present:** Laura Crivlare, Mary Cunningham, Carrie Espinosa, Christine Hammerlund, Jennifer Harris, Dr. Michael Karner, Demetri Katsulis, Troy McIntosh, Dr. Darryl Rader, Carla Shroeder, Dr. Andrew Warrington

### I. Call to Order

*The Full Board Meeting was called to order at 8:07 AM by Chairwoman, Kim Wimer.*

### II. Public Comment

*Ed Gallagher, from Pace Suburban Bus, presented the Pace ReVision Project update, distributing a two-sided handout detailing proposed bus route redesigns for Lake County.*

*Two network concepts discussed:*

- *Coverage Model: Expands hourly bus service into new areas like Lake Zurich, Barrington, and Zion.*
- *Frequency Model: Increases bus frequency (every 30 minutes) but reduces the service area.*

*The first round of public feedback is open, with a survey available for input.*

### III. Chair Report

- *National Apprenticeship Week- Marcus Jordan and Sara Espeland will be talking with us later in the meeting*
- *Congratulation to ROE, Dr. Karner, Gina Schuyler and all the employers who participated in Navig8Lake.*

### IV. Consent Agenda –

1. [June 2024 Board Meeting Minutes](#)  
[Attachment A](#)
2. [2025 Meeting Schedule](#)
3. Approve the Job Center of Lake County PY'24 MOU Modifications
  - [Summary of Changes](#)
  - [Final MOU](#)

*A motion was made to approve the consent agenda.*

*The motion was approved with no objections.*

## **V. Action Items**

1. Approve The [Lake County Workforce Development Board 2025 -2030 Strategic Plan](#)

*The 2025-2030 Strategic Plan was presented for board review and approval, with updates reflecting industry-led workforce solutions, enhanced career pathways, and accountability measures for board impact. The discussion emphasized the need for an action-driven approach to align with Lake County workforce needs and state-level workforce planning efforts.*

### *Key Discussion Points*

#### *1. Core Strategic Priorities*

- a. Industry-Led Workforce Solutions: The board emphasized that workforce development initiatives must align directly with business needs in Lake County.*
- b. Career Pathways Acceleration: The board discussed strategies to improve pathway accessibility from high school students to adult learners, including partnerships with local industries to bridge skill gaps.*
- c. Board Excellence and Accountability: There was a focused discussion on how the board can act as a high-impact workforce board and better communicate its value to the community and partners.*

#### *2. Alignment with State Workforce Goals*

- a. The Illinois Workforce Investment Board (IWIB) is finalizing its statewide strategic plan, which Lake County's plan aligns with.*
- b. The board acknowledged the importance of ensuring consistency between local and state priorities, particularly in youth employment, talent development, and equity-focused workforce initiatives.*

#### *3. KPI Development & Reporting*

- a. Several data-driven objectives were discussed, with board members raising questions about how progress will be measured.*
- b. The workforce department already tracks key performance indicators (KPIs), but additional partner-driven KPIs will be developed.*
- c. The strategic plan will be published in January 2025, with biannual updates to the board on progress.*

#### *4. Board Composition & Employer Engagement*

- a. The board discussed the need for greater representation from large employers in Lake County.*
- b. Healthcare and manufacturing industries were highlighted as key sectors facing hiring challenges, and employer-driven solutions were encouraged.*

### *Approval of the 2025-2030 Strategic Plan*

- o The plan was formally put to a vote after discussion.*
- o Motion: To approve the 2025-2030 Strategic Plan.*
- o Seconded by: Dennis.*
- o Vote: Unanimously approved.*

## **VI. Updates/Announcements**

### *1. State and Federal Updates*

*IWIB (Illinois Workforce Investment Board):*

*Encouraging Lake County employer participation in upcoming focus groups.*

*The state workforce plan will be finalized next month, and Lake County's strategic plan aligns with state priorities.*

*NAWB (National Association of Workforce Boards):*

*Workforce boards across the country are expanding pre-apprenticeship programs to increase employer partnerships and improve career pathway accessibility*

2. Committee Updates

*Tabled*

3. Other

**Navig8 Lake:** Over 4,000 youth participated in the first-ever Navig8 Lake Career Exploration Fair at the Lake County Fairgrounds.

*Unlike traditional job fairs, Navig8 Lake focused on hands-on career exploration, with students interacting with career pathways in fields like construction, healthcare, and technology.*

*A survey was circulated to employers and attendees to gather feedback and improve next year's event.*

**Staff:** Staff members, Jennifer Everett and Demar Harris, for their 20 years of service, highlighting their dedication and contributions to workforce development.

## VII. Presentations

1. Climate Equity Jobs Act

*The Climate and Equitable Jobs Act (CEJA) was introduced as a statewide initiative aimed at preparing individuals for clean energy careers. The presentation was led by Richard Ottman (CLC), Antonio Garcia (LCWD), and Yvette Ewing (The Community Works), with additional contributions from Dr. Winter Ram from the College of Lake County (CLC).*

### **Key Highlights from the Presentation**

*The CEJA Workforce Network Grant has awarded \$3,519,548 to the College of Lake County (CLC) in partnership with Lake County Workforce Development.*

*The program aims to support clean energy workforce training programs and create a comprehensive pipeline for employment in the green energy sector.*

*The grant is managed by the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO) as part of a \$94 million per year initiative to support entry-level clean energy jobs.*

*Workforce Training & Career Pathways*

*The program includes multiple levels of training:*

*Basic Employability Skills Training – Focus on soft skills, resume building, and job readiness.*

*Bridge Program – Clean Energy Basics – OSHA 10 training, construction safety, and clean energy fundamentals.*

*Advanced Technical Training – Specialized training in HVAC, Electric Vehicles (EV), Energy Auditing, and Construction Inspection.*

*Participants receive stipends for completing each phase of training, ensuring financial support while they build career-ready skills.*

*Participant & Employer Engagement*

*The program prioritizes individuals from Equity Investment Eligible Communities, including: Environmental Justice Communities*

- *R3 Areas (Restore, Reinvest, Renew)*
- *Previously incarcerated individuals*
- *Foster care graduates*
- *Displaced energy workers.*

*500 Clean Energy Navigator contacts will be made to increase awareness and participation.*

*Discussion & Board Feedback*

*Several board members raised questions about employer participation and certification requirements for clean energy companies hiring program graduates.*

*There was discussion on how Smalley Steel in Lake Zurich recently secured a state grant under the Reimagining Energy and Vehicles (REV) program, showing how traditional manufacturing industries are shifting toward clean energy.*

*The board emphasized expanding employer engagement efforts to ensure a strong job placement pipeline for graduates.*

**2. National Apprenticeship Week**

*Member Marcus Jordan and Sarah Espeland, Apprenticeship Navigator provided an update on National Apprenticeship Week initiatives.*

- *75 businesses engaged in discussions about expanding apprenticeships in Lake County.*
- *15 new apprenticeship programs were launched in response to employer demand.*
- *Key takeaway: More emphasis needed on youth outreach to introduce high school students to skilled trades and apprenticeship opportunities.*

**VIII. Upcoming Board & Committee Meetings**

February 27, 2025

**IX. Adjournment**

*A motion to adjourn was made and seconded with no objections.*

*The meeting was adjourned at 9:54am*