



LCWDB Executive Committee Meeting Minutes

April 16, 2025, at 8:15 AM

Zoom

Present: Kevin Considine, Laura Crivlare, Ed Gallagher, Jennifer Harris, Marcus Jordan, Dennis Kessler, Dr. Carlotta Roman, Mary Ross-Cunningham, Dr. Andrew Warrington, Kimberly Wimer

Absent: Timothy Dempsey, Dr. Michael Karner, Jennifer Serino, Dr. Lori Suddick

I. Call to Order..... Kimberly Wimer, Chairwoman

*The meeting was called to order on **April 16, 2025, at 8:17 AM** by Executive Committee Chairwoman Kimberly Wimer.*

II. Public Comment

Board Coordinator DJ Newport shared that Youth Conservation Corps (YCC) will make a public comment at the upcoming LCWD Board of Directors Meeting regarding funding cuts to their Urban Forestry Program. The Board was informed that the cuts are effective retroactively as of April 2, 2025, and youth in the program are currently being reassigned.

III. Chairman's Report

The Chairwoman acknowledged the significance of consistency in board meeting locations and emphasized improved attendance through predictability. The Chairwoman also acknowledged DJ's update on upcoming public comments and advocacy discussions.

IV. Consent Agenda

V. Action Items

- *No action items were brought to the floor for this meeting.*

VI. Regular Agenda

- **State and Federal Updates**

- i. *Dr. Andrew Warrington and Jennifer Harris provided context from the recent National Governors Association (NGA) meeting. Andrew emphasized the unpredictability of funding cuts. Jenifer Noted*

that there was good attendance and optimism at the forum despite uncertainty.

- ii. Dr. Carlotta Roman shared outcomes from the NAWB Forum and Advocacy Day, including positive conversations with legislators and breakout sessions on industry partnerships.*

- **Congressional Outreach**

- i. Dr. Carlotta Roman and DJ Newport reported on interactions with Congressman Brad Schneider, expressing his support for workforce development and youth programs. DJ noted a sense of concern among federal representatives about fast-changing priorities. Bipartisan youth employment legislation introduced during the Board's D.C. visit was discussed.*

- **Advocacy Strategy**

- i. DJ proposed using budgeted DEI consultant funds to hire an advocacy consultant. Carlotta supported this redirection, noting that DEI is already embedded in operations.*
- ii. Jennifer Harris and others suggested leveraging state associations (e.g. Michigan Works, Colorado Workforce) for strategic insight. There was a strong consensus on aligning statewide board voices and developing a consistent advocacy strategy.*

- **Budget Update**

- i. DJ shared slides and recapped last years key budget priorities, suggesting minimal changes this year to allow time for data gathering.*
- ii. Remaining funds are available for events/speakers before fiscal year-end (June 30). DJ also mentioned that research is underway for an RFP focused on in-school youth, ensuring programs are sustainable and impactful.*

- **Youth Employment Focus**

- i. Jennifer Everett emphasized support for high school students on a direct-to-work path, especially those not pursuing post-secondary education. Kimberly Wimer added that high schools are actively identifying such students, which aligns with employer needs.*

VII. Announcements

- The national forum will rotate cities: Las Vegas (2026), New York (2027), and Chicago (2028)
- Jennifer Harris and DJ will coordinate with leaders from other state associations to speak at future meetings.

VIII. Updates/Other Items

- DeMar Harris highlighted leveraging existing partnerships with local Chambers of Commerce for advocacy through the U.S. Chamber.
- Dennis Kessler offered to connect the Board with a successful D.C.-based lobbyist experiences in coalition advocacy.
- Andrew noted the importance of collective focus and strategic messaging across Illinois' workforce boards.

IX. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at **9:00 AM**.