



**The Workforce Connection Board and Chief Elected Officials**  
**Serving Boone, Winnebago, and Stephenson Counties**

**Meeting Date:** September 13, 2022

**Time:** 8:00 am to 10:00 am

**Location:** Riverfront Museum Park – Kresge Hall

**RSVP to:** [ccornelius@theworkforceconnection.org](mailto:ccornelius@theworkforceconnection.org) or 815-395-6638

*Mission Statement: To create a competitive, skilled and educated workforce by providing a system for individuals to gain meaningful employment in response to the needs of business.*

**AGENDA**

1. **TWC Board Welcome** **Chair Frank Rotello**
  - Board Meeting Call to Order
  - Board Roll Call
2. **Chief Elected Officials Welcome** **Mayor McNamara**
  - CEO Meeting Call to Order
  - CEO Roll Call
3. **Approval of Meeting Minutes - TWC Board & CEO Action Item**
  - a) TWC Board Meeting Minutes – 06/07/2022
  - b) CEO Meeting Minutes – 06/07/2022
4. **New Slate of Officers/New Board Member Introduction**
5. **Guest Speaker – Keith Barnes, Vice President of Equity and Inclusion** **Karen Brown, Immediate Past Chair**
6. **Collaborating for the Future** **Frank Rotello/Courtney Geiger**
7. **Aligning for 2023 and Beyond** **Frank Rotello**
  - Group Discussion
8. **Closing Remarks** **Frank Rotello/Gina Caronna**
9. **Member Comments**
10. **Public Comment**
11. **Adjournment**

*The Workforce Connection Board is an Equal Opportunity Employer/Program. A sign language interpreter, alternative format materials, or infrared assistive listening devices will be made available with 72-hour notice. Additional reasonable accommodations will be made available upon request.*

*In accordance with the Illinois Open Meeting Act, The Workforce Connection Board may enter into a meeting session closed to the public to discuss issues identified as appropriate for a closed session.*



**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.



*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)*

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# Welcome New Board Members



Michael Dunn, Executive Director  
Region 1 Planning Council

As a Regional Planning Council representing over 700,000 residents in Northern Illinois, we function as this region's Federal Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), Federal Economic Development District (EDD), IGA-created Landbank, and Council of Governments (COG). We are proud of the successful planning, funding, and analytical work that has benefited our community and our local government partners. Our governance framework of regional elected and appointed leaders, in conjunction with our 30 staff members, continue to explore strategies to bring innovation and investment to our future built environment.



Jeff Fahrenwald, VP of Strategic Development & Education  
SupplyCore Inc.

After a 35-year career in higher education, Jeff Fahrenwald, MBA, is professor emeritus of business management at Rockford University. He served for 15 years as the Director of the MBA program and 5 years as the Associate VP of Graduate and Community Education. He has also held leadership positions in numerous for profit and not-for-profit organizations and has consulted for and trainer for 100's or organizations, focusing his efforts on Leadership Development and Strategic Planning and Execution.

After retirement from university life, Jeff joined SupplyCore in 2017 as Vice President of Strategy Realization. In this role, Jeff is responsible for working with the entire senior leadership team to develop and guide the strategic direction of SupplyCore Affiliates.

In 2014, the Rockford Area Chamber of Commerce recognized Jeff, for his many contributions to his local community, as the 2014 Citizen of the Year. He also was recognized as a Person You Should Know, and received Crusader Community Health's Spirit of Caring Award. He has an MBA from Eastern Illinois University and additional post-graduate coursework from the University of Nebraska





George Gaulrapp, External Affairs Manager  
ComEd, An Excelon Company

Senior Executive with over 25 years of experience. George offers a unique blend of business, financial, sales and local government experience. Expertise in management and sales, fiscal management, project management, staff development, relationship management, and business development.



Dr. Sheila Hill, President/CEO  
Hill & Hill Enterprises, Inc.

Dr. Sheila Hill is a Rockford native passionate about entrepreneurial engagement, strategic planning, community engagement, and God's people.

She is currently the President of Hill and Hill Enterprises Inc. providing residential and commercial property management and maintenance services. She is the Co-Founder of Think Big Corporation, a non-profit entrepreneur accelerator center providing business development and resources for minority and women-owned businesses. Dr. Hill is also the Co-Pastor at the Park Church, where she helps people meet God and discover His purpose for their lives.

Dr. Hill has volunteered on various boards, including Crusader Clinic Board of Directors, Northern Illinois Minority Companies Association, Rockford Chamber of Commerce Minority Business Council, Bridge Ministries Executive Board, Rockford MELD, and the Washington Park Christian Church Executive Board. She has served in Nairobi, Kenya, as an international speaker and instructor, where she trained 5000+ entrepreneurs and leaders.

