

LCWD Board of Directors Meeting Agenda

Thursday, September 24, 2026, 8:00 am – 9:00 am

College of Lake County – Lakeshore Campus

Eleanor Murkey Community Center

I. Call to Order

II. Public Comment

III. Chair Report

Welcome new members:

- Brandon Ewing, Lake County Board Member – District 9
- Jamie Rim, IDES, Acting Local Office Manager
- Dr. Kristen Jones, College of Lake County, Interim President
- Tina Comissiong, Advocate Condell, Chief Operating Officer
- Sean Fitzgerald, AED Foundation, Vice President

IV. Workforce Board Membership Governance & Leadership

V. Consent Agenda

- a. June 2026 Board of Directors Meeting Minutes [Attachment A](#)
- b. Accept the Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO) WIOA Apprenticeship Expansion Grant in the amount of \$550,000. [Attachment B](#)
- c. Accept the Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO) 2026 Supplemental Grant in the amount of \$149,955 to implement the Workforce Access and Economic Mobility Initiative. [Attachment C](#)
- d. Approval renewal of the subrecipient agreement with the College of Lake County (CLC) for the Climate and Equitable Jobs Act (CEJA) Workforce Hub Grant continuation period from July 1, 2026, through June 30, 2027, the maximum payment amount for the full three-year grant term of July 1, 2024, to June 30, 2027, shall not exceed \$3,052,100. [Attachment D](#)

VI. Regular Business

- a. Workforce Development Month Celebration and Recognition
- b. The Greater Chicagoland Economic Partnership Presentation
 - i. Kevin Considine, President & CEO, Lake County Partners
- c. Summer Youth Employment Program Presentation
 - i. Workforce Development, College of Lake County, Roberti House, Liberty Prairie
- d. Committee Updates
 - i. Youth Advisory Group Update
- e. Climate and Equitable Jobs Act Impact Report [Attachment E](#)
- f. Workforce Development Impact Report [Attachment F](#)

VII. Strategic Focus

VIII. Other Business / Updates

- a. Hire Lake County Job Fair on Friday, October 2, at 11:00 AM
- b. Navig8 Lake County on Tuesday, October 20th, at 7:30 AM

IX. Member Time

X. Adjournment

A tour of the College of Lake County Urban Farm will take place immediately after the board meeting adjourns.

Upcoming Meetings:

LCWD Board of Directors Meeting

- Thursday, December 3, 2026, at 8:00 AM

LCWD Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
Thursday, September 25, 2025, at 8:00 AM
College of Lake County – Grayslake Campus
Room A013

Present: John Castillo, Kevin Considine, Timothy Dempsey, Carrie Espinosa, Yvette Ewing, Christian Fernandez, Edward Gallagher, Jennifer Harris, Laticia Holbert (Zoom), Dr. Kristen Jones (Proxy), Marcus Jordan, Dennis Kessler, Kathy Nellis, Dr. Carlotta Roman, Jennifer Serino, Dr. Tasha Shell (Proxy), Quinton Snodgrass, Ken Swanson, Amy Van Strien, Kimberly Wimer

Absent: Laura Crivlare-Maglio, Josh Fischer, Lisa Johnson, Dr. Michael Karner, Noelle Kischer-Lepper, Troy McIntosh, Dr. Darryl Rader, Julie Savitt, Carla Shroeder, Adam Sutter, Dr. Andrew Warrington

I. Call to Order..... Chairwoman, Dr. Carlotta Roman

The meeting was called to order on Thursday, June 25, 2026, at 8:04 AM by Board of Directors Chairwoman Dr. Carlotta Roman.

II. Public Comment

No public comments were made.

III. Chair Report

*Chair Dr. Roman opened the meeting by recognizing the passing of **Dr. Mary Ross Cunningham**, Vice Chair of the Lake County Board and a longtime advocate for workforce development and the Job Center of Lake County. Dr. Cunningham was recognized for her leadership and advocacy of county-funded Summer Youth Programs, workforce services, grants, and initiatives supporting small businesses and workforce development. The Chair also noted Dr. Cunningham's past advocacy at the federal level related to incumbent worker training policies and her support for SkillBridge and other workforce initiatives.*

Chair Dr. Roman also welcomed Patrice Sutton, Lake County Administrator, who was attending the meeting.

