



WDB/LEO Joint Meeting
Michigan Works! West Central
 Wednesday, September 3, 2025

MINUTES

LEO Board Members *(5 Makes Quorum)*

Present	Virtual	Absent
Fred Guenther Jody Hartley Joel McCormick Paul Mellema Jamie Russell Lori Tubbergen Clark		Jack Bulger Mark Gregory

WDB Board Members *(12 Makes Quorum)*

Present	Virtual	Absent
Mike Adams Karen Huisman (D. Eichinger) Larry Emig Jason Finch Eric Gustad Lindsay Hager Dave Hamelund Renee Kline-Garstka Jami Klomp Don Nolan Kelly Rider Rebecca Robeck Tracie Ruppert/Dani Craft Tracy Sanchez Jennifer Schmidt Jesica Scytke Deborah Smith-Olson		Sheila Brabaw Stephanie Frees Nancy Griffin Anna Hutchinson Dan Kosheba Cheray LaRoue Dawn Riley Mary Trucks

Guests, Lindsey Lassanske (DHHS Director of Lake, Newaygo and Oceana), Elizabeth McInnis

Michigan Works! West Central Staff, Shelly Keene, Toni Davis, Jonathan Eppley, Jeff Lodholtz, Chelsea Augustson, Chad Marr, Kelly Miller, Julie Sanders, Kimberly Tagliareni, Kevin Welch, Zachary Fredrick

1. **Call to Order** at 12:30 p.m. by LEO Jody Hartley
2. **Public Comment** – No public Comments

3. Consent Agenda-Handout-Action Items

- a. Financial Report - Handout (*Goldenrod*)
- b. Minutes from June 4, 2025, meeting (Emailed)

Items were motioned for approval by Paul Mellema, LEO; supported by Jamie Russell, WDB; motion was approved by WDB and LEO.

4. Mecosta County Success Story

- A. Shelly Keene introduced, Zachary Fredrick, Talent Specialists from Mecosta County Michigan Works! West Central service center.
- B. Fredrick shared a successful WIOA OSY client, Elizabeth McInnis, who received CNA funding through WIOA/OSY grant. McInnis was very successful at completing the Nurse Assistant Certification and is gainfully employed fulltime at the Brooks of Big Rapids. McInnis shared Fredrick had encouraged her, and she is very thankful for all that Michigan Works! West Central has done for her and the opportunity she was given.
- C. Fredrick and McInnis, left the meeting at approximately 12:45 p.m.

5. Plans/Modifications– Handout (Blue) - Actions Item

- a. Going PRO Talent Fund
 - 1. Going PRO Talent Fund Program Administration Fiscal Year (FY) 2025 Cycle 2, the period of July 1, 2025, through Dec. 31, 2026 (PI 25-25) – **Action – Signature Required**
 - b. Other
 - 2. MWA Apprenticeship Success Coordinators (ASCs) and MWA Registered Apprenticeship Program (RAP) Intermediary Functions (MWA ASC and MWA RAP Intermediary Functions) (Draft PI 25-xx) – **Action – Signatures Required**
 - 3. Regional Innovation Project – (Draft PI 25-xx) – **Action _ Signature Required**
 - 4. National Farmworker Jobs Program (NFJP) – (Draft 25-xx) – **Action – Signatures Required**
- Items were motioned for approval by Jason Finch, WDB; supported by Mike Adams, WDB; motion was approved by WDB and LEO.**

6. Approval of Personnel Committee Recommendations – Action Item

Full Board approved the recommendation as presented.

Items were motioned for approval by Larry Emig, WDB; supported by Jason Finch, WDB; motion was approved by WDB and LEO.