Dr. Hill was recognized by the Illinois Public Health Association and presented the Young Worker Award for developing an innovative program for grassroots community-based groups and the faith-based community, to work on violence prevention and health issues.

As a businesswoman with over 25+ years of experience, Dr. Hill's love for business drives her to mentor women in leadership, business, and personal development.



**Dr. Brant Hulsebus, Owner**  
**Hulsebus Rockford Chiropractic**

Dr. Brant Hulsebus is a third-generation Chiropractor and Palmer graduate. He graduated in 2002 from Palmer College of Chiropractic with a BS and DC degree and joined the practice in 2002. He is a member of the International Chiropractor Association, a Fellow of the ICA, previously Legislative & Medicare Chairman, and currently the Illinois delegate, member, and past officer of the Illinois Prairie State Chiropractic Associate, Certified in the [Webster Technique](#).

Currently, Dr. Hulsebus is the Team Chiropractor for the Rockford IceHogs since 2004 and is a member of the Professional Hockey Chiropractic Society. His many awards include:

- 2021 winner of the Palmer College Bright Beacon Award
- 2022 winner of the ICA Legislative Leadership Award, proudly named the “Bob Hulsebus” award after his grandfather
- Previously Top 40 Leaders in Rockford under 40
- Best Chiropractor in Rockford 2009, 2010 by RRStar

Additional Degrees Held include:

- LCP Degree (Chiropractic Philosophy)
- CCWP Degree (Certified in [Wellness](#))

Locally, he is a founding member of Next Rockford, a member of Rockford Cosmopolitan Club, and serves the Rockford Academy. Dr. Hulsebus works with students, and it is not uncommon to see students with him. He goes to the local high schools to teach neurology and health. He hosts interns both on the undergraduate level and the Chiropractic Schools. Has been a speaker at various Illinois Prairie State Chiropractic, International Chiropractors and Pi house in Davenport and has helped to create a track to help Chiropractic students start at Rock Valley College, then enter Palmer College of Chiropractic.

Dr. Hulsebus became a Chiropractor to follow in his father’s and grandfather’s footsteps. Since growing up as the son and grandson of chiropractors, he heard many stories of success. It was these stories that inspired him to continue the legacy. Because of the success of the previous generations, today, the practice is run with time-proven methods.



**Jim Knutson, Risk Manager & HR Director**  
**Aircraft Gear Corporation**

Jim Knutson has been the Risk Manager and Human Resources Director of Aircraft Gear Corporation in Rockford, Illinois, a manufacturer of components for the aviation and auto industries, since 1989. He is responsible for all corporate risk management, compensation, and benefit programs. Jim is a member of a

number of business groups working on health care payment reform, a member of the Winnebago County, Illinois Crime Commission, and a board member and immediate past chair of the Rockford Regional Health Council. He helped develop a health plan for smaller employers addressing cost and quality concerns. Jim received his bachelor's degree from Marquette University and his law degree from Northern Illinois University.

Jim has worked with the Winnebago County Sheriff's department to place graduates of the CNC machining program, has been on the State of Illinois Insurance Commission Working Group to revise the standard application for medical insurance, and is a member of the steering committee of The Illinois State Chamber of Commerce Health Council. He has testified before the joint state legislative committee on exchanges and presented before diverse groups including The Institute of Medicine, Captive Live conferences, and Robert Wood Johnson Foundation-sponsored events.



[Kris Machajewski, President & CEO](#)  
[YWCA Literacy Council](#)

Accomplished, results-driven CEO leading a local association of the 16th largest nonprofit in the U.S. Consistent successes in streamlining operations that drive growth and efficiency while increasing accountability and internal controls. Highly regarded as a progressive collaborator, strategic thinker, and pivotal change agent with solid leadership, communication, and interpersonal skills to interact with and establish rapport with all levels of staff, management, legislators, and community leaders.



[Matt Montalbano, Senior Vice President-Branch Manager](#)  
[RBG Wealth Management](#)

Our team provides wealth management strategies to families and corporate executives throughout the United States. We have a niche working with retail executives.

Our main goal is to build a long-lasting relationship with our clients through trust, integrity and meaningful communication. We offer portfolio management, asset allocation, stock options services, restricted stock strategies, deferred compensation and retirement plans. We view ourselves as multi-faceted wealth managers in reviewing all of our client's assets - whether directly held with us or not. We have the ability to create custom portfolios for clients. Our practice is primarily advisory-based.