IV. Consent Agenda

- a. *April 2026 Board of Directors Meeting Minutes*
- b. *Authorize the acceptance of WIOA Rapid Response Grant in the amount of \$440,000 for the grant period of April 1, 2026, through December 30, 2027.*
 - i. *Motion to approve: Timothy Dempsey*
 - ii. *Motion seconded: Dennis Kessler*
 - iii. *Motion carried.*

V. Regular Business (ACTION ITEMS)

- a. ***Approve the Program Year 26 WIOA Formula Grant Budget and Participant Plan for Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth.***
 - i. *Staff presented the proposed Program Year 2026 WIOA Formula Grant Budget and Participant Plan for Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth programs.*
 - ii. *The PY26 formula fund allocation is approximately \$6.8 million, a reduction from the previous year but generally in line with the allocation from two years prior. Staff explained that formula funding is based on factors including population, community characteristics, unemployment rates, and declining industries. Lake County's lower unemployment rate compared with the state contributed to the reduction in the allocation.*
 - iii. *The proposed budget maintains the current personnel inventory and accounts for Lake County employee benefits, indirect costs, facilities, Job Center resources, technology subscriptions, staff development, and program operations. Continued programming includes occupational training, work-based learning, employer-led training grants, chamber agreements, Job Center on the Move, community workers, and implementation of IWDS 2.0, the new case management and performance management system.*
 - iv. *Staff reviewed WIOA funding requirements incorporated into the budget, including:*
 - 1. *A maximum of 10% of the allocation for administration.*
 - 2. *No more than 25% of youth funding allocated to in-school youth.*
 - 3. *At least 75% of youth funding allocated to out-of-school youth.*
 - 4. *At least 20% of youth funding dedicated to work-based learning.*
 - 5. *At least 50% of Adult and Dislocated Worker funding budgeted toward training.*

6. *No more than 20% of Adult and Dislocated Worker funding allocated to incumbent worker training.*
- v. *The budget includes approximately \$1.3 million for Individual Training Accounts, supportive services, work-based learning, work experience, on-the-job training, apprenticeships, incumbent worker training, and contracted youth programming.*
- vi. *The Board discussed the distinction between Workforce Development-delivered work-based learning and contracted youth programming. Staff explained that contracted work-based learning is delivered through high schools, community-based organizations, and 160 Driving Academy.*
- vii. *Staff also reviewed the overall projected Workforce Development budget of approximately \$14 million, which is approximately \$1 million less than the previous year. The projected budget includes WIOA formula funds, carryforward funding, Rapid Response grants, county funding, SkillBridge funding, apprenticeship funding, and other supplemental grants.*
- viii. *The Board discussed the connection between the budget and the Board's strategic priorities. Staff explained that funding has been intentionally distributed across the Board's strategic areas, including operating a high-performing workforce system, building the future workforce, expanding employer-led training, strengthening talent pipelines, reducing barriers to success, increasing access to technology and digital literacy, connecting residents to opportunities, and connecting industry to talent.*

1. *Motion to approve: Timothy Dempsey*
2. *Motion seconded: Dennis Kessler*
3. *Motion carried.*

b. Authorize Workforce Development to approve renewals with 160 Driving Academy and Youth Conservation Corps based on performance, continued service need, and availability of WIOA Out-of-School Youth funds.

- i. *The Board considered authorization for Workforce Development to approve renewals with 160 Driving Academy and Youth Conservation Corps based on performance, continued service need, and availability of WIOA out-of-school youth funding.*
1. *Motion to approve: Kevin Considine*

2. *Motion seconded: Marcus Jordan*
3. *Motion carried.*
4. *Timothy Dempsey abstained.*

c. Approve the Nominating Committee's recommended Slate of Officers for PY'26.

i. The slate as recommended includes:

1. *Dr. Carlotta Roman, Chair*
2. *Josh Fischer, Vice Chair*
 - a. *Led by Timothy Dempsey, the floor was opened for additional nominations. No additional nominations were made, and the nominations were closed.*
 - i. *Motion to approve: Quinton Snodgrass*
 - ii. *Motion seconded: Dennis Kessler*
 - iii. *Motion carried.*
 - b. *Chair Dr. Roman thanked the Board for its continued trust and support and recognized the shared leadership of the Board and its members*

