



**The Workforce Connection Board and Chief Elected Officials
Meeting Minutes**
**The Workforce Connection Board,
Workforce Board for Boone, Winnebago, and Stephenson Counties**

Meeting: June 7, 2022
Time: 8:00 am
Location: Zoom Virtual Meeting

- Board Members Present: Ben Bernsten; Scott Bloomquist; Karen Brown; Todd Cagnoni; Kathy Crandall; Michelle Cassaro; Pamela Fettes; Sue Fischer; Einar Forsman; Jessica Greenberg; Bonnie Juarez for Bill Grennell; Dr. Daniel Grohens; Bob Guirl; Greg Harle; Vanessa Hughes; Eva Kretschmar; Deb Lindley; Amy Nord; Amy Ott; James Pirages; Dan Ross; Frank Rotello; Dr. Amanda Smith for Dr. Howard Spearman; Mark Williams; Ed Wood; Jeff Zeal
- Board Members Absent: Len Carter; Frank Delarosa; Al Golden; Kim Kuborn; Jordan Priest; Mark Stefanic; Todd Wells;
- CEO Members Present: Joseph Chiarelli; William Hadley; Karl Johnson; Thomas McNamara;
- CEO Members Absent: None
- Board Staff Present: Gina Caronna; Cathy Cornelius; Amanda Sink; Dan White;
- Partner Staff Present: Courtney Geiger; Bonnie Perez; Jessica Story
- Guests Present: None

1. **TWC Board Call to Order:** Board Chair Frank Rotello presided and called the TWC Board to order at 8:00 am.

CEO Call to Order: Mayor McNamara called the CEO meeting to order at 8:00 am.
2. **TWC Board Roll Call:** A roll call was taken and a quorum was present.

CEO Roll Call: A roll call was taken and a quorum present.
3. **Approval of Meeting Minutes – Action Item:**
TWC Board Meeting Minutes – 03/01/2022

TWC Board Motion: Harle Second: Pirages Approved
Abstentions: Scott Bloomquist-did not attend 03/01/2022 meeting

CEO Board Motion: Boone Second: Winnebago Approved

4. Program Approvals/Re-Approvals – TWC Board Action Item:

Chris Oysti presented the list of training programs for re-approval. There were two (2) new programs for approval for Rock Valley College; Hazardous Materials CDL Endorsement and Into to Manufacturing and CNC Machining; one (1) program for approval from Northern Illinois University; Health Sciences General, B.S., and one (1) new program from Rockford Career College; Practical Nursing. These programs were reviewed by the Pathways to Careers committee along with Labor Market Information and outcome data to garner information on program changes, effectiveness, and credentials.

Motion: Harle Second: Cassaro Approved by Roll Call Vote
Abstentions: Dr. Amanda Smith, Rock Valley College employee and Karen Brown, Highland Community College employee.

5. Boone/Winnebago Elevate Youth Services Provider Approval – TWC Board & CEO Action Item

Scott Bloomquist, Chair of the Youth Council informed the group that a request for proposal (RFP) is released every three (3) years by the TWC Board for a service provider for Youth Services for Boone and Winnebago Counties. One proposal was received and reviewed by the Review Team of Karen Brown, Raegan Caras, and Pam Fettes. After completing the process the review team unanimously agreed to recommend the proposal from Goodwill of Northern Illinois and Wisconsin Stateline Area, Inc. to the Youth Council for approval to recommend to the TWC Board and Chief Elected Officials. The Youth Council approved the recommendation at their May 18, 2022 meeting.

Courtney Geiger, Program Director for Elevate Youth Services explained the performance outcomes that are measured.

Motion: To approve the recommendation of the Youth Council to award Goodwill of Northern Illinois and Wisconsin Stateline Area, Inc. as the WIOA Youth Services provider for Boone and Winnebago counties.

TWC Board Motion: Fettes Second: Brown Approved by Roll Call Vote
Abstentions: Dr. Amanda Smith, RVC subcontractor to Goodwill of Northern Illinois; Ben Bernsten, employed by Goodwill of Northern Illinois

CEO Board Motion: Winnebago Second: Boone Approved by Roll Call Vote

6. Sub-Award Renewal Approval – TWC Board & CEO Action Item

Dan White informed the group that the One-Stop Operator procurement is conducted as a Request for Proposal (RFP) under the direction of the TWC Board. The award from the RFP includes an option to renew for up to three additional one-year periods.