7. WIOA Performance

- a. PY 2024 – July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2025 (page 5-6)
 - 1. Page 5 is the Statewide Data
 - 2. Page 6 is the Local data that was submitted to USDOL

8. Fraud Policy

- Starts on page 7 and goes through page 10
- We are required to provide the fraud policy to all staff and board members annually.
- Signature sheet on page 11 – please sign and leave on the table for Kelly to collect

9. Conflict of Interest

- Page 13 – starts the policy

- Page 14 – signature sheet – please complete the form and leave it on the table for Kelly to collect

10. Shining Star Award

Each year, the Michigan Works! Association recognizes a staff person from each of the Michigan Works! agencies across the state. These individuals are those who go above and beyond their daily duties to make a difference. This year, the team at Michigan Works! West Central has selected Andrew Middleton, Newaygo County Talent Specialist who has stepped out of their comfort zone, become a leader among our frontline staff and strengthened his value to the organization.

His calm demeanor and thorough knowledge of our programs and services have made him one of the go-to Talent Specialists for those who have questions. What's more, he regularly is asking the right questions to managers on behalf of his coworkers to make sure everyone is sharing the same information and able to provide the best services possible to our participants.

11. Federal & State Budget Updates

Federal Budget

- The house released their version of the budget last week – 28 percent cut to the USDOL budget. The bill targets specific formula funding programs. – WOIA youth, Job Corp, NFJP are the main programs that they are proposing cuts to.
- The justification is eliminating duplicative programs.

State Budget

- The house is proposing a 46 percent cut to Labor & Economic Opportunity/MEDC budget in comparison to the FY 25 budget.
- For Michigan Works! the key programs that have been impacted by the house budget are Jobs for Michigan's Graduates, Barrier Removal Employment Success, Apprenticeships and Going PRO Talent Fund.
 - The house has completely removed all four of the programs from their proposed budget.
- What does that mean for us?
 - Our local strategy is to do advocacy and reach out to both the house and the senate to try to push going pro talent fund and apprenticeship funding.
 - In addition to the GPTF and Apprenticeship programs, we will be sending additional information asking for support of both the BRES program and the JMG program.
- For Going PRO Talent Fund – the next application period is scheduled to open on October 1- the last communication with the State – nothing was mentioned about the budget. The state tends to act like business is as usual and ignore the fact that there is potential for a significant cut in the funding, if any is received at this time. At this time, we will not be scheduling orientation meetings for employers until we have a better understanding of what the state has planned.

Keene asked the board if they have a relationship with any of the Representatives or Senators in our region to please reach out to them, advocate for workforce development funding. If you need talking points, the letter that we have in the packet would be a great reference

12. Action Planning Update

In your packet on page 15, you'll see information about our most recent virtual board academy session, which coincides with our Image/Visibility priority. Chelsea and Angie from OS Reentry Services gave an overview of everything their program helps returning citizens with across all 13 counties of Prosperity Region 4.

The next board academy will be held at noon on Oct. 1; the topic will be communications. Board academy sessions and topics will be sent out in December with the 2026, board schedule.

Also, on this page you will see information about our recent 20 Under 30 award luncheon, which was held July 25, in Ludington. Half of this year's 20 Under 30 winners attended the event to receive their awards, certificates and tributes from local legislators.

One of this year's winners, Jack Boitel from WSCC, gave a speech encouraging all the young adults in the room to reach high and strive for success. There also were about 10 youth participants who attended the event.

Youth Assistant Manager Vanessa Wolgamott recognized our youth participants and shared some highlights from the JMG program, with the goal of inspiring the next generation of workforce to achieve their career goals.

The whole event falls under the reaching out to the next generation of workforce strategic goal. We specifically invite young adults enrolled in our programs to attend the event to motivate them and encourage them to someday be in the pages of our 20 Under 30 magazine.

