

**ANNUAL MEETING OF THE  
The Workforce Connection Board**  
(The Workforce Innovation Board serving Boone, Winnebago and Stephenson Counties)  
**And Chief Elected Officials**

*Tuesday, September 11, 2018*  
Regional Design Center, 315 N. Main St.  
Rockford, IL

- I. Board Meeting Call to Order:** Chairman Karen Brown called The Workforce Connection Board meeting to order at 8:06 a.m.

**CEO Call to Order:** Mayor McNamara called the Chief Elected Officials meeting to order at 8:06 a.m.

- II. Board Members Present (22):** Eric Black; Karen Brown; Nathan Bryant; Linda Campos; Michelle Cassaro; Gary Evans; Einar Forsman; Dr. Daniel Grohens; Jerry Guinane; Bob Guirl; Greg Harle; Tim Hood; Dr. Doug Jensen; Paul Logli; Amy Ott; James Pirages; Frank Rotello; Amanda Smith; Crystal Soltow; Craig Steege; Mark Stefanic; Jeff Zeal

**Board Members Absent(10):** Todd Cagnoni; Dr. Lori Fanello; Pamela Fettes; Al Golden; Candace Cavalier; June Hazzard; Vanessa Hughes; Jordan Priest; Dr. Rudy Valdez; Kimberly Wichman

**CEO Members Present (4):** Thomas McNamara, Karl Johnson, William Hadley, Frank Haney

**CEO Members Absent (0):** None

**Staff Present:** Lisa Bly, Cathy Cornelius, Mike Johnson, Valerie Johnson, Robert Jones Jr., John Strandin, Dan White

**Guests and Partner Staff Present:** Rebecca Anderson; Tom Austin; Cira Bennett; Ben Bernsten; Mark Burgess; Len Carter; Tiana Cook; Kari Cullen; Ted Duckett; Jay Fieser; Courtney Geiger, Jessica Gonzales; Anisha Grimmett; Kim Haley; Margie Hartfiel; Jessica Hayes; Amy Heilman; Angela Hite-Carter; Rhonda Kliman; Kerry Knodle; Lorraine Logan; Rebecca Motley; Jen Newendyke; Troy Primus; John Rico; Heather Snider; Spitty Tata; Sheryl Thogerson;

- III. Approval of Meeting Minutes:**

- CEO Board – 06/05/2018
- TWC Board 06/05/2018 and 08/07/2018

<b>TWC Motion:</b>	<b>Hood</b>	<b>Second:</b>	<b>Ott</b>	<b>Approved</b>
<b>CEO Motion:</b>	<b>Stephenson</b>	<b>Second:</b>	<b>Boone</b>	<b>Approved</b>

- IV. Welcome and Introductions:**

Karen Brown welcomed everyone and let them know that The Workforce Connection has been working closely with employers, community leaders and partners to increase awareness of the many resources available through The Workforce Connection. Karen encouraged everyone to review the annual report available in print and on the TWC website. She also thanked the sponsors of the annual meeting: OSF Healthcare, Rasmussen College, Alpha Controls & Services, Project First Rate and the Piping Industry Council of the Rockford Area.

- V. New Slate of Officer/Board Members:**

Karen Brown announced the new slate of officers: Frank Rotello, Board Chair; Shelly Cassaro, Vice Chair; and Amy Ott, Secretary/Treasurer. She also recognized the outgoing Board members and thanked them for their service: Candace Cavalier, Brian Halsted, Sam Schmitz, Kimberly Wichman and Dave Young. She then welcomed the new Board members: Ben Bernsten, Goodwill Industries of Northern Illinois; Len Carter, FHN; Rebecca Motley, Greater Freeport Partnership; Jeff Zeal, IDES; and Troy Primus, AAR.

She then thanked the Board members for all their hard work over the years that she was Chair and said she is excited to see what is coming. She remarked that Frank Rotello has been an active Board member and she is confident that he will provide great leadership. She gave Frank a gift of satirical tools he may need as Chair and included an alarm clock and calendar. She then passed the gavel on to Frank and wished him well.

**VI. Incoming Board Chair Remarks:**

Frank Rotello thanked Karen Brown for her years of leadership and presented her with a plaque to commemorate her time serving as Chair. He then spoke to the group about workforce development being a regional effort and that employers are choosing to locate their businesses in regions that are aligned.

**VII. Illinois Workforce Innovation Board:** Mark Burgess with the Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity, Office of Employment and Training spoke to the group about the Illinois Workforce Innovation Board (IWIB). He shared the goals and responsibilities of the IWIB as well as their vision and mission statement. He talked about the steps in their strategic planning process and the goal teams that do the work. The strategic plan is created following the guiding principles. The IWIB and the 4 Goal Teams established, worked on 5 priority activities. Mark then outlined each of these 5 priority activities and why they are important. The IWIB encourages Local Workforce Innovation Boards and CEOs to incorporate the principles found within the strategic plan in their discussions around regional and local planning. He also encouraged Board members and CEOs to participate with the IWIB and to contact him for an application. There are committees, task forces and work groups that would welcome their input.

