

**MINUTES**  
**SOUTHWEST MINNESOTA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD**  
**LYON COUNTY GOVERNMENT CENTER**  
**COMMISSIONER'S ROOM – 2<sup>ND</sup> FLOOR**  
**DECEMBER 4, 2025**  
**4:00 P.M.**

Members Present: Carla Goedtke, Andy Easley, Vince Robinson, Tim Jones, Lori Wynia, See Moua-Leske, Anne Johnson, Hilary DeVlaeminck, Terry Gaalswyk, Mary Shumski, Scott Marquardt, Mimi Schafer, Kirsten Gloege

Members Excused: Brad Vaughn, Marly Wagner, Jacque Peters, Bruce Bergeson, Melissa McGinty-Thompson, Dawn Schnell

Guest Speaker: Ben Winchester

Staff Present: Carrie Bendix, Maria Peters, Jenna Weyer

Carla Goedtke called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

**Welcome & Introduction**

Carla Goedtke welcomed members, and everyone introduced themselves.

**Rural Living in 2025 by Ben Winchester – University of Minnesota Extension**

Ben Winchester, Rural Sociologist with the University of Minnesota Extension Department of Community Development, presented “Rewriting the Rural Narrative: Rural Living in 2025.” He emphasized that housing availability is crucial to rural population growth and explained that people primarily relocate for quality of life, safety, and affordable housing, with fewer moving solely for employment. Mr. Winchester noted that many home sales occur informally through word of mouth and local connections, limiting access for potential newcomers, and that housing supply is further constrained by delayed downsizing among baby boomers, restricting homeownership opportunities for younger generations. He also responded to board member questions regarding multi-generational housing, noting that 23% of households today are multi-generational, reflecting a widespread return to traditional living arrangements rather than a trend limited to a specific demographic.

**Approval of the Agenda & Agenda Additions**

Carla Goedtke asked if there were any additions to the agenda. Hearing no additional agenda items, a motion was made by Terry Gaalswyk to approve the agenda as presented. The motion was seconded by See Moua-Leske and passed unanimously.

**Consent Agenda Items**

- SW MN Workforce Development Board Meeting Minutes – June 5, 2025
- Youth Committee Meeting Minutes – August 7, 2025 & November 6, 2025

- Southwest Minnesota Private Industry Council Report

Vince Robinson made a motion to approve the consent agenda including the Minutes of the June 5, 2025 SW MN Workforce Development Board Meeting; Minutes of the August 7, 2025 and November 6, 2025 Youth Committee Meeting; and the Southwest Minnesota Private Industry Council Report. Anne Johnson seconded the motion and passed unanimously.

### **Director's & Officers Insurance**

Carla Goedtke presented the quoted premium of \$856 for Director's & Officers Insurance through Nonprofit Insurance Trust, noting it is the same as the current year. See Moua-Leske made a motion to approve the \$856 premium for Director's & Officers Insurance. The motion was seconded by Terry Gaalswyk and passed unanimously.

### **Electronic Document Storage Policy**

Carrie Bendix noted that the Regional Electronic Document Storage Policy has been updated to reflect DEED's new policy. It provides guidelines on the use of Electronic Document Storage (EDS) features in Workforce One (WF1) for Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act and other state/federal funded programs as appropriate. Andy Easley made a motion to approve the newly rewritten Electronic Document Storage Policy. Vince Robinson seconded the motion and passed unanimously.

### **Workforce Development Board Operating Budget Approval**

Carrie Bendix presented the proposed Operating Budget for Program Year 2025-2026 in the amount of \$49,674. Anne Johnson made a motion to approve the Program Year 2025-2026 operating budget. Andy Easley seconded the motion and passed unanimously.

### **State Dislocated Worker Funding**

Carrie Bendix reported that the Minnesota Job Skills Partnership (MJSP) Board held a special meeting on October 3, 2025 and approved DEED's request for the additional \$11.2 million from the Workforce Development Fund (WDF) reserves to provide additional State Dislocated Worker services statewide. Terry Gaalswyk made a motion to approve receiving an additional \$232,157 for State Dislocated Worker services, totaling \$440,548. Hilary DeVlaeminck seconded the motion and passed unanimously. Tim Jones abstained.