The Youth Stephenson procurement is also conducted as a Request for Proposal (RFP) under the direction of the TWC Board. The award from the Youth Stephenson RFP includes an option to renew for up to two additional one-year periods.

Based on the Mid-Year Conversations and the Illinois Department of Commerce & Economic Opportunity programmatic and fiscal monitoring, staff recommends that Goodwill Industries of Northern Illinois, the current One-Stop-Operator be renewed for PY22 (7/1/22-6/30/23) and that the Regional Office of Education #8, the current Youth Stephenson provider be renewed for PY22 (7/1/22-6/30/23).

Motion: To approve renewal of current One-Stop-Operator and Youth Stephenson service provider for Program Year 2022.

TWC Board Motion: Harle Second: Ross Approved by Roll Call Vote
Abstentions: Dr. Amanda Smith, RVC subcontractor to Goodwill of Northern Illinois; Ben Bernsten, employed by Goodwill of Northern Illinois

CEO Board Motion: Boone Second: Winnebago Approved by Roll Call Vote

7. April 2022 Finance Committee

• April 2022 Financial Report

Amy Ott, Finance Committee Chair reviewed the April 2022 Finance Summary Report noting that Adult & Dislocated Worker Training Expenditures were at 65%, well above the 50% requirement. Youth Work-Based Learning spending requirement was at 22%, above the 20% requirement. Training Obligations for Combined Adult & Dislocated Workers and Youth Training costs are over in certain areas and funds will continue to be obligated for Dislocated Worker activities. Subrecipient spending for the Boone/Winnebago County Youth Services and the One-Stop Operator & Career Services were above the reasonable spending requirement. The Elevate Stephenson Youth Services and AAR Aircraft Services were slightly below and are expected to meet the goal by the end of the program year. The Overall Actual Costs & Obligations finds the Adult and Youth above the reasonable spending threshold with Dislocated Worker lagging behind and this will adjust with the Budget Modification. Participant Service Levels shows the number of people being served in relation to the goals.

• PY2021 Budget Modification – TWC Board & CEO Action Item

Amy Ott presented the mid-year budget modification and explained the changes that will be made and have been approved by the Finance Committee. This is to account for actual year-to-date activity and redistribute unused dollars to best utilize the resources.

TWC Board Motion: Harle Second: Pirages Approved by Roll Call Vote

CEO Board Motion: Boone Second: Winnebago Approved by Roll Call Vote

• PY2022 Preliminary Budget – TWC Board & CEO Action Item

Each year, a preliminary budget is developed and includes the WIOA formula allocations, estimated carryover funds, and any additional grant funds for Program Year 2022 (PY22), our three-county area received a decrease in WIOA formula funds of \$611,013. Projected carryover is estimated to be reduced by over \$500,000. \$200,000 of administrative funds will be reprogrammed to help offset the reductions along with reduced carryover into the next program year. A summary of PY22 Budget Modification Funding Sources and Planned Expenditures compared to the Current Budget was presented.

Motion: To approve the PY22 Preliminary Budget as presented which includes the PY2022 Formula Allocations, the estimated carryover formula funds and the other grants, and funding levels for 3 subawards.

TWC Board Motion: Cassaro Second: Fettes Approved by Roll Call vote
Abstentions: Dr. Amanda Smith, Rock Valley College employee; Ben Bernsten, Goodwill of Northern Illinois, subaward recipient.

CEO Board Motion: Winnebago Second: Boone Approved by Roll Call vote

8. **Regional and Local Plan Required Revision – TWC Board & CEO Action Item**

Gina Caronna and Amanda Sink presented the group with the required and suggested revisions to the Regional and Local Plans as directed by the WIOA Interagency Technical Assistance Team.

These revisions include:

- Data and Labor Market Information, including more detailed demographics data, literacy levels, retention rates, and layoffs;
- Removal of written support for the hemp industry due to the federal law on marijuana and DOL position;
- Regional Sector Partnerships;
- Outreach and recruitment strategies;
- Additional regional strategies to address equity through data;
- Title II work around returning citizens;
- Metrics on the Community Navigator role;
- And technical changes.

Revisions to the Local Plan include:

- Adding in IDES data on Women and Minorities in the Illinois Labor Force;
- And technical changes.

Gina pointed out that it was decided to address both the required and the suggested revisions.

