

MINUTES
SOUTHWEST MINNESOTA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD
LYON COUNTY GOVERNMENT CENTER
COMMISSIONER'S ROOM – 2ND FLOOR
JUNE 5, 2025
4:00 P.M.

Members Present: Carla Goedtke, Andy Easley, Beth Wilms, Vince Robinson, Tim Jones, Lori Wynia, Brad Vaughn

Joining Via ZOOM: Scott Marquardt, Jacque Peters, Terry Gaalswyk, Mimi Schafer

Members Excused: Anne Johnson, Rochelle Remund, See Moua-Leske, LeRoy Kiecker, Marly Wagner, Hilary DeVlaeminck, Bruce Bergeson, Melissa McGinty-Thompson, Dawn Schnell

Guest Presenter: Luke Greiner

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, everyone introduced themselves and shared an update from their organization. Beth Wilms reported that she will be retiring after six years of serving on the Workforce Development Board. Mimi Schafer reported a reduction of six staff members.

Approval of the Agenda & Agenda Additions

Carla Goedtke asked if there were any additions to the agenda. Carrie Bendix requested to add funding allocations for WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker and Sponsorship for the October 2nd Joint Board Meeting. A motion was made by Terry Gaalswyk to approve the requested agenda items. The motion was seconded by Jacque Peters and passed unanimously.

Southwest Minnesota's Economy: Trends, Challenges, and Opportunities – Luke Greiner

Luke Greiner, Regional Analyst for the Department of Employment and Economic Development, shared updates on Southwest Minnesota's economic and workforce trends. In the past year, wages have increased by 5.6%, outpacing the national average of 3.7%. As of April 2025, the region has 29,000 more workers than it did in February 2020. Regarding foreign-born populations in Southwest Minnesota, 56% of the region's immigrants are from Latin America, with many not bringing children. Additionally, 40% of foreign-born individuals do not speak English well or at all, and 62% have entered the United States since 2000. Luke also reported on survey results from Career Expos held in Marshall and Worthington last Fall. Health Science and Human Services (27%) and Agriculture (11%) were the most popular career interests among students. The trend after high school has shifted from pursuing a bachelor's degree (10 years ago) to either entering the workforce directly after high school

or completing a two-year degree or program. Student work environment preferences included 30% outdoor work, 6% remote, 15% in-person, and 29% hybrid models. Luke noted that with 40% of students reporting interest in only exploring careers they were already familiar with, there is a need for greater exposure to various career options. 70% of students surveyed expressed an interest in staying in rural areas, 24% preferred their hometowns, 26% had desires to live in a large city or someplace else, and 5% were interested in living in the Twin Cities. Board members asked where artificial intelligence (AI) would have the greatest impact in Southwest Minnesota. Luke identified education as the most impacted area in the future followed by public administration and government.

Consent Agenda Items

- SW MN Workforce Development Board Meeting Minutes – April 3rd, 2025
- Drive for Five Committee Meeting Minutes – May 13th, 2025
- Southwest Minnesota Private Industry Council Report

Lori Wynia made a motion to approve the consent agenda including the Minutes of the April 3, 2025 SW MN Workforce Development Board Meeting; Minutes of the May 13, 2025 Drive for Five Committee Meeting; and the Southwest Minnesota Private Industry Council Report. Brad Vaughn seconded the motion and passed unanimously.

Youth Intervention Program

Carrie Bendix requested approval to apply for the two-year Youth Intervention Program grant for \$150,000 (\$75,000 each year). Brad Vaughn made a motion to approve applying for the two-year Youth Intervention Program grant for \$150,000 (\$75,000 each year). Vince Robinson seconded the motion and passed unanimously. Tim Jones abstained from agenda items B and C.

Minnesota Youth Program

Carrie Bendix presented funding allocations in the amount of \$93,854 for the Minnesota Youth Program as well as \$82,780 for WIOA Adult and \$160,620 for WIOA Dislocated Worker from the agenda additions. The decrease in funding was discussed. Terry Gaalswyk made a motion to approve allocations in the amount of \$93,854 for the Minnesota Youth Program, \$82,780 for WIOA Adult, and \$160,620 for WIOA Dislocated Worker. Vince Robinson made a motion and passed unanimously.

Nominations Committee

Andy Easley encouraged Board members to join the Nominations Committee to help with the Nominations process for the Executive Committee at the August 7th, 2025 Meeting. Board members requested a list of open Board positions. Carrie Bendix noted that the Health and Human Services Director from Lac qui Parle will be replacing Beth Wilms on the Workforce Development Board.

2025-2026 Meeting Schedule Approval – Bi-Monthly

Carla Goedtke proposed the meeting schedule for Program Year 2025-2026 for the first Thursday of the selected months from 4:00 – 6:00pm. The proposed meeting dates are:

- August 7, 2025
- October 2, 2025
- December 4, 2025
- February 5, 2026
- April 2, 2026
- June 4, 2026
- August 6, 2026
- October 1, 2026
- December 3, 2026

Tim Jones made a motion to approve the proposed meeting schedule for Program Year 2025-2026. The motion was seconded by Jacque Peters and passed unanimously. Discussion took place regarding changes to the open meeting rules related to remote access. Members can now join meetings from anywhere as long as the published location has availability for open access to the public and all attendees can be seen and heard. Board members agreed it would be valuable to rotate the in-person meeting location to provide further opportunity for networking and collaboration.

Joint In-Person Board Meeting October 2nd for PIC 40th Anniversary

Carrie Bendix proposed holding a Joint in-person Board meeting on October 2nd which would include the PIC Board, the Chief Elected Official Board, and the Workforce Development Board, noting that Andy Easley has agreed to host the meeting at Iterro (formerly Tru Shrimp) in Balaton. Up to 100 people will be invited including past board members, PIC staff, and participants as well as Legislatures. Carrie also requested sponsors for the meal that will take place at the event. Scott Marquardt with Southwest Initiative Foundation and Brad Vaughn with Hills Stainless Steel offered to sponsor the event meal. Beth Wilms made a motion to approve the joint in-person Board Meeting on October 2nd for the PIC 40th Anniversary in addition to meal sponsorship by Southwest Initiative Foundation and Hills Stainless Steel. Lori Wynia seconded the motion and passed unanimously.

Committee Reports

Dawn Schnell reported on the Drive for Five Committee meeting from May 13th, 2025.

Director Updates

Carrie Bendix discussed updates since the last meeting including legislative updates, impacts of the Job Corps shutdown in St. Paul, Board engagement opportunities, and decreased funding for the RC3 grant.

Recognition of Outgoing Board Members

Carrie Bendix gave recognition to Beth Wilms who will be retiring after six years of service to the Workforce Development Board. Rochelle Remund will also be resigning from the Workforce Development Board after serving three years.

Important Dates

- Youth Committee Meeting – August 7th, 2025 – 9:00a.m. – 11:00a.m.
- Executive Committee Meeting – August 7th, 2025 – 3:00p.m.
- Workforce Development Board Meeting – August 7th, 2025 – 4:00p.m. – 6:00p.m.
- Drive for Five Committee Meeting – September 9th, 2025 – 4:00p.m. – 5:00p.m.

Adjourn

A motion was made by Beth Wilms to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Tim Jones and passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned.

Approved by:



Vince Robinson, Secretary

Approved by:



Carrie Bendix, Recording Secretary