

**Region 1 Conference Call Minutes**  
**Chief Elected Officials & Regional Workforce Development Board**  
Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act (WIOA)  
“Workforce Partners – Helping Iowa Work”  
[http://www.iowawdb.gov/r1\\_home](http://www.iowawdb.gov/r1_home)

**March 20, 2020**  
**3:00 p.m.**

**CALL TO ORDER**

**1. Welcome – John Beard & Dave Baker**

John Beard, called the joint meeting of the RWDB/CEO Board to order at 3:04 p.m. and welcomed CEO and RWDB members.

**2. Roll Call/ Quorum – Sue Larson (Keystone AEA)**

**CEO Members Present Via Phone:**

John Beard, Jeff Madlom, Steve Doeppke, Dan Byrnes, Dave Baker, David Tilkes

**CEO Members Absent:**

Marty Stanbrough, Roy Buol, Jerry Stevens

**RWDB Present Via Phone:**

Les Askelson, Dan White, Donna Boss, Jayme Kluesner, Lisa Curtin, Ron Axtell, Marla Loecke, Jamie Phipps, Larry Leliefeld,

**RWDB Members Absent:**

Candance Drahn, James Vermazen, David Gaylor, Kathy Gunderson, Caroline Scheidel, Jeanne Helling, Michael Myers, Gissella Aitken-Shadle, Jennalee Pedretti, Josh Pope, Joan Funke, Rhonda Kendrick, Craig Allen

**Others Present:**

Windy Mihm-Herold, Mike Witt, Rachele Howe, Linda Rouse, Sue Larson

**RWDB/CEO BOARD DISCUSSION AND ACTION**

**3. Consider Approval of Agenda – John Beard, CEO Chair & Les Askelson, RWDB Chair**

**4. Required Steps to Become Compliant with WIOA Law as our Existing Region 1 (as outlined in the attached CEO Checklist) or by a Merger with Regions 2 and 7 – John Beard & Dave Baker**

John Beard: Purpose of the meeting is becoming compliant and keeping our region.

Dave Baker: Talked with Corey Eberling from Franklin County at the current district and they had their meeting yesterday. They actually had board members involved in the decision making which was not required. They are seeking to merge into the bigger twenty county group. Rational was kinda two-fold. In that with the money to go around, believe it will be better if centralized. The workforce board will have to take on more of a workload and there didn't seem to be much interest

in that. They will have one bigger entity to work to their advantage. Nobody wants extra duties and meetings. Asked Mike Witt and Linda Rouse to update everyone at the meeting on why we are even considering merging.

Linda Rouse: This is your board's ultimate decision. A couple of points financially, would be the administrative funds won't go far if you do not merge, you have to secure a Fiscal Agent and One-Stop operator down the road. A big thing for Region 2 is that they really don't have an engaged board willing to put in the work needing to be done. If you all combine as a local area you can find high level staff for the board and be engaged with the workforce. Most board members already have full time jobs. You all have a lot of things in common and strategically when the three regions align, you will be able to get amazing things done. Moving in the direction of Regions 2 and 7, the CEOs of both have consulted with WF boards and agreed to move forward with merging. Region 1 can chose to wait a year but then, you will have to start this process all over again. RFPs to service providers begins all over again. If it happens that way then you stay as Region 1 and that other area may not want to allow you to join in as a local area. Not looking at Workforce Centers closing but some small outlying small service centers will be impacted. With the right board in place, you will see the value in smaller communities. More satellite serving a larger area and more funding and program side to go in this direction, not backwards.

John Beard: I'm hearing some really good points. You can accuse me of being a flip flopper, but I've spoken in favor of both scenarios. Ultimate concern to provide the best service we can for the people who need us. We have a meeting on April 28 to make our decision then. Jointing Regions 2 and 7, would allow folks to make their case. Moving that direction with compliance. No danger of getting behind. Good effort going towards compliance. I had the CEO attachment sent out to members to look at the checklist. As I go thru those items, I had conversations with people moving in that direction. We can make our decision at the March 27 meeting. I can see why Region 2 thinks 10% of everyone's budget has to go for administration. If Sue would agree to be our secretary we would be on our way. Developing a shared liability agreement. Finding a Chief Elected Official would be good, but I haven't been on this board long enough to understand this structure.