VI. Strategic Focus

a. Committee Action Plans 2026 – 2028

i. Operations Committee

1. Digital Access and Literacy – Presentation by Digital Growth Initiative

- a. *The Operations Committee's strategic focus is Strengthening System Access and Coordination, with an emphasis on digital access and literacy and digital navigation*
- b. *Staff recognized the County's Digital Growth Initiative team and highlighted the Workforce Development Department's three-year partnership with the County broadband team. The partnership has supported digital literacy, digital curriculum, laptop distribution, and digital navigation throughout Lake County. Workforce Development also incorporated digital literacy services into its Rapid Response grant to serve an additional 125 residents.*
- c. *Betsy Brandon, Assistant to the County Administrator, provided an overview of the County's Digital Growth Initiative. The Lake County*

Board adopted the Broadband and Digital Equity Plan in December 2023. The initiative was funded through ARPA, with funding scheduled to end at the end of 2026. The initiative was developed in response to gaps in internet access, access to devices, and digital literacy programming.

d. The initiative includes:

- i. Digital literacy programming*
- ii. Digital navigators*
- iii. Device distribution*
- iv. Community partnerships*
- v. Public Wi-Fi initiatives*
- vi. County-level digital access policies*
- vii. A digital asset inventory and resource website*
- viii. The Northstar Digital Literacy curriculum*

e. Digital navigators provide one-on-one assistance, group learning, basic computer skills training, resume workshops, open computer lab support, and assistance understanding emerging technology. Navigators are located at the Job Center, health centers, libraries, and other community locations throughout the County.

f. Through April 2026, the initiative had served nearly 5,000 residents, provided nearly 4,500 learning sessions, and distributed more than 1,500 devices. The program distributed 119 laptops to Summer Youth Employment Program participants during the previous summer and planned to continue the model in 2026.

g. Board members discussed the importance of sustaining the Digital Growth Initiative after ARPA funding ends and asked how Board members, businesses, and community partners could assist. The County indicated that it is developing sustainability strategies and welcomed ideas and potential partnerships. Workforce Development is also working with the County on a sustainability plan and is leveraging WIOA and Rapid Response funding to continue portions of the work, including digital navigation and device distribution.

ii. Talent Pipeline Committee

1. Future Workforce – Young Professionals Panel

- a. *The Talent Pipeline Committee's strategic role is to build earlier and sustainable career pathways. The Committee's focus areas include:
 - i. Youth voice and program design
 - ii. K-12 aligned work-based learning opportunities
 - iii. Increased registered apprenticeship pathways
 - iv. Emerging skills*
- b. *Jennifer Serino discussed the recent Young Professionals Panel, which brought young Workforce Development employees into the Talent Pipeline Committee meeting to share their experiences entering the workforce and their perspectives on career pathways and workforce services.*
- c. *The Board heard from young professionals Ricky and Yadira, who discussed their experiences working with high school students through the Summer Youth Employment Program.*
- d. *Ricky emphasized the importance of exposing young people to opportunities beyond the traditional college pathway. He shared that work-based learning gives students the opportunity to explore careers, gain experience, save money, and determine whether a career path is a good fit before investing significant time and money into education.*
- e. *Yadira discussed how conversations with Summer Youth participants frequently expanded beyond their immediate summer employment into longer-term career planning. Students expressed interest in careers including elevator technology and nursing, and Workforce Development was able to connect them with resources and opportunities beyond the Summer Youth Program. Parents also expressed interest in Workforce Development services for themselves.*
- f. *The Board was informed that the Executive Committee had approved the creation of a Youth Advisory Group, chaired by Ed Gallagher of*

Pace. The group will initially include young professionals within Workforce Development and will eventually determine which additional youth and community members should participate. The purpose of the group is to incorporate youth voice into the design and delivery of future youth programs and grant-funded services.