John Rico, Chair of the IWIB spoke to the group giving them some of his background. John also is the Chair of the National Chairs of Workforce Boards as well as the Vice-Chair for the Chicago Chamber of Commerce. He then talked about why he became involved with the State Board and the importance of the private sector to step up to the plate.

**VIII. Employer Spotlight:** Craig Steege, Co-Chair of the Employer & Public Engagement Committee introduced Jessica Hayes with Manpower to speak about a customized training program our Business Team set up to help newly hired workers at Acument gain the skills they needed to be successful on the job. This is a great example of creative solutions and collaboration between Workforce Development, Staffing Agencies and Employers.

**IX. Apprenticeship Earn/Learn Model:** Greg Harle, Training Director for Rockford Area Plumbing and Pipefitting and Refrigeration Joint Apprenticeship Training for Local Union 23 and Rhonda Kliman from the Office of Apprenticeship U.S. Department of Labor spoke to the group about apprenticeship. Greg talked about the 5 year apprenticeship programs that are available and the criteria for those programs. He also described each type of vocation noting the scope of work and types of projects they work on. A plumber doesn't just fix toilets. Apprenticeships are On The Job Training programs for which you start earning income from day 1. Wages are based on a percentage of Journeymen wages and increase every year. 1<sup>st</sup> year apprentices earn \$19.47 per hour plus benefits including insurance and pension. The apprenticeship program combines classroom related instruction along with engaging community service. Upon completion, apprentices will have a Department of Labor Certificate of Completion, industry recognized credentials, 32 credits toward select degree programs and free continuing education and advancement opportunities.

The Building Construction Trades Unions are now accepting applications. It is a competitive process with high expectations for performance.

Ronda Kliman spoke to the group about Register Apprenticeship, noting that it is not only in construction and trades and not only union. There are apprenticeships available in many industries such as Automotive, Health Services, Financial Services, Information Technology and others and many occupations within those industries. The Department of Labor offers many resources for starting an apprenticeship.

**X. Illinois Workforce Partners Award Winner:** Amanda Smith introduced Tamarius Brewer, this year's IWP Award Winner for our Local Workforce Area. Tamarius enrolled in the Youth Elevate Program in 2016 and began attending Career Readiness Classes to gain employability skills and to receive career guidance. Tamarius then completed his GED and began classes in RVC TechWorks program with financial assistance through Elevate. Upon completion of the TechWorks program, Tamarius was placed in On-the-Job Training with Leading Edge Hydraulics. After 7 months of OJT with Leading Edge Hydraulics, Tamarius was offered a full-time position as a Mill Operator at Concentric, a local manufacturing company. Tamarius always received excellent reviews from both the programs and from his employers. Recently, Tamarius bought his first car and his own house. Tamarius will receive recognition in Springfield on September 13<sup>th</sup> for our Local Workforce Area.

**XI. Economy and Jobs Report:** Tom Austin, Labor Market Economist with the Illinois Department of Employment Security updated the group with Labor Force Information for Local Workforce Area 3 comparing it to state and national data. He also covered the population change over time and by age; and educational attainment of those employed.

**XII. What does the data tell us:** In summary, the data shows that our Workforce Area has declining unemployment, fewer workers of prime working age, a large pool of workers with limited education and an aging labor force. Food for thought: What are the opportunities to help employers attract, prepare and retain a skilled workforce?

**XIII. Introduce Board Team/Roles:** Frank Rotello introduced the Workforce Board staff and their roles.

**XIV. Workforce Plan Goals Update:** Frank Rotello informed the group of the regional goals that Karen Brown has made sure we stayed on task with. We have weaved those 6 regional goals into our committee work and continue to focus our efforts on achieving those goals.

**XV. Closing/Thank You!:** Frank thanked all for attending and encouraged everyone to visit The Workforce Connection website to learn more about what we do.

**XVI. Next Meeting:** November 6, 2018

**XVII. Public Comments:** John Rico encouraged all workforce boards to harness the youth to stay in the area.

**XVIII. Adjournment:**

Motion to adjourn at 10:00 am.

<b>Board Motion:</b>	<b>Ott</b>	<b>Second:</b>	<b>Guinane</b>	<b>Approved</b>
<b>CEO Motion:</b>	<b>Boone</b>	<b>Second:</b>	<b>Stephenson</b>	<b>Approved</b>

Respectfully submitted,  
Cathy Cornelius

Date: September 26, 2018

Included in Meeting Packet  
TWC Meeting Minutes (06/05/18 & 08/07/18)  
CEO Meeting Minutes (06/05/18)