LCWDB Executive Committee Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, August 19, 2026, at 8:15 AM

Job Center of Lake County

Present: *Kevin Considine, Timothy Dempsey, Josh Fischer, Jennifer Harris, Dennis Kessler, Dr. Carlotta Roman, Jennifer Serino, Dr. Andrew Warrington, Kimberly Wimer*

Absent: *Laura Crivlare-Maglio, Ed Gallagher, Dr. Kristen Jones, Marcus Jordan, Dr. Michael Karner*

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

The meeting was called to order on Wednesday, August 19, 2026, at 8:20 AM by Executive Committee Chairwoman Dr. Carlotta Roman.

II. **Public Comment**

No public comments were made.

III. **Chair Report**

Dr. Carlotta Roman shared that that Mary Ross-Cunningham will be replaced, transition details to come.

IV. **Consent Agenda**

a. *June 2026 Executive Committee Meeting Minutes*

b. *July 2026 Executive Committee Meeting Minutes*

i. *Motion to approve: Timothy Dempsey*

ii. *Motion seconded: Kevin Considine*

iii. *Motion carried.*

V. **Regular Business**

Action Items

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

i. *Jennifer Serino presented the DCEO WIOA Apprenticeship Expansion Grant in the amount of $550,000. The grant will support expanded apprenticeship opportunities, employer engagement, staffing, and related workforce strategies.*
    1. *Motion to approve: Dr. Andrew Warrington*
    2. *Motion seconded: Kimberly Wimer*
    3. *Motion carried.*

b. *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.*

i. *Jennifer Serino presented the DCEO 2026 Supplemental Grant in the amount of $149,955 to implement the Workforce Access and Economic Mobility Initiative.*

ii. *The initiative is designed to support SNAP recipients as they transition into employment. Staff clarified that the initiative is not focused solely on SNAP work requirements, consistent with previous Executive Committee direction. The funding will also support expansion of digital access through laptops and provide funding for an external consultant to strengthen data storytelling and communication of workforce outcomes.*
    1. *Motion to approve: Kimberly Wimer*
    2. *Motion seconded: Timothy Dempsey*
    3. *Motion carried.*

c. *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.*

i. *The Executive Committee considered renewal of the subrecipient agreement with College of Lake County (CLC) for the Climate and Equitable Jobs Act (CEJA) Workforce Hub Grant for the continuation period of July 1, 2026, through June 30, 2027, with a maximum payment amount of $3,052,100.*

ii. *LCWD team reported that the state budget has confirmed continued CEJA funding. The committee discussed changes occurring within the CEJA hub structure and an upcoming information session in Waukegan. A new Notice of Funding is expected in September, and current recipients are not guaranteed continuation in the next funding round.*

iii. *Approximately 70 individuals have secured employment through the program to date. Members requested additional information regarding employment outcomes, including job types, employers, wages, and outcomes at the state level.*

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

d. *Approve the Community Capacity Building Pilot Projects with Aspiritech, Give Me TEN, Liberty Prairie, College of Lake County Manufacturing Alliance.*

i. *LCWD team presented the proposed Community Capacity Building Pilot Projects, which are intended to expand service capacity, strengthen community and employer partnerships, and support Board-aligned priorities. The pilot authority allows for up to $200,000 total, with individual agreements not to exceed $50,000.*

ii. *The proposed pilots included:*

1. ***Aspiritech** – Focused on serving the neurodivergent population and incorporating a U.S. Department of Labor apprenticeship in cybersecurity.*
2. ***Give Me TEN** – A small-business internship model developed by Sue Dixon that gives young people an opportunity to spend approximately 10 hours exploring a role with a small business, with the goal of progressing into a longer-term internship.*
3. ***Liberty Prairie** – Builds on its Summer Youth Employment Program partnership and expands opportunities year-round, including entrepreneurship, farm, retail, and camp components.*
    a. *Aspiritech, Give Me TEN, and Liberty Prairie were brought to the whole committee for approval.*
        i. *Motion to approve: Timothy Dempsey*
        ii. *Motion seconded: Kevin Considine*
        iii. *Motion carried.*
4. ***College of Lake County Manufacturing Alliance** - Expands the manufacturing industry sector partnership and focuses on opportunity youth transitioning into work-based learning, apprenticeships, and employment.*

a. *College of Lake County Manufacturing Alliance was brought to the committee, but majority of the committee members had to abstain due to relations with the CLC Manufacturing Alliance.*
b. *Members (in attendance) Considine, Fischer, Kessler, Serino, Warrington, and Wimer abstained.*
    i. *Motion to approve: Timothy Dempsey*
    ii. *Motion seconded: Jennifer Harris*
    iii. *Motion carried.*

Business

a. Reviewing Employer Training Grant Investments

a. The committee reviewed employer training investments for Program Years 2024 and 2025.

i. ***Incumbent Worker Training (IWT)*** *reimburses employers for training provided to their existing workforce. More than $500,000 was invested over the two-year period.*
ii. ***On-the-Job Training (OJT)*** *reimburses employers for training wages at a negotiated rate, with approximately $800,000 invested over the two-year period. Agreements exceeding $50,000 must be brought to the Executive Committee.*
iii. *The committee discussed the growth of the employer training budget, which increased from approximately $150,000 in PY24 to $500,000 in PY25, with the $500,000 budget continuing into the current year.*

b. Reviewing Training Provider Investments

a. *The committee reviewed Individual Training Account (ITA) investments, including tuition, fees, and books. More than $3 million was invested across PY24 and PY25 among the listed training providers.*
b. *The committee discussed the increase in associate degree completions through College of Lake County and credited improved coordination between Workforce Development and CLC.*
c. *The committee also reviewed CDL and truck-driving training. Once a participant is connected to intake, a letter of intent and anticipated start date can generally be established within approximately three to four weeks. Training is approximately five*

weeks and 240 hours. 160 Driving Academy operates open enrollment, with classes beginning every other Monday.