iii. Employer Connections Committee

1. Apprenticeship Program – Presentation on Apprenticeship Programs

- a. The Employer Connections Committee's strategic focus for the next two years is Industry Sector Partnerships, including employer-led training and talent development, apprenticeship expansion, and communication and messaging*
- b. Board member Marcus Jordan presented on apprenticeships. He began by recognizing the Workforce Development team's ability to adapt and respond to changing circumstances, noting that this flexibility is also essential to successful apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship programs. He emphasized that workforce and career pathways do not always follow a simple, predetermined sequence and that successful apprenticeship programs require adaptability.*

VII. Other Business / Updates

a. State and Federal Updates

- i. Tabled to July Executive Committee Meeting*

VIII. Member Time

- a. Dr. Carlotta Roman – Legacy Reentry Foundation Relentless Hope Award
 - i. Presentation by Regina from Legacy Reentry Foundation**
- b. Ali O'Brien – Fischer Paper Products Honored on 6/5*

IX. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 9:50 AM.

- Motion to approve: Jennifer Harris*
- Motion seconded: Timothy Dempsey*
- Motion carried.*

Upcoming Meetings:

LCWDB Talent Pipeline Committee Meeting

- *Tuesday, August 11, 2026, at 9:00 AM*

LCWDB Employer Connections Committee Meeting

- *Tuesday, August 18, 2026, at 9:00 AM*

LCWD Board of Directors Meeting

- *Thursday, September 24, 2026, at 8:00 AM*



Action Item

Accept the Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO) WIOA Apprenticeship Expansion Grant in the amount of \$550,000.

Grant Period: July 1, 2026, through June 30, 2028

Background

Lake County Workforce Development (LCWD), in partnership with **McHenry County Workforce Network (MCWN)**, is advancing a regional apprenticeship strategy designed to make apprenticeship and work-based learning a core component of the workforce system rather than a stand-alone program.

The initiative builds upon a substantial existing WBL infrastructure. Over the past year, LCWD coordinated **80+ work-based learning opportunities across 40+ employer worksites, 20+ On-the-Job Training opportunities, 7 new apprenticeship worksites, and training for 90+ individuals through apprenticeship-related Incumbent Worker Training activities.**

The next phase intentionally uses this employer base as a pipeline for apprenticeship expansion, with a goal of transitioning **at least 20% of current WBL employer sites into active Registered Apprenticeship Programs.**

Project Details

Regional Infrastructure

- Lake County Apprenticeship Specialists: **Sara Espeland – 100%** and **Omar Ramirez – 50%** dedicated to apprenticeship/WBL.
- McHenry County will add a dedicated **Apprenticeship Specialist**, creating a coordinated regional team.
- Lake and McHenry will use shared planning, employer outreach, sector strategies, and an apprenticeship-centered Integrated Business Services Team approach.
- Employer incentives 15x4,000

Strategic Outcome

Move apprenticeship from a grant-funded activity to a **core regional talent-development strategy**, while advancing Illinois' goal of dedicating at least **10% of WIOA Title I-B expenditures to WBL and apprenticeship by 2029.**

**Action Item**

Accept the Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO) 2026 Supplemental Grant in the amount of \$149,955 to implement the Workforce Access and Economic Mobility Initiative.

Grant Period: July 1st, 2025 – June 30th, 2026

Participants: SNAP Recipients, youth and underserved communities

Project

Expand access to workforce services and career pathways for SNAP recipients, youth, WIOA-eligible individuals, and underserved communities through community-based outreach, digital access, a workforce kiosk, two-way text communication, and digital literacy/technology supports.

Strengthen employer and small-business talent pipelines through **\$75,000 in paid work-based learning**, providing up to 10 individuals with meaningful work experience while engaging employers as partners in developing future talent and pathways to employment.

Strengthen workforce system capacity, sustainability, and measurable impact by leveraging existing WIOA services and partnerships, coordinating referrals with DHS and community partners, and investing in data, outcomes, and storytelling to demonstrate return on investment and inform future workforce strategies.

Lake County Workforce Development Board Executive Committee - August 2026

Action

Approval to renew the subrecipient agreement with the College of Lake County (CLC) for the Climate and Equitable Jobs Act (CEJA) Workforce Hub Grant continuation period from July 1, 2026, through June 30, 2027, the maximum payment amount shall be \$3,052,100.

