

**NORTHWEST INDIANA WORKFORCE BOARD MINUTES**  
**Center of Workforce Innovations**  
**November 14, 2024**

***Present:***

Karen Kopka, Audra Peterson, Adrienne Carrol, Aco Sikoski, Lori Tubbs, Liz Negron-Haniford, George Douglas, Adam Collins, Justin Mount, Martina Tovar, Mikie Stogsdill

***Absent/Proxy:*** Jim Clarida, Anna Ortega, Chris Bebee, Kevin Comerford, Debi Baughman

***Staff:***

Lisa Daugherty, Erin Sizemore, Tammy Stump, Kathy Neary, Jen Grabowski

***Guests:***

**CALL TO ORDER**

Karen Kopka called the meeting to order.

**Consent Agenda**

Mrs. Kopka asked the Board Members to review the items on the consent agenda.

**Motion:** A motion was made by Aco Sikoski and seconded by Audra Peterson to accept the consent agenda as presented. All were in favor. **The motion passed.**

Ms. Daugherty welcomed new member Mikie Stogsdill to the meeting.

**1. Board Business**

Dashboard/Performance

Ms. Neary highlighted some changes that have been made to the report. Based on a request, this report was changed to indicate program year. Prior program year versus current program year to date. This report reflects the year to date from July 1<sup>st</sup> to the end of October and then also a reflection of the previous year.

**Goal #1 Increase skills of current workforce to align with economic development strategies and key industry clusters** Team leads collaborated on ways to provide clientele with more direct, streamlined engagement. Adult Ed is exploring bringing services to Demotte.

**Goal #2 Improve employer access to qualified workers and awareness of training resources:** Monthly virtual Community Partner Learning Sessions have been instrumental to educate wrap around services.

**Goal #3 Ensure Youth in NWI are positioned for continued education/learning and workforce success:** Governors Work Ethic Certificate is being rolled out for the 2024-25 school year. Seniors that earn this certificate will be able to access statewide employer support towards securing employment opportunities.

**Goal #4- Encourage and support an entrepreneurial spirit:** New partnerships with the Connection Center and St. Joseph College to expand Adult Ed training and services in southern/rural area.

**Goal #5 Assure compliance and efficient operations of a workforce development system:** Completed the approval of Gary WorkOne as a comprehensive site to better serve the community.

#### Workforce Division Performance Negotiation Levels

Every 2 years all the regions in the state negotiate with DWD on where they think they will fall in performance. DWD negotiates with DOL to get the number in the document that Ms. Sizemore provided. The state has performance indicator goals. Employment 2Q, Employment 4Q, Median Earnings, Credential Rate and MSG. within those indicators it gets broken down between Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth and Wagner Peyser.

#### JAG National Career Development Conference

Ms. Stump spoke about the Regional Career Development Conference that will be hosted at the JW Marriott Hotel in Indianapolis April 24<sup>th</sup>-26<sup>th</sup> 2025. Typically, withing our budget, we are able to send 2-3 students. Because the conference is being held in Indianapolis this year DWD would like for us to send as many as possible. We are targeting about 10 individual participants. Ms. Stump asked the board if anyone would be interested in becoming a sponsor. The approximate cost would be \$900 per student. Which would include transportation, hotel accommodations and the conference.

#### **1. Old Business**

No old business to report on.

#### **2. Reports**

##### Youth Employment Council

Ms. Stump talked about the development of subcommittees for some of the goals which include credentials that are valued by the employers and integrating work-based learning into career pathways as well as aligning ourselves with the new graduation requirements. Also bridging the gap for seniors that don't have a plan after graduation.

##### President's Report

Ms. Daugherty gave an update on the Michigan City Hub project. We now have a signed MOU with the City of Michigan City to go in and assess the building. Ms. Daugherty showed the Board the renderings. She also stated the Michigan City redevelopment approved a \$1.2 million dollar investment which we are using for planning purposes right now. We have been allotted 4 million in Readi 2.0 dollars but that's not finalized yet. With that said in order to receive the Readi 2.0 funds we have to have spent 65% of 1.0. We are looking at potentially 2.0 dollars flowing by late first quarter, early second quarter of 2025. On the WorkOne side, the Portage office is scheduled to close after the first of the year. Employees will start vacating and moving to the other office spaces in December. Hammond is still on schedule to be vacated by the end of December and be in the new location which is in Downtown Hammond.

#### Save the Dates

**NWIWB meeting January 16,2025**

#### **ADJOURN**

Mrs. Kopka adjourned the meeting.

Jen Grabowski, Recording Secretary