d. *Members discussed the challenges faced by drivers under the age of 21 because of insurance requirements and employer restrictions. CDL credentials can also provide an advantage for young people pursuing union opportunities, particularly when combined with OSHA-40 training.*

c. Workforce Board Committee Action Plan Updates

a. *Serino provided an update on the Board's standing committees and their two-year action plans. All three active committees met during the month and reviewed their respective action plans.*

b. *Going forward, committees will focus on one specific action item per meeting rather than attempting to address broad topics during each meeting. Committee members will also receive a formal governance document outlining expectations related to active participation, serving as ambassadors for the workforce system, leadership opportunities, and participation in the annual Workforce Impact and Recognition Celebration.*

i. Youth Advisory Group

1. *The Youth Advisory Group has been established under the Talent Pipeline Committee and is led by Ed Gallagher.*
2. *The initial group includes approximately seven young professionals from Workforce Development. The group held its first meeting and will continue developing its framework and recruitment strategy before formally informing Board decisions. Members have experience presenting to high school students and discussing career pathways.*
3. *The Committee also discussed whether the Board should incorporate the voices of adult service users in addition to youth and employers. Members discussed potentially using nonprofit board-matching events and similar resources to identify individuals who could provide customer perspectives.*

d. Workforce Board Committee Governance and Membership

a. *The Committee continued discussion of the updated governance structure for the Board's committees.*
b. *Committees other than the Executive and Finance and Compliance Committees will meet five times annually, with an emphasis on virtual meetings. Committee members will receive the governance document for review and signature.*
c. *The Operations Committee continues to be composed primarily of Job Center partners, with approximately half of its membership coming from outside partners.*
d. *Board staff will distribute the committee governance document to committee members by the end of the month for signature.*

e. Workforce Development Month

a. *The Committee discussed upcoming Workforce Development activities and opportunities to increase awareness of the workforce system and its impact throughout Lake County.*

VI. Member Time & Strategic Focus

a. Engagement Strategies – Regional, State, National

i. *The Committee discussed opportunities to strengthen the Board's engagement at the regional, state, and national levels.*
ii. *Members discussed the National Association of Workforce Boards (NAWB), including upcoming policy and advocacy opportunities. NAWB Policy Day is scheduled for the end of September and will include advocacy training and a coordinated Hill Day. The NAWB Annual Meeting will take place in October.*
iii. *The Committee also discussed the transition toward a more formal statewide Illinois workforce association and the potential benefits of stronger statewide advocacy.*

b. Funding and Development

i. *The Committee discussed the Lake County Workforce Ecosystem Collaborative, which includes Workforce Development, College of Lake County, Lake County Partners, and the Regional Office of Education.*
ii. *Family foundations are participating, and the Aim and Arrow Group has been engaged to develop the ecosystem's framework and blueprint. The collaborative has completed its initial discovery and fact-finding phases and is moving into the roadmap and action phase.*

iii. *The framework will focus heavily on the high school experience and the full customer journey from education through attainment of a family-sustaining wage. Essential skills alignment and the ALICE income level were also discussed as components of the developing framework.*

iv. *The primary outstanding challenge is establishing the appropriate staffing and governance structure for the collaborative. Core leaders will meet separately to address those questions before the collaborative expands to additional partners.*

v. *An Aim and Arrow report is expected to be published in September for stakeholder review.*

c. Communication Strategies

i. *The Committee discussed the importance of communicating workforce outcomes more effectively and using data to tell the story of the workforce system.*

ii. *The supplemental DCEO grant includes funding for an external consultant to assist with data storytelling and outcomes communication.*

iii. *Members also discussed the need for stronger communication regarding the impact of workforce programs, particularly when discussing employer training, CEJA, apprenticeships, and other investments.*

d. Strategic Discussion

i. *The Committee engaged in a broader discussion about AI and its potential impact on the workforce.*

ii. *Members expressed concern that AI may increasingly affect entry-level positions and could make it more difficult for young people to obtain their first professional jobs. The discussion included examples of potential disruption in fields such as law, engineering, medicine, and healthcare.*

iii. *The Committee discussed the need for the Board to develop a more Lake County-specific conversation regarding AI and workforce implications beyond the state's current AI Task Force, which is focused primarily on AI use within the workforce system.*

iv. *An American Enterprise Institute briefing addressing AI threats, workforce implications, and education and training impacts was also discussed. The briefing will be shared with Board members for consideration.*

VII. Other Business / Updates

a. *CEJA Job Fair & Panel Discussion on Friday, August 28th, at 8:30 AM*
b. *8th Annual Disability Job Fair on Thursday, September 10th, at 12:00 PM*
c. *Hire Lake County Job Fair on Friday, October 2, at 11:00 AM*
d. *Illinois Workforce Association 1st Annual Conference on Tuesday, October 6th and Wednesday, October 7th*
e. *Navig8 Lake County on Tuesday, October 20th, at 7:30 AM*

VIII. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned 9:32 AM.

Motion to approve: Jennifer Harris

Motion seconded: Kimberly Wimer

Motion carried.

Upcoming Meetings:

LCWDB Executive Committee Meeting

- *Wednesday, September 16, 2026, at 8:15 AM*

LCWD Board of Directors Meeting

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