



SWDB BOARD NOTES

Date: 12/5/25

Location: ZOOM

Minutes

Iowa Workforce Development Board Meeting

December 5, 2025

11 am – 12:00 pm

ZOOM

Agenda item 1. Call to Order

Chair Teresa Hovell called to order the meeting of the Iowa Workforce Development Board (the Board) on December 5, 2025, at approximately 11 am.

Agenda item 2. Roll Call

Members in Attendance

1. Laura Book
2. Dawn Driscoll
3. Beth Townsend
4. Stacy Cervenka
5. Brandy McOmber
6. Teresa Hovell
7. Scott Naumann
8. Kelly Barrick
9. Jack Hasken
10. LuAnn Scholbrock
11. Jessica Dunker
12. Brad Elliott
13. Ofelia Rumbo
14. Nick Glew
15. Astra Ferris

16. Charlie Wishman
17. Carrie Duncan
18. Jason Shanks
19. Director MacKenzie Snow

Members Absent

1. Barb Kniff McCulla
2. Scott Naumann
3. Kelly Barrick
4. Brad Elliott
5. Carrie Duncan
6. Tiffany O'Donnell

Shelly Evans called roll and advised Chair Teresa Hovell that quorum was established.

Agenda item 3. Approval of Agenda

Chair Hovell called the next order of business which was the approval of the meeting Agenda for December 5, 2025. The agenda was previously emailed to the Members of the Board.

- ACTION ITEM: Motion to Approve the Agenda for 12/5/25.

LuAnn Scholbrock motioned to approve the Agenda and Jason Shanks seconded the motion. Members of the Board in attendance voted on the motion by voice vote, which carried unanimously.

Agenda item 4. Approval of 8/25/25 Minutes (Attachment 1)

Chair Hovell called the next order of business which was the approval of the meeting Minutes for August 25, 2025. The minutes were previously emailed to the Members of the Board.

- ACTION ITEM: Motion to Approve the Minutes for 8/25/25.

Nick Glew motioned to approve the Minutes and Dawn Driscoll seconded the motion. Members of the Board in attendance voted on the motion by voice vote, which carried unanimously.

Agenda item 5. Welcome by Teresa Hovell, Chair

Chair Hovell welcomes attendees.

- Welcome.
- Introduction of new member Astra Ferris.

Astra Ferris – CEO of Greater Fort Dodge Growth Alliance in Fort Dodge. At this role and big shoes to fill for Dennis Plautz who has been involved in things at the state house for many years. I came from Joplin, MO, and served on the MO state workforce board for 1 ½ years. I am excited to be here. It takes a while to get your head and mind wrapped around WIOA funding and the mechanisms of the organizational flow. I am excited to jump right in to see how I can help. Economic development is the backbone here and something I have been passionate about since 2012 in rural and regional markets. Excited to see what we can do to bolster and help workforce, this board, and to be a part of this team. Thank you for having me.

Teresa Hovell – we are excited to have you on board Astra and looking forward to everything you are going to bring and your participation today and moving forward. Housekeeping reminders on discussions today. If you want to speak please have your camera on and mute so we don't get feedback. We all participated in the committee survey and Michelle can take the lead on this discussion and next steps.

Agenda item 6. Discussion on Proposal for new SWDB Committee Structure by Michelle McNertney, Executive Director of SWDB. (Attachment 2 – Summary of Survey results, Attachment 3 – SWDB Committee Structure Proposal, Attachment 4 – Bylaws – Committees)

Michelle McNertney opened discussions on the committee survey. At the August board meeting we discussed the Committees of the SWDB. During the last legislative session, a change was made to the state code, which, instead of requiring specific committees of the Board, the code now says it is up to the SWDB to determine the committee structure via the Bylaws of the SWDB. We would have the ability to change the committee structure within the Bylaws without having to go through the current legislative process.

A survey was sent to the SWDB members outlining the current structure. Currently eight existing committees. Should we continue with the structure?