### **Request for Proposals**

Carrie Bendix advised that all of the listed proposals were already submitted, noting the PIC received the full amount requested for Career Pathway Agriculture Grant in the amount of \$500,000 and the Robert & Helen Remick Charitable Foundation Trust in the amount of \$10,000. Grants applied for but not received included the Women's Economic Security Act (WESA) Grant for \$125,000 per year, and the Nobles County Opioid Settlement Funding and US Bank Foundation both for \$25,000. The PIC

received \$10,000 from the Communities Response to Opioid Fund out of the \$20,000 applied for and \$1,500 of the requested \$2,500 from the Great River Energy Company grant. Carrie is still waiting to hear back regarding the Drive for Five Part I, the Taylor Corporation Foundation in the amount of \$25,000, and the Pathways to Prosperity On-Ramp to Career Pathways Grant (\$200,000/yr), Pathways to Prosperity Bridge to Career Pathways Grant (\$200,000/yr), and Pathways to Prosperity Individualized Training Pathway Grant (\$250,000/yr). Scott Marquardt made a motion to approve the listed applications and funds received. Hilary DeVlaeminck seconded the motion and passed unanimously. Tim Jones, See Moua-Leske and Terry Gaalswyk abstained.

### **Monitoring Reports**

Tim Jones discussed results of the Monitoring Reports for WIOA Adult, WIOA Dislocated worker, and State Dislocated Worker programs, noting a corrective action for a missed plan update likely due to multiple staff member transitions in the past year. Carrie Bendix reminded board members that this was the first area of concern in many years. Terry Gaalswyk made a motion to approve results from the monitoring reports. Hilary DeVlaeminck seconded the motion and passed unanimously.

### **Confidentiality & Conflict of Interest**

Carrie Bendix explained the Confidentiality & Conflict of Interest Policies and asked each Board Member to sign and return.

### **Discussion – Open Meeting Laws**

Carrie Bendix discussed that open meeting laws have changed and board members can now join virtually from any location, given that at least one board member joins from a regular meeting location. Members showed interest in holding in-person meetings at a business with a guest speaker similar to previous years in either June or October. Vince Robinson made a motion to change the open meeting rules to reflect the recent updates, noting the Lyon County Government Center will become the only regular in person meeting location. Lori Wynia seconded the motion and passed unanimously.

### **Committee Reports**

Maria Peters reported on the November 6, 2025 Youth Committee meeting. Marly Wagner from TRIO Upward Bound shared about the program and its design to support low income and first generation college students in their preparation for higher education. Eriann Faris shared an update from the Robotics scrimmage and CDA (Child Development Associate) Training. She also included that a new chatbot was created on the LYFT website. Maria Peters reported that most of the funds for work experience have been either spent or allocated for but that the Robotics/STEM Grant and Robotics Grant still have available funds. Maria provided an update on events including Career Expos, Breaking Traditions, and Tours of Manufacturing. Maria also mentioned that Suree Sompamitwong's last day with the PIC will be November 6<sup>th</sup>. Cami Raymond shared that the open house for Project Search will

be held on November 6<sup>th</sup> at Avera. She also reported that student applications re-opened and will close by the end of January. Linae Enockson from Sanford thanked the committee for promoting the Occupational Therapy camp which sold out in days and announced that another camp for CNA and Surgical Tech will be held in Jackson and Luverne.

**Director Updates**

Carrie Bendix discussed updates since the last meeting including working on the Budget as grants term at the end of December. Carrie also spoke about the PIC’s 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary event in Balaton on October 6<sup>th</sup> and thanked sponsors. Board members provided positive feedback on the event and appreciated the opportunity to connect with members from the Chief Elected Officials Board, the Workforce Development Board, and the Southwest Minnesota Private Industry Council Board of Directors together.

**Member Updates**

Terry Gaalswyk announced the Workforce Pell Grant, an expansion of the Pell Grant to shorter-term trainings and courses between 8 and 15 weeks and 150 – 600 contact hours that can be used as an opportunity to further advance those in southwest Minnesota. See Moua Leske reminded members of the *It Begins With Us* Conference on February 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> consisting of a Poverty Simulation on Day 1 and a panel of Vietnam Veterans, speakers from the Carpenters Union, and a presentation by Grate Interpreting on Day 2.

**Important Dates**

- Youth Committee Meeting – February 5<sup>th</sup>, 2026 – 9:00a.m. – 11:00a.m.
- Executive Committee Meeting – February 5<sup>th</sup>, 2026 – 3:00p.m.
- Workforce Development Board Meeting – February 5<sup>th</sup>, 2026 – 4:00p.m. – 6:00p.m.

**Adjourn**

A motion was made by Hilary DeVlaeminck to adjourn. The motion was seconded by See Moua-Leske and passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned.

Approved by:



Vince Robinson, Secretary

Approved by:



Carrie Bendix, Recording Secretary