

**WASHINGTON COUNTY
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD MEETING
CareerForce
Woodbury, MN
March 19, 2025**

Members Present

Laurie Levine	John Burcaw	Chris Eng
Erin Kampa	Nicole Lindscheid	Holly Jackson
Jamie Staska		

Action Team Members

Commissioner Stan Karwoski	Melissa McLean
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CareerForce Staff Present

Rick Roy	Tatum Heller	Cory Sindt
Cameron Smith	Deb Cunningham	

1. Meeting Called to Order & Determination of Quorum – Laurie Levine, Chair

A quorum was determined.

- A Motion was made to approve the agenda, it was seconded, (vote taken) and the Motion was approved.
- A Motion was made to approve the December minutes, it was seconded, (vote taken) and the Motion was approved.
- Attendee Introductions – no new members

2. Board Action and Update Items for Federal Requirements:

- Approval of Washington County as the Sole Service Provider for WIOA Youth Services. (vote required) *Tatum Heller*, supervisor for WIOA & State Youth Programs. A Motion was made to approve, it was seconded (vote taken) and the Motion was approved.
- MOU/IFA (update) *Rick Roy* – is still going through the approval process with DEED. The MOU outlines all the required programs and obligations to participate in the WorkForce Development System. The IFA looks at the funding at this location as the comprehensive center. It will have to be redone when CareerForce moves to the new Woodbury location later in 2025.
- One-Stop Operator Agreement (update) – *Rick Roy* – It’s a consortium of Adult Basic Ed, Vocational Rehab and Job Service. We received feedback from DEED with some recommended changes.
- Continuing resolution for Federal Programs (update) – *Rick Roy* – Continuing resolution was passed. There are some anticipated cuts in funding, specifically for the Dislocated Worker Program. The amount hasn’t been determined yet for Minnesota. DEED’s rapid response team will be holding events for federal employees that were laid off to help them get reemployed. We haven’t seen any referrals yet. Within Community Services

were probably the only division that's mostly federal and state funded. Other divisions get a lot of levy dollars, since we don't, we're predicting it'll hit us hard.

3. Action Team Updates

- **Business Engagement Action Team** – *Rick Roy* – The Metro Gold Line ribbon cutting is March 22, 10:00-11:00 a.m. at the Woodlane Park & Ride and 11:00-12:00 at SunRay. Federal, state and city people will be attending and speaking. It's a family event with bling and giveaways. Ramsey and Washington Counties invested dollars for rides to be free the first week. Normal fee will be \$2.00. Everyone is encouraged to ride the Gold Line to see employment opportunities along the line. For additional information see website – <https://GoWashingtonMN.com>

The state is allowing us to continue DEI efforts and has given us a small allocation. Rick suggested including content of cultural competency to the World Café events that are planned. There are six levels of cultural competency with descriptions. It would be a good exercise for businesses to take back to their staff to get a feel of the culture of their business. There could be value in supporting non-profits that are at risk of losing tax exempt status for DEI work.

Laurie Levine – working with Grow Minnesota | Minnesota Chamber and the City of Cottage Grove. A survey was put together for businesses, particularly targeting businesses in the business park. The information gathered from the survey would be used to model the World Café concept for the Cottage Grove, St. Paul Park and Newport businesses.

Someone from the Alexandria Chamber will speak at the next Chamber meeting. They have a great program connecting businesses, schools, workforce and chambers. Looking forward to learning how to replicate and facilitate that type of program with the Chamber.

Rick Roy – moving forward with the virtual reality and getting people trained. Jerry is still helping and will be training Vivien Fowler our Career Service Specialist and will be training staff at Forest Lake High School April 7th. Cameron will be attending as well.

- **Community & Education Engagement Action Teams** – *Cory Sindt* – The two teams continue to meet together, networking and conversing how to make a bigger impact as a group. Working with Jerry Klebsch, a social worker and Community Services liaison, to put together 2-3 pop-up family resource center events this summer. There's approximately \$40,000 to work with, focusing on low to lower income neighborhoods in Landfall, Cottage Grove, Oakdale and Cimarron.

4. Board Members and Guest Updates

Rick Roy – Met with the executive director of Corrie's House. A home for recovering sex trafficked youth ages 12-21. The home, located in Oakdale, was purchased and renovated. Several companies donated work time or items. They are going through the licensing process and should be ready to go by August. Anyone helping at Corrie's House must pass 40 hours of training dealing with psychological issues. The home can house six youth who are allowed to

stay as long as they need. Some services provided include individual and group therapy, education, and job skills. The executive director plans to attend one of our staff career services specialist meetings to see how we can collaborate. Corrie's House is located near the Gold Line.

Laurie Levine – The Chamber has its Community Showcase on April 26th, 10:00 – 2:00 at Park High School Activity Center. Businesses from the communities will pull together for this event to include a job fair, kids' area and much more.

Tatum Heller – Working on writing program plans and waiting to hear what our grant funding will be to know how many participants we can serve and services we can offer.

Cory Sindt – Starting to prepare for program changes coming in 2026. The Diversionary Work Program will be ending and there will be changes to the sanctioning process.

Cameron Smith – We've had more youth and young adults applying recently. We're watching our funding to determine how and if we can serve them.

Erin Kampa – Though Voc. Rehab. Services are through DEED we are 80% funded by the Department of Education. We're anticipating budget cuts. We've had a hiring freeze for quite some time and monitoring expenditures monthly. We're utilizing our internal staff and looking towards closing our categories and having wait lists again. Our Woodbury office is currently at 94 & Century. We're looking for a different location that would be smaller, more accessible and possibly on the Gold Line.