- Executive Committee - results show there is strong commitment and support to remain.
- Systems Committee - feedback was split on whether this committee should continue to exist.
- Policies and Practice Committee, which has never met, feedback was split on whether this committee should continue to exist. This committee was previously required under state code.
- Disability Access Committee - has historically been a very strong, active committee, and there are also local disability access committees. Feedback was pretty strong to continue.
- Minority Unemployment and Outreach Committee – mixed feedback.
- Reentry Committee – mixed feedback.
- Iowa Plains Local Workforce Development Area Committee - strong support to continue. This is the local workforce development board for the Iowa Plains Committee, which is the 43 counties from northern to southern border, and sort of west of I-35, for the most part. This committee allows local feedback.

The next question was the proposal to keep the Executive, Iowa Plains, and Disability Access committees and eliminate the five others but combine some. Combine Systems and Policies and Procedures; Barriers to Work that would absorb Reentry, Minority Unemployment and Outreach, and Youth Committees. Strong support.

Digging in deeper there was a description provided for the creation of a System and Policy committee. 70% responses agree or strongly agree. After creation, look and see how things need to be tweaked.

Creation of the Barriers of Employment Committee, proposing combining the Youth, Minority Unemployment and Outreach, and Reentry Committees. Majority agreed or strongly agreed. A few disagree or are not sure. Agree with proposed description of this committee.

General questions

- Should we require every member of the SWDB be a participant of at least one committee. 50% agree, some no, and some unsure.
- Should each committee contain a minimum of three board members to be a part of the committee? Most responses were neutral on this, some agree and some disagree.
- Should SWDB Bylaws be amended to include a requirement that the committee structure is reviewed once every couple of years. Not the process historically. Half agreed but a larger portion was neutral.

Fourteen responses out of 22 SWDB participated in survey.

Jack Hasken - was done very diplomatically, good to get input, and was well done.

Michelle McNertney - Attachment 3 is a formalized proposal based on the discussion from the August meeting and the survey results. Proposal was to create:

- Executive Committee
- Disability Access Committee
- Iowa Plains Committee
- Systems and Policy Committee
- Barriers to Employment Committee

Proposed purpose and membership of each committee. This is just a jumping-off point based on previous discussions. These committees are created within the Bylaws, so if you do want to make a motion today to make changes to this structure, your motion would be to amend the Bylaws.

Teresa Hovell – let's look at in two different pieces. So, First, look at committee structure, which Michelle did a great job of explaining. I would like to take some time to address those three questions about SWDB membership on the committees. Don't necessarily need decisions, but just think that's worth a conversation, given the pretty even distribution of responses there on what our responsibility as a SWDB to these committees. Any discussion, or is there a motion regarding the structure, Attachment 3.

Jack Hasken - the Executive Committee - clearly defined a chair, vice chair, and five members. The other committees don't have any other than a chair. Do we want to set a number for each committee or not? I think Michelle mentioned something about what number do we have on the committees. From my experience, three to five is a good working number.

Jessica Dunker - I think if it's a Bylaw change that's required, we need to be very careful not to lock ourselves into very many things, including size. I think purpose is great. Worries me a little bit from the standpoint of that's our Bylaws.

Jack Hasken - we could certainly say when we're at a meeting, let's find three to five people.

Jessica Dunker - we've all been locked into some stuff over the years.

Ophelia Rumbo - I just have a question. Can a board member be part of one, two, or multiple committees, or are we not decided?

Teresa Hovell - I don't believe that it's up to us as a board and as for an individual, that if they're passionate about more than one committee. I do not see a reason why that person could not serve on multiple committees if they feel that they have the time to meet those needs. Michelle, anything within our current structures or potential structure that would say one has been done.

Michelle McNertney – historically the Disability Access Committee has been quite large. There's a lot of interest, great participation, and engagement. That committee would probably be bigger. Also have a lot of the local members want to join or represent their local committee. I think setting minimums is a great way to go and then it just depends on the committee. It has not been established that way before.

Ofelia Rumbo – thank you.

Teresa Hovell - if we decide we want to put at least an expectation, if not a rule, if you must serve two years on that committee? When you look at committees that turn frequently with their members, a lot of work gets lost in those quick turnarounds. Don't know if that is maybe more of an internal expectation that you would serve two years. Not creating a formal rule, just don't want to see a mass turnover of folks that we create a new committee and we can't get work over the finish line because we're turning it too fast.