Background:

The College of Lake County was awarded the third year of funding for the Climate and Equitable Jobs Act (CEJA) through the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity's CEJA Workforce Hub Grant for Program Year 2025. The College of Lake County is renewing the subrecipient agreement with Workforce Development for a total budget of \$3,052,100.

Grant Details

- **Funding Source:** College of Lake County CEJA Workforce Hub Grant with Illinois DCEO
- **Grant Period:** July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2027
- **Grant Amount:** \$3,052,100
- **Expected Outcomes:**
 - Expand access to clean energy career pathways
 - Provide credential-based and pre-apprenticeship training
 - Deliver supportive services such as transportation and technology
 - Engage employers and unions to expand apprenticeship and hiring opportunities
 - Host job fairs, forums, and hiring events to support workforce connection

CEJA IMPACT SNAPSHOT

Building equitable pathways into Illinois' clean energy economy in Lake County.

WAUKEGAN CEJA HUB

246

PARTICIPANTS ENROLLED

Expanding access to clean energy careers

\$1.26M

DIRECT PARTICIPANT INVESTMENT

143

JUSTICE-INVOLVED

58% of participants enrolled

61

PARTICIPANTS EMPLOYED

26% Clean Energy Companies

THE IMPACT

CEJA has moved from program launch to measurable impact—combining foundational skills, occupational training, barrier reduction, paid work experience, and employment pathways for Lake County residents.

246

Enrolled

201

Bridge completers

112

Job-specific training

17

WBL to Employment

DIRECT PARTICIPANT INVESTMENT

\$663,665

Participant stipends

\$380,763

Barrier reduction

\$217,205

Subsidized training wages

\$1,261,633 TOTAL INVESTED DIRECTLY IN PARTICIPANTS

INVESTMENT BY TRAINING PATHWAY

Bridge

\$382,361

HVAC

\$104,234

Building & Home Inspection

\$78,466

Electric Vehicle

\$66,104

Energy Auditor

\$14,157

Source: CEJA Reporting. Data range: June 2024 – August 2026. WBL = Work-Based Learning. WD = Workforce Development. IPA = Illinois Power Agency. DCEO = Department of Commerce & Opportunity

WORKFORCE FORWARD: CLEAN ENERGY SUMMIT

August 28, 2026 – College of Lake County ATC



74

Employers attended

225

Job Seekers

23

Employers

Keyla Ward, Ameren | Laticia Holbert, ComEd | Jennifer Serino, WD
Larry Dawson & Diana Fuller, DCEO | Esther Kim, IL IPA

WIOA IMPACT REPORT

Report Period
04/01/2025 - 06/30/2026
2025 Q1 to Q4



Lake County Workforce Investment Board

All FS Adult

Title I Participants

ECONOMIC *IMPACT*

\$31,445,074

Total Annual Earnings for All Employed

\$44,516

Average Annual Earnings for All Employed

WHAT DO WE MEAN BY...

Total Annual Earnings for All Employed

The total money earned by *all employed* customers over the full four quarters after they left the program.

Average Annual Earnings for All Employed

The average wage earned by *all employed* customers over the full four quarters after they left the program.



Lake County Workforce Investment Board

Title I Participants

EMPLOYMENT **SUCCESS**

1,101

Number of Customers Served and Exited

734

Employed

66.7%

Employed Q2

WHAT DO WE MEAN BY...

Number of Customers Served and Exited

Any customer who received staff-assisted services and left the program during the four quarters immediately preceding the current report period.

Employed

Number of customers employed in the 2nd quarter after leaving the program.

Employed Q2

Percentage of customers who were employed in the second quarter after leaving the program. This Employment Q2 definition is a key US Department of Labor Performance Measure for WIOA programs.

Scan for more info about the data used in this report and how to access more data insights.



[About the WIOA Impact Report](#)

SOURCE FutureWorks BI; Data derived from the WIOA Individual Performance Records (Public Use Data), USDOL; Program Year 2025 Quarter 4

WIOA
IMPACT
REPORT
2023 Q1 to Q4