Commissioner Stan Karwoski - Update on the County Board budget, the federal impact through executive orders that have been overturned partially by the courts would affect close to half our population with some of our social services that help administer Medicaid. We decided, between the Governor's and Trump administration what cuts really pan out, we will cut back on some services. We feel that those responsible to those budgets should be sending a message to the population, this is who you voted for and this is what you're getting. If we back fill with our own tax payer dollars, it's not the right resource.

Attended the CDA Board meeting recently as an alternate. There's been some new money in housing. It's trending in the right direction. Proposed to the CDA to look at housing in proximity to the Gold Line as it takes years to develop.

Chris Eng – In Partnership with the State, Met Transit reached out to the city of Woodbury regarding setting up Micro Transit service. The city would create the boundaries that a few short buses could handle and pick out key stop points (the Gold Line, library, schools, retail...). \$2.00 fee would take you anywhere within those boundary lines of Woodbury.

Nicole Lindscheid – Our primary business is the dislocated workforce. I was at a job fair recently and there were significantly more individuals than previous job fairs. Usually, I talk to about 20-30 attendees at this event, I spoke to about 60-70 individuals. About one out of four were federal employees. We have an on-the-job training program for help desk that is growing. We continue our partnership with Ramsey County. Currently we're working on a partnership

with Project for Pride in Living, getting experience for those individuals that were getting IT certifications but not getting jobs. We are launching a summer camp for on-the-job training. We need individuals, especially youth to be involved as well as a pending WIOA Program that will align with certification for 16-24 year olds. We have a new building for on-the-job training located across the street from us.

Holly Jackson – At the refinery we concluded a hiring class for process technicians earlier this winter. Eleven individuals will start March 31. We continue to have a posting out for instrument techs. Instrumental electrical is the trade skill that we struggle to bring folks in for. Being of the private sector, our supply is not drying up. We continue to maintain stable operations at the refinery. There was a large tanker truck fire on February 18 at a terminal. Newport and St. Paul Park Fire Departments responded. There were no injuries.

Chris Eng – We're seeing a lot of activity in small businesses interested in starting up or existing businesses that want to take to the next level. There's some softening on larger companies. The market isn't as strong as we had hoped it would be. There are about three million square feet of vacant manufacturing space in the County. In workforce development, we've had an introductory meeting with all our school districts to develop a plan, how we can work together and share ideas. We shared with all the educators the study from Real Time Talent of all the gateway jobs that are easiest to enter in the metro area. We will be meeting again to plan, set some goals & action steps. We've been looking at Alexandria as a model, how they got their program started, what's working well and not working.

John Burcaw – We lost three million dollars that was going to be used to provide registered apprenticeships for incarcerated people throughout Minnesota in partnership with the DOC and also demonstrate how pairing of Voc. Ed with robust wrap around services using our FTIU care team and in-house clinicians that we can reduce recidivism and opioid consumption. That project appears to be dead in the water. We are the training provider for DEED's PROWD (Partners for Reentry Opportunities in Workforce Development) grant to provide training for returning individuals and working with the Federal Bureau of Prisons and DOL for a transitions program for incarcerated persons.

Moose Lake correctional facility inmates are building tiny homes and gifting to veterans in St. Paul on some land that someone gifted. The impact of this program is so much greater than the veterans themselves. Several men said they hope to get involved with volunteerism upon their release and would like to be a part of this in the future. It's building a sense of leadership and commitment to the community.

We were highlighted on the ForConstructionPros.com website. They interviewed and published an in-depth article about our school & mostly about our care team model providing mental health supports to our students daily. We average about 200 students per semester. They get a mental health assessment, physical health assessment and social well-being assessment. We have about 20-22% still receiving care from last May.

Melissa McLean – working with the DEED Drive for 5 grant, part 2. Part 1 is training, part 2 is placement. Placement has not happened. Final effort – Level Up, Hiring Right Now Event –

April 24 for 18+ year olds, graduating students, young adults, walk ins. East side of St. Paul. Vendors are limited to those hiring right now and community resources.

I facilitate a CCR group (College and Career Readiness) consisting of all the Pathways folks. We meet monthly. There are 28 members from 18 school districts. As we talk about creating a strong pipeline, this group can help. I've been working with the Perkins folks creating a core group trying to get higher level educational administrators to the table of economic development discussions. Owatonna has a very good program like Alexandria. Their superintendent said if you don't have superintendents at the table for economic development discussions, it's going to be hard to go forward. Our work group will be trying to get together with all of you 3-4 times a year to get the administrators around the table.

We were awarded \$112,000 from Greater Twin Cities United Way putting 22 students through paid healthcare work with HealthPartners. Ten through Minnesota Trades Academy for 8 weeks, \$16/hour. Healthcare is getting paid \$18 /hour. We would love to do this with students from this area.

If you need to have a meeting, Classroom Barge is coming on the Mississippi River. It's a floating classroom barge parked at Harriet Island from mid-June through November. It's free. It's workforce development. They want juniors and seniors to come learn about jobs that deal with environment sciences, ecology and also things like deck hands, boat captain. They can take 30 students for a full day of learning. They will reimburse up to \$400 for subs and/or transportation costs. You can hold meetings there – taking reservations now. It's free.

Jaime Staska – We are losing a long-time staff of about 15 years. We're looking to Metro State and other partners for a good, dedicated person who is also Spanish speaking. We're doing some program evaluation. Looking forward to where we're moving in the future. We've been in Landfall 30 years and 15 years in Cimarron. Seeing the other collaborations out there it's nice to think what might be possible. Reached out to Metro Sate and some other higher ed places to see about partnerships with some of their placements to get some quality tutors in our programs.

5. Call and Vote for Adjournment

A Motion was made to adjourn the meeting, it was seconded, vote taken and the Motion was approved