Beth Townsend - I think that's a great idea, Teresa, and I think we could easily manage that, to Jessica's point, not necessarily putting it into rules, but just by the way we manage it, when you volunteer for a committee. Ophelia, we love to have as many members as we can find who are interested and want to participate in committees. I feel if you have a call for more than one, I think that's great, to be honest. I do want to suggest something about the last committee, Barriers to Employment. I'm not sure why I like the word barriers. As I understand it, we're going to be consolidating the minority unemployment, returning citizens, and then any other, you know, individuals who might have difficulties in getting into the workplace. I'm not sure I want to call it barriers, especially if we're talking about minority status, because I don't view that as a barrier. The purpose of the committee was to focus as opposed to, so I think maybe we should rename that subcommittee. I think it's a good idea, because we often see in the American Job Centers individuals who come in often have more than one challenge. You may have a disability, or you may have a returning citizen and need your high school diploma. Individuals don't generally come in with only one specific area that has been challenging for them. I understand and agree with combining all of this, I'm just not sure I like the committee title.

Astra Ferris - Since that would be the goal of whatever barrier or multiple things, and then that doesn't single somebody out, and as those get lumped together, the term participation may be more advantageous.

Jessica Dunker – a way to look at it differently.

Teresa Hovell - Yeah.

Jessica Dunker - another thing, the point to be added is, if we're doing a Bylaw change, we could put language into the change that says, committee size and structure as determined by the SWDB, at any given time, so that we give ourselves the opportunity to do things via motions. Say this committee needs five people and there must be board members, and they must serve two years. Just something that we've enabled ourselves with within the context of a conversation on the board to be able to do, and not, again, lock ourselves in, but allow us to set parameters each time we're establishing things.

Teresa Hovell - I really like that, Jessica, if we can do that. I think that gives us the flexibility to manage the boards the way we need to. I like that.

Ofelia Rumbo - I also have a suggestion instead of Barriers to Employment, Workforce Access Committee, that could be another one. Pathways is also a good suggestion.

Jessica Dunker - I like Access a lot. That is what the Workforce Board does, Workforce Development does.

Jack Hasken - Did we have a Bylaws committee?

Teresa Hovell - I thought we did. I think we did.

Michelle McNertney - I'll just jump in quick. Several years ago, when the Bylaws were rewritten, there was a task force put forth to rewrite the Bylaws. A short-term to accomplish one goal rather than a full standing committee. Something that we can do at any point when needed. Propose having a full-time Bylaws committee if you want.

Teresa Hovell - Would that be more under the systems and policy, perhaps, though, as the proposal is? Those could fall underneath those systems and policy group.

Michelle McNertney - It could fit, and you could add it to the description if you wanted to make sure that was a task of that committee.

Jack Hasken - Yeah, I think that's a good idea. Policy and Bylaws are similar. Policy committee, Michelle said they had never met. Low bar to have to get above.

Jessica Dunker - Less is more. Less is more. I've been trapped in required committees before, so less is more, and more effective.

Nick Glew - that Bylaws piece might be a piece that's more of a governance issue that maybe needs to sit under the Executive Committee versus the broader, how does the workforce system works. I see it as more specific to governance just within our own team.

Jack Hasken - that's a good point, Nick.

Teresa Hovell – any further discussion? This has been really, really good.

Nick Glew - I also really like the Pathways to Employment description.

Jessica Dunker - I do want to thank you guys for the work. It's really helpful to have all this put together so nicely for a conversation. Thank you.

Teresa Hovell - Thank you, Michelle. She did a nice job. As we look at all those things we just discussed, do we need to adjust this before we take a formal vote, or like renaming the Barriers to Employment, adding Bylaws to the Executive Committee. Do we need to add that before we want to take a formal?

Michelle McNertney – I would ask Shelly or Andrew Greenberg, who is our, Assistant Attorney General that supports the work of the board to weigh in, but I think you could just make a series of motions to make those amendments, and we can document them. I am tracking the document with these discussions with track changes and then I can show them. Andrew, does that make sense to move forward?

Andrew Greenberg - I agree. If you have something that you want to do to put it in the form of a motion, you don't have to do one all-encompassing motion, you can do several smaller ones and revisit other topics later.

Michelle McNertney – does that help Teresa?