13. Michigan Works! West Central Organizational Updates

a. Executive Director, Shelly Keene

- Next week is the Michigan Works! Association annual conference. Our team submitted five different workshop proposals for an opportunity to present, and every one we submitted was selected. We have three workshops that our staff will be doing by themselves, we have one where we partnered up with another Michigan Works! agency and then we have one that we will be presenting with the state.
- Despite all of the challenges we are experiencing with funding, July 1, we were able to release the waitlist and at this time, we no longer have a waitlist, so staff have been busy getting individuals enrolled and signed up for training opportunities.

b. Communications Report, Jonathan Eppley

- You may have noticed when you walked into the conference room the posterboard highlighting the employer of the month. This is a new service we started in June, during the same week of our last board meeting.
- The business services team has been collecting survey responses to highlight area employers in our six counties that we work with to showcase how they support their employees, give back to the community, provide stable jobs and how they work with MWWC.
- We started this in June, and so far have highlighted Reed City Group, Arbore Farms, FloraCraft and Horizon Bank.

- The stories on the posterboards are shared on our website, on our social media pages and on our lobby slideshows. We also are sure to print an extra posterboard for the employer to proudly display at their business. Be sure to check out this month's winner before you leave.
- If you'd like more information about our new employer of the month initiative, talk to your business services rep.

c. Business Services Report

1. Kevin Welch

Summer Job Fairs – Welch highlighted the successful job fairs held throughout our six-county region this summer, emphasizing the exceptional turnout and engagement from both employers and job seekers.

SS-ELC Update – Welch also provided an encouraging update on SS-ELC, celebrating the continued impact of the program. He highlighted that we have our final police academy trainee set to attend Kirtland Community College, proudly sponsored by the Lake County Sheriff's Office.

d. OS Reentry Services, Chelsea Augustson

Chelsea thanked everyone who attended the OS Virtual Board Academy, and hoped they found it beneficial and was able to learn and understand more about the Offender Success program.

Chelsea also reported outstanding results obtained with the 4th Annual Reentry United Conference. This event was a sold-out event for the 4th year in a row. There were 12 breakout sessions throughout the day focusing on Pre-Reentry. She is excited for the next year, with a new location being at Allendale Grand Valley.

3rd Quarter, Reentry statis

-Economic Stability	71 Prob / 148 Parole
-Health & Behavioral Health	501 Prob / 105 Parole
-Residential Stability	3ppl 58days / 314ppl 6,364days
-Social Supports	394 Prob / 1,097 Parole

e. Workforce Development Services, Toni Davis

In *Mason County* we had two work experiences finish with Lakeshore Food Club and they hired both for part time positions-one recently graduated from high school and the second starts his senior year at G2S. We did sign a work experience contract with Sandcastles Children's Museum in Ludington. So, we will be placing two youth there in the fall.

In *Oceana County* we had nine youth complete their work experiences. Of the nine four were offered employment upon completion of the work experience. We do have two others who will be starting this fall.

In *Baldwin* we have started going into the school every Tuesday and plan to attend the upcoming Trunk or Treat event to connect with partners and youth.

In *Big Rapids*, the PATH group started to volunteer once a month at the Big Rapids Housing Commission. We are going to very soon begin partnering with Life Resources to ensure our

younger parents are receiving free services and access to baby items they may need. We have started to talk to Big Rapids Virtual School about the school year and how we can work together more.

In *Osceola County* we have had four referrals from Friend of the Court to help non-custodial parents catch up on their child support. Of the four referrals two very quickly obtained employment at a local restaurant.

One of the participants secured employment at a factory earning a sustainable wage. He has nearly paid off outstanding child support and other financial obligations. He also received a bicycle through the BRES program to help him with transportation to and from work.

One participant is pursuing security employment and is actively paying down his child support.

13. Handouts

a. News Clippings

1. Tractor Supply Company breaks ground in Evart
2. Cooking up an expansion to Paris
3. Satisfying the sweet tooth at new store, Candy Lake
4. Timeless Picture Framing expanding into fine art gallery
5. Mackinac Tech. considers Big Rapids location

b. Unemployment

The state level is at 5.4 percent and the national level 4.4 percent.

c. Updated Organizational Chart

14. Next Meeting:

Dec. 3, 2025 – Michigan Works! West Central Newaygo Service Center, 9075 S. Mason Drive.

15. Other Business

16. Adjournment

Jody Hartley, LEO; adjourned meeting at 1:23 p.m.