Dave Baker: Last meeting in Waterloo, I brought 28 E-agreement and bylaws. At that point we were talking about staying in separate region, but we should adopt the same as the other regions. We were well represented by county officials at that meeting. After talking it over, everyone was like it makes sense to have a bigger group to draw from, expertise, etc. There will be changes in current districts and the service provider portion has to go out to RFP regardless of what we do. Do we do two or three of those or just one. Would like to hear from members of the board that participate in meetings. I think we reached consensus. NE and NW Iowa in the same region that got my attention and thought no way. Since then, we have been meeting and getting to know those members from NW Iowa and we have found out that it wasn't all that bad. Waterloo seems to be centrally located and all in agreement. Upper Iowa University lets us meet at their facility. Want to hear from other elected officials we haven't heard from and board members. Do they understand changes are coming regardless if we merge or not. State has pledged One-Stop shops will stay the same and service providers have to be done regionally. Or we are putting federal funds in jeopardy. Talked about location of One-Stop shops and satellites. We want them to stay operational. If we are opposed to merging because of the number of counties that's ok.

Les Askelson: Biggest fear is merging. Need to be brought up to speed and what is being proposed. Biggest concern is fear that Decorah could lose their office and we need to provide the best services to our area clients. How can we be assured of that? This is shared concern by other members and business owners. The delivery and quality of services. Smaller towns have better services.

Dave Baker: Concerns about Decorah are fair and we should talk about that office staying open. Just need a discussion on these matters that are concerning us. I do think we need all the facts out there. Concerns and rumors need to be addressed. If I'm not sure about something I will stick with the current game plan. But if we have assurances, and financially the way to go and have full time staff to run the operation that is where Regions 2 and 7 are – financial strength in numbers that they can't do individually. We have to change what we are doing currently, can't do same old, same old not an option to us.

Rachelle Howe – I do understand changes need to happen. State needs to be in compliance and will work with them. Want to make changes we need. We are here to help. We are ok with the changes. Want customers to have the services when they need it.

Ron Axtell: Some of the concerns in the past are losing local control and afraid of 20 counties and that those decisions will be good for all counties involved. Another concern is the state might say only one provider for this new 20 county region. If there is only one service provider that could make a huge difference. Potentially the four service providers we use now has to be done by July 1. One-Stop operator is a wild card but not needed until December. The budget isn't making a lot of sense right now, seems to expensive. Need facts what exactly things are going to cost. This is a huge decision. Makes good sense to wait until the fall to make an informed decision. Ensure people get quality services they are used to.

Dave Baker: Noted that county officials make the ultimate decision. Financial work needs to be brought forward.

Linda Rouse: Ron made some great points. Only two separate service providers needed. RFP for Youth and Adult Dislocated Workers need to go out soon. Service providers are the team members in our American Job Centers providing jobs for clients. Employer of record does not matter. Those CC will still be receiving training dollars when clients enroll. All of that will still be there. Fiscal agent and service provider cannot be the same that would be out of compliance. Fiscal agent can send money to service providers. Costs associated for clients to go thru the fiscal agent. \$9,000-\$10,000 dollars a year. Board has a lot more responsibilities, the driving workforce for strategies. Think about your board being able to go after more people to help. CEO descriptions are for a high level position with more hours a week, like a full time job. \$20,000-\$30,000 will not be enough for that position. High level functioning engaged board is great because that is what you need. That is not happening now. The longer you put off the vote, the longer it will take to get CEO tasks done. If you don't join now, you can ask to join an area in a year or two but they do not have to take you. You need to get things done and moving forward.

Mike Witt: Appreciate everyone's discussion and service. Information was passed out about budget at the last meeting. Hypotheticals based on what we knew were happening with areas merging for budget dollars. If you stayed the same or merged. Nobody can predict what is happening with federal dollars in the future. IWD closed offices across the state in year's past because of state and federal budgeting. Our director is committed to not closing any offices. Want to relieve everyone's fear of closing centers. We can make more connections across the area, we are committed to that.

Dave Baker: At the last meeting in Waterloo, meeting information with CEO job description was handed out then. Corey Eberling from Franklin County said at the meeting that some of their counties don't participate or come to any meetings. I hope there is some wiggle room on making decisions, etc.

Dan Byrnes: Stated to get some information out before the April 28 meeting and vote. If the RFP needs to go out soon, we need to get that done. Time for us to look at facts and move on.

Linda Rouse: Will scan documents from the Waterloo meeting and send to Sue Larson to send out to all board members on Monday.

Dave Baker: Suggests meeting Friday, March 27 at 3:00 p.m. to do our two meetings. CEO followed by RWDB consultation. Linda will send information to Sue Larson to email out to everyone. State folks pledging Decorah wouldn't be closed and others would remain in place. Other counties feel the same we do about merging and we want this to succeed. 28 E Agreement is for county elected officials to worry about and the bylaws. CEO liability agreement and 28E agreement are the same thing.

#### **FLOOR ITEMS/CLOSURE**

5. Next Meeting Date: Friday, March 27, 2020 @ 3:00 p.m.
  
6. Adjournment  
4:15 p.m.

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Sue Larson  
Keystone AEA