Indiana State Workforce Development Board (SWDB)
Meeting Minutes

Date: Thursday, July 16, 2026
Time: 10:00 AM-12:00 PM (ET)
Location: MADE @ Plainfield, 1610 Reeves Road, Plainfield, IN 46168

I. Welcome, Call to Order, and Roll Call

The State Workforce Development Board (SWDB) meeting called to order by Chair Natalie Carroll at 10:08 AM ET at MADE @ Plainfield with Chair Natalie Carroll presiding. A quorum was present.

Roll call included:

Present: SWDB Chair Natalie Carroll, Rep. Bob Behning, Jeff Bryant, Penny Callaway, Makenzie Coulter, Darrek Davis, Mayor Mary K. Ferdon, Brent Fye, Commissioner Jeannine Gray, Shawn Holm-Hensen, Rob Keisling, Paul Ketcham (proxy for Governor's designee, Dr. Katie Jenner), Theresa Koleszar, Lara Pastore, Sen. Jeff Raatz, Paul Perkins, Brenda Reetz, Kate Shelby, Tony Vespa

Remote: Rebecca Schroeder

SWDB Staff: Jacob Harkin

II. Member Self-Introductions and Objectives (First Time Attendees)

Chair Carroll welcomed the Board and introduced new board member, Jeff Bryant, to replace Chuck Goodrich who has now been appointed as Secretary of Commerce. Rep. Bob Behning and Paul Perkins also provided remarks as first time attendees. Chair Carroll invited Kate Shelby, Commissioner of Department of Workforce Development (DWD), to share the list of recent Board member resignations. This included Chuck Goodrich, Laura Starks, and Sarah Harrison. Chair Carroll then invited MADE @ Plainfield Executive Director, Brandy Wethington, to speak about the history of their facilities, and how they are celebrating their 5-year anniversary.

III. Action Items: SWDB Business

Chair Carroll introduced a list of procedural action items for the Board. This included approval of minutes from the May 20 meeting, setting a date for the next SWDB meeting, and establishing a meeting schedule for 2027.

For the approval of the May 20 meeting minutes, it was discovered that the draft version did not have “Minutes” at the top of the document by Chair Carroll. There were no other recommendations for the May 20 Meeting Minutes.

Motion to Approve the May 20 meeting minutes: Brenda Reetz moved to approve with the addition of “minutes” to header of document.

Second: Kate Shelby seconded the motion.

Outcome: Motion passed unanimously.

Following the vote, there was discussion of scheduling the next meeting date. Kate Shelby proposed October 7th, 2026. Some board members indicated potential conflicts on that date. Members were reminded that if they cannot physically join, there are virtual attendance options available.

Motion to Approve October 7 as the next meeting date: Makenzie Coulter moved to approve.

Second: Penny Callaway seconded the motion.

Outcome: Motion passed unanimously.

Lastly, to determine the frequency of meetings in 2027, Kate Shelby proposed every third Wednesday in the second month of each quarter. For example, the meeting dates would be the third Wednesday in February, May, August, and late October/early November. The locations of future meetings will remain in central Indiana.

Motion to Approve the frequency of future meetings: Commissioner Jeannine Gray moved to approve.

Second: Brenda Reetz seconded the motion.

Outcome: Motion passed unanimously.

Follow-Up Item: Chair Carroll stated that if a board member is interested in hosting a SWDB meeting at their organization’s facilities, to contact the SWDB Director.

IV. Board Officers and Committees

Due to member vacancies, it was decided to postpone the election of a Vice Chair and appointments to the Executive Committee. Kate Shelby explained the roles and responsibilities of the Vice Chair and Executive Committees. Members interested in serving as Vice Chair or in being appointed to the Executive Committee were advised by the Chair to express their interest via email to the SWDB Director by end of July.

No action taken.

V. Overview of Workforce Pell Program

Chair Carroll introduced Lara Pastore, Board member and Associate Chief of Talent Development at DWD, and Brooke Kile, Senior Associate Commissioner for Business Solutions, Indiana Commission for Higher Education to co-present on the Workforce Pell Program. Workforce Pell is a program designed to provide financial aid and training opportunities for individuals who are interested in high-wage paying jobs that are in-demand. The main components for Workforce Pell are student eligibility through FAFSA, institution eligibility, and whether programs meet all the necessary criteria.

Follow Up Item: Board members were invited to share comments and questions to the SWDB Director via email. Questions will be addressed at the next SWDB meeting.

VI. Feedback Discussion on State-Funded Workforce Programs

Board members were asked to provide feedback on active state funded workforce programs. Kate Shelby opened this feedback session by addressing that Jobs for America's Graduates (JAG) is not an active workforce program. Kate Shelby then re-introduced Lara Pastore to review other DWD state funded workforce programs.

Lara Pastore discussed Power Up Indiana and explained it is a pilot program in its first-year of implementation. Power Up recognizes and rewards companies that train, retain, and advance talent from within and builds a culture of lifelong learning across the state. She also spoke about the Employer Training Grant (ETG) which, similar to Power Up Indiana, reimburses costs for upskilling employees in high-demand positions within six key industry sectors including advanced manufacturing, agriculture, building and construction, health and life sciences, technology and business services, and transportation and logistics.

Pastore finished her summary of programs with the Workforce Ready Grant (WRG). WRG is a grant program that covers the tuition and fees of qualifying certificate programs across Indiana. The grant provides non-credit based short-term career aligned training for adults looking to enter the workforce upon completion.

Follow-Up Items: Makenzie Coulter requested that the materials be sent to members a week in advance of the meeting, and that resources display challenges and general feedback from applicants and businesses. Board members were advised to send questions or feedback about Power Up Indiana and ETG to the SWDB Director via email.

VII. Closing Remarks and Adjournment

Chair Carroll thanked the Board and reminded them to share location suggestions and program feedback and questions to the SWDB Director.

Motion to Approve: Rob Keisling moved to adjourn the meeting.

Second: Kate Shelby seconded the motion.

Outcome: Motion passed unanimously.

Chair Carroll adjourned the meeting at 11:54 AM.