Teresa Hovell - that does. I wanted to make sure we followed the right path. Wonderful.

Beth Townsend - basically propose a motion to accept the structure as proposed with a change to the Executive Committee and adding the Bylaw work to that committee and changing the name rather than Barriers to Employment to Pathways to Employment. Is that how we would need to do it, Andrew?

Andrew Greenberg - I think that would work we need to make sure we're, writing down what we're voting on, and I think that was pretty clear.

Beth Townsend - Did you get that, Michelle?

Michelle McNertney - Yes, let me try to put it in the chat, and you guys can agree. So, it was a motion to accept the committees as proposed, with I'll just say, exception to add to the description of the Executive Committee, the responsibility to maintain Bylaws. Changing the name of the Barriers of Work Committee to the Pathways to Employment Committee?

Teresa Hovell - I believe that one. I'll pop that in the chat.

Michelle McNertney - that could be considered one motion, I think. if I captured it correctly.

Teresa Hovell - the motion, as proposed by Director Townsend, was to add Bylaws oversight to the Executive Committee and to change the title of the Barriers to Employment Committee to Pathways to Employment.

Nick Glew - I was going to ask if we need to be even more specific of motion to amend the Bylaws as whatever the transition then to that, but to specifically amend our Bylaws.

Jessica Dunker - I agree. I think we must have a motion to amend the Bylaws to modify the committee structure and adopt the new committee structure as provided in the proposal. I think that's what we need to say.

Michelle McNertney - editing as we are talking. Moving to amend the Bylaws to modify the committee structure.

Jessica Dunker - as outlined in the SWDB committee structure with the following exceptions, and then you're, I think it's home. Does a Bylaw change require a certain quorum, but does it require, it doesn't require two votes or something like that?

Michelle McNertney - Nope.

Jessica Dunker – no, okay.

Michelle McNertney – just a moment. Second in the book.

Jessica Dunker - one more clarifying question, motion to amend the Bylaws to accept the committee structure.

Teresa Hovell - we talked about adding to the Bylaws that the structure and size of the committees were at the discretion of the board. Does that need to be added into this motion as well.

Michelle McNertney - I would do that as a second motion, a separate motion.

Teresa Hovell - Okay. We have a motion on the floor to amend the Bylaws to modify the committee structure, accept the committees as outlined in the SWDB committee structure proposal, with the exception to add the description of the Executive Committee the responsibility of maintaining the Bylaws of the Board and changing the name of the Barriers to Work Committee to the Pathways to Employment Committee.

Jessica Dunker motioned to approve the motion to amend by the Bylaws to modify the committee structure, accept the committees as outlined in the SWDB committee structure proposal, with the exception to add the description of the Executive Committee the responsibility of maintaining the Bylaws of the Board and changing the name of Barriers to Work committee to Pathways to Employment Committee and Nick Glew

seconded the motion. Members of the Board in attendance voted on the motion by voice vote, which carried unanimously.

Teresa Hovell - is there any additional discussion? Hearing no additional discussion, all in favor of approving this motion, say aye. Opposed same sign. We have approved the motion.

Michelle McNertney - Teresa, if you want to do additional motions to add that language that was discussed earlier, or as you mentioned, there were those three questions you wanted to specifically consider, you can do that now.

Teresa Hovell - prior to a motion, I think that those three questions would fall underneath that motion that the board would have the discretion to manage and maintain the structures of those committees themselves. I'm going to leave the wordsmithing to Michelle, I will make a motion that we amend the Bylaws to state the SWDB has the authority or has the discretion to amend the size and makeup of these committees, as needed.

Michelle McNertney - I dropped that into the chat as well. Motion to amend the Bylaws to state that the SWDB has the discretion to amend the size and composition of the committees as needed.

- ACTION ITEM: Motion to amend the Bylaws to modify the committee structure and accept the committees as outlined in the SWDB Committee Structure proposal, with the exception to add to the description of the Executive Committee the responsibility of maintaining the Bylaws of the board, and changing the name of the Barriers to Work Committee to the Pathways to Employment Committee.