TWC Board Motion: Fettes Second: Brown Approved by Roll Call vote

CEO Board Motion: Boone Second: Winnebago Approved by Roll Call vote

9. **Spotlights**

- **Employer and Employee – Rogers Precision Machining**

A video was shared that showed the collaboration and impact of The Workforce Connection with employers. Two participants were placed in On-The-Job Training with Rogers Precision Machining.

- Mark Williams, Executive Director of Greater Freeport Partnership (GFP) shared how the organization was established in 2018 with the merger of four agencies in Stephenson County to provide seamless operation and a strategic plan that is aligned. Mark explained some of the issues that are currently being addressed in Freeport and Stephenson County. GFP strives to find solutions to these issues and tries to bring in the private sector to help address some of these issues.

10. **Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act H.R. 7309**

Frank Rotello, Board Chair shared that the WIOA expired in 2020 and is up for renewal. There is recognition that Workforce Development has been under-funded.

Gina listed the 7 areas that the reauthorization would address. The reauthorization has passed the House but is not expected to be taken up by the Senate until next year.

11. **Chief Elected Official Update**

- **Stephenson County** – County Board Chair, William Hadley shared that Stephenson County was part of an award of \$50 million for infrastructure improvements. The county will use the award to repair McConnell Road. This road is used to travel to Berner Food & Beverage. This employer has 720 employees and has 60-80 semi-trucks per day to their business. This is the worst road in the county. The Mill Race Crossing project is on schedule and the county continues to work with Fehr-Graham.

- **Winnebago County** – County Board Chair, Joseph Chiarelli shared an update on the Landfill Management project to bring Air Liquide to the county. The County Board approved the map amendment on the grounds of the landfill and will reduce emissions of gas and will create 6 new jobs. The county has also been able to attract a multi-hundred square foot facility to Baxter Road because of the infrastructure improvements that were made and the ability of workers in the region. This new facility will provide hundreds of new jobs. The county is now doing its due-diligence for bringing a water system to the area from New Milford and Cherry Valley. The I-39 Corridor has been a big focus. The work of The Workforce Connection is important and a major factor for attraction. The county is moving forward with contract negotiations with unions for the county. Wage disparity is major issue for union workers in the county.
- **Boone County** – County Board Chair, Karl Johnson shared an update of Project Kelly. This is the General Mills project on Route 20 and Irene Road in Belvidere. They will be closing on the property this week. This project will spur development in that area as well.
- **City of Rockford** – Mayor, Thomas McNamara shared that the city council approved a funding agreement for the Convention and Visitors Bureau to continue to market the City of Rockford, the city will host a large Skating Championship to the area which will have a \$2.5 million economic impact and will held in January when hotels and restaurants are at their slowest time. A development agreement has been created to support Think Big, a non-profit organization that promotes minority entrepreneurship and business development. Funding has been approved to support many non-profit organizations throughout the city. Reconstruction of Auburn Street has been added to the comprehensive plan and is expected to be funded at \$30-\$40 million. Lastly, the city has accepted two grants to support the Crisis Code Response Team and Mental Health Board with fire department innovative dispatching technology and places a nurse in the 911 call center.

12. **Board Chair’s Remarks**

Frank Rotello remarked on how the region’s unemployment rate is higher than the state rate and how it always has been and how the all the stakeholders need to get to the root cause and take action. However, there has been some improvement in job growth of 1% overall and other areas such as manufacturing and leisure and hospitality have seen increases over 7%. Frank revisited the Hallmarks of Excellence which help us stay focused, work together and collaborate. All the good things reported by the CEOs are a good indicator that we, as a region, are starting to step up to the challenges.

13. **Member Comments:**

None

14. **Public Comment:**

None

15. **Adjournment**

TWC Board Motion to adjourn at 9:11

Motion:	Pirages	Second:	Cagnoni	Approved
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CEO Board Motion to adjourn at 9:11

Motion:	Winnebago	Second:	Boone	Approved
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Respectfully submitted,
Cathy Cornelius

Date: September 6, 2022

ITEMS INCLUDED IN THE MEETING PACKET

TWC Board Meeting Minutes 03/01/2022 (Action Item)

CEO Meeting Minutes 03/01/2022 (Action Item)

Program Approvals/Re-approvals (Action Item)
Boone/Winnebago Elevate Youth Services Provider Approval (Action Item)
Sub-Award Renewal Approval (Action Item)
April 2022 Finance Report
PY2021 Budget Modification Approval (Action Item)
PY2022 Preliminary Budget Approval (Action Item)
Regional and Local Plan Required Revisions Approval (Action Item)