I have passed the Series 7, 9, 10, 31, 63 and 65 securities exams. I hold an insurance and annuity license.

I have 25 years of experience, and our clients can benefit from having an advisor they can count on being around for a long time.



Jamie Proctor, General Manager  
Americold Logistics, LLC

Jamie joins us from Americold where she spent the last 26 years, most recently as General Manager for the two Belvidere locations. Her most recent accomplishments include leading the development of a Women's Leadership Mentoring Program and established and led a global team to validate, define and launch the program for their Center of Excellence sites. Along with this, she has extensive experience leading employee development processes and programs, employee engagement, and community initiatives to continue building strong partner relationships across organizations.

Outside of work, Jamie spends her free time with her husband of 33 years, and their two daughters who are both nurses, and her 4-year-old grandson (with a granddaughter due in March).



Casey Schwebke, Operations Manager  
Swebco Manufacturing Inc.  
President of the Rock River Valley Tooling & Machining Association (RRVTMA)

Born and raised in Boone County. Casey attended the University of Wisconsin Stout and graduated with a bachelor's degree in Business Administration and a minor in Industrial Management. Casey is a third-generation owner of Swebco Manufacturing. Swebco began its journey in 1979 and has earned a solid reputation as a precision machine shop for a broad base of commercial and industrial manufacturers.

Casey became involved in the Rock River Valley Tooling and Machining Association and shortly after in 2010 he was asked to Join their board of directors where he became involved in their apprenticeship program

which is one of the largest Manufacturing apprenticeships in the US. Casey took over as President of the RRVMTA in 2021 and is continuing to push for training and apprenticeships in manufacturing.

In his off-time Casey enjoys spending time with his wife and three children and can often be found up north snowmobiling, playing hockey, or spending time with his family and friends.



Juan Tapia, VP of Human Resources  
Berner Food & Beverage, LLC

A Human Resource executive with over 20 years of experience, Juan brings a wealth of knowledge to his new position with Berner Foods. Juan has experience with Private Equity and Food Manufacturing supporting multi-site organizations across North America and Latin America. Strong experience with public and privately held manufacturing organizations, private equity, business integrations, culture change, talent management (acquisition, development, and succession), organization design and restructuring, salary and bonus compensation programs, benefits design and cost management, safety, workers compensation, and employee relations practices in organized and union-free operations. Juan Holds a bachelor's degree from the University of Illinois (Chicago) and in his spare time he enjoys relaxing on the golf course.

## **Thank you for Serving**

**Fred Delarosa, Embassy Suites – since 2019**  
**William Grennell, The Literacy Council – 2019**  
**Jordan Priest, 617 Enterprises – 2016**  
**Craig Steege, Rasmussen University – 2013**  
**Mark Stefanic, SupplyCore, Inc. – 2004**  
**Ed Wood, Berner Food & Beverage, LLC – 2019**

*The Workforce Connection Board and Chief Elected Officials  
thank you for your continued support.*

**Thank you to our Sponsors!**



# Guest Speaker:

## Keith R. Barnes



Keith started his appointment as the inaugural Vice President of Equity and Inclusion with Rock Valley College in June 2021. He previously served as the Executive Director for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion with Pikes Peak Community College in Colorado Springs, CO from August 2016 to June 2021. PPCC was a recipient of the Higher Education Excellence in Diversity (HEED) Award from 2018 to 2021. Keith served as the Coordinator, Access, Equity, and Diversity with Kishwaukee College in Malta, IL from September 2007 to March 2016. Keith has been an active member of the National Association of Diversity Officers in Higher Education (NADOHE) since January 2014, and he served as the Chapter President for the Rocky Mountain Association of Diversity Officers in Higher Education (RMADOHE) for the Fiscal Year 2021. He was also a member of the National Conference on Race and Ethnicity in American Higher Education (NCORE) National Advisory Council from 2014 to 2018. Keith is a current and founding member of the Illinois Community College Diversity Commission. He was a founding member of the Colorado Community College System (CCCS) Equity and Inclusion Council. He received his ADA Coordinator Training Certification from the University of Missouri and the Great Plains ADA Center in April of 2016, and he was certified as an Intercultural Development Inventory Qualified Administrator in March 2022. Keith is a life member of Alpha Phi Alpha, Fraternity, Inc., and he founded Joshua Bee, LLC Consulting based in Denver, CO to provide training, consulting, and lectures/presentations on a variety of topics pertaining to diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Joshua Bee was named after his son, Joshua Barnes, who passed away on October 24, 2011, after a premature birth. Keith is married to Dr. Teresa Barnes, and they reside in Boone County, Illinois with their nine-year old daughter, India Barnes.