Beth Townsend motioned to Motion to amend the Bylaws to modify the committee structure and accept the committees as outlined in the SWDB Committee Structure proposal, with the exception to add to the description of the Executive Committee the responsibility of maintaining the Bylaws of the board, and changing the name of the Barriers to Work Committee to the Pathways to Employment Committee and that the SWDB has the discretion to amend the size and composition of the committees as needed.

Members of the Board in attendance voted on the motion by voice vote, which carried unanimously.

Teresa Hovell - Is there any additional discussion to the motion? All in favor of the amendment to the Bylaws say aye. Opposed? The same? It is approved.

Teresa Hovell - I am open to any conversation, the three general feedback questions, I feel would fall up within that last motion we made, so that we would make those determinations based on particular committee. I think we need to have that consideration of do we believe that at least You need to serve on at least one committee during your tenure as a board member? I think, in my personal opinion, that is more realistic than three board members on each committee. I think that we might have that

if somebody is very passionate but asking each board member to serve on one committee, I think, is a very reasonable ask for us to do. I am, honestly, just kind of interested in opinions on that.

Jessica Dunker - I'm not sure that's realistic, to be honest.

Teresa Hovell - for each board member?

Jessica Dunker - Yeah, I think some people are giving what they can give as serving as part of the state board. I would hate to have us lose some voice at the highest level with the state board, because that was their... that was the maximum that they were able to do. You certainly can encourage it and ask for it, but I'm not sure I would mandate it. And then I think if we mandate it, we probably have to add it to the description of what it is to be a member of the committee, which is, I imagine, also in our governance or bylaws. I would hesitate to do that, I guess. I think everybody should do it. Let me put that part in. I think you should.

Teresa Hovell - Highly encouraged.

Jessica Dunker - Highly encouraged, yeah.

Nick Glew - my comment was going to be I still feel like a newer board member, even though I've been on for a couple of years, and I feel like it's probably those committees that are getting at a deeper level of really understanding, kind of inner workings of things that perhaps we don't get into at the board level from a discussion perspective. I don't really know what those committees do all that well, because I haven't been on a committee. That's how I feel, anyway. So, I think the highly encouraged. I think it's just going to make us all better board members, but I also appreciate and understand, Jessica, your concern that, you know, there could be some people that just, you know, that's the line that we're not going to cross. I think highly encouraged is I don't know if somewhere in something that we do, we state that, because I do think it will lead to better board members in the long term.

Beth Townsend - I agree with Jessica. I don't know that we want to mandate. I understand what you're saying, Teresa, and hopefully we will get enough interest in the communities that board members will want to participate in, but not everybody has the same capacity, and so I don't want to discourage anybody from serving on the board because they don't have the extra time to do the committee. To Nick's point, the committee meetings tend to be longer because they are more in-depth, and you're more hyper-focused on a particular issue. We don't generally have time for the state board meeting. It's a great idea Teresa, I do absolutely love the idea, I just don't know practical from a practical standpoint, we can do it.

Teresa Hovell - I think that's valid. I think that Jessica's point is valid, and I think if we just encourage.

Jack Hasken - Encourage.

Teresa Hovell - Nick's point is great. Understanding what we're really doing would involve being more deeply involved. I appreciate that there are times when I give as much as I can to what I have and there's no adding to my plate. I think that it's valid and it's just an encouragement as we talk to board members and explain the committees. Recruit within the board, as those committees are moving forward, we highly encourage participation. I'm not going to die on a hill of making anybody do it. I do feel that a good conversation could be had about reviewing the committee structures every two years. Maybe it's longer than two years. I think the structures, as long as I've been on the board, have been fairly stagnant and what I heard in our last meeting was some people didn't know what the boards were doing. Jack's board, our committee, was great. They did a lot of work, but people didn't know what the Executive Committee did and I think understanding, are we still doing the right things, rather than letting them languish and become unproductive. Maybe it's not 2 years, maybe it's 4 years. I think that it's a good conversation that we need to continue to review those and make sure that they're productive, that they're supported in the correct manner. Maybe we change how many people need to be on the board, or on that committee, maybe we change the direction of the committee, I don't know, so I don't know if we do that, if that has to be a motion in the Bylaws, or again, if that's under that discretion.

Jessica Dunker - It certainly sounds like under the discretion of the Executive Committee, because Executive Committee would be looking at the board as a whole, and would be having conversations about what needs to be refreshed, and so, I think everything that you're asking is the right things for people to do, and the right thing for the board to do. Just not locking ourselves in.

Teresa Hovell - Sometimes you're going to have an Executive Committee who's really into that, and then other times you may have one that is really into something else.

Jessica Dunker - I wouldn't. I agree, I just don't know if you need a motion or a rule.

Teresa Hovell - great.

Beth Townsend - I don't.

Teresa Hovell - That's why I like that discretionary oversight in the Bylaws.

Beth Townsend - it's important to remember that you're going to have a new Governor in 2027, and then there will be some board members that will roll off, and we'll get new work. Board members, appointed by the new Governor, and that's probably always a good time too so you've got some events coming up in the next couple of years that would really lend itself to doing that review with the new Governor and the new board members.

Teresa Hovell - That sounds great.

Beth Townsend - new Director of workforce, probably.

Teresa Hovell - Never know now.

Beth Townsend - Taking time.

Teresa Hovell - I would like to recommend that maybe we think over the holidays. People can come back to the February meeting, and then maybe decide if there is a committee that they feel led to participate in. It gives people time to review what the committees are. Maybe have some conversations with fellow board members if you have shared passions, and then maybe we can start to really put those together after the first of the year of who has a clear path that they're being drawn to a committee, and we can start getting those set up.

Michelle McNertney - Can I just add, Teresa, yes, I think at the February meeting, it would be great to have an agenda item to elect the chair of each of these committees, so that then they can take off and do good things with the new structure.

Teresa Hovell - Yeah, great.

Ofelia Rumbo - I also just want to add, as we, you know, as we go through these changes, and we welcome new, board members, to make sure that we have an onboarding process, that even though this is encouraged to participate in one of these committees, that we make sure that we... that we go through that, education process of highlighting the importance of the committees and how this is a great opportunity to be more involved with the state board.

Teresa Hovell - I think any onboarding for new and even some existing folks into any of those groups is key to the engagement, so 100% agree with that.

Michelle McNertney - I am happy to put together an onboarding that we can do, maybe late in January, for any new members or any existing members that want to re-attend and just learn more about the overall purpose and structure of the board itself. As Astra mentioned earlier, the funding streams that we're dealing with and getting kind of that base understanding is really helpful for your work. Great point, Ophelia, making sure that we stress the importance of the committees and what they are. So, I can work on that, and we can get something on the books for maybe late January, early February before the next meeting.

Teresa Hovell - I think that's wonderful.

Ofelia Rumbo - Thank you, appreciate it.

Teresa Hovell: Do we have any further discussion on our committees or are we ready to move to our next conversation?

Agenda item 7. Review and Discussion of PY26 WIOA Unified State Plan Modification by Brandy McOmber, WIOA Core Partner Working Group (Attachment 5 – Iowa WIOA Unified State Plan Modification Summary, Attachment 6 – Draft PY26 WIOA Unified State Plan Modification)

Brandy McOmber opened discussions on the PY26 WIOA Unified State Plan Modification. My portion of the presentation will be pretty brief, as I'll be turning it over to Kyle Clabby-Kane who will provide an overview of what the WIOA core partner working groups final draft of what the modification looks like. Quick reminder the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Core Partner Working Group is comprised of representatives from each of the four titles under the WIOA. Group serves in support of SWDB to help align and coordinate workforce programs across the state as well as developing key materials on behalf of the board, such as this modification. I want to highlight two attachments. Attachment 5 is a summary of the proposed modifications and Attachment 6 is the full draft.

Kyle Clabby-Kane – From the slides you can see the members of the Core Partner Working Group that contributed immensely to the draft. Includes Michelle, Carolyn Farley with responsibility for Title I, Title III. Brandy, Sandy Ostendorf, at Voc Rehab; Carrie Oserhaus at Department for the Blind, and myself for Title II. WIOA requires the Governor to submit a unified or combined state plan every four years and at the two-year mark. We are required to do an update or modification to our state plan even though it feels like yesterday that we did the four-year plan. I'm here today to discuss that. I want to throw out a disclaimer on the draft that you have in the agenda packet today. We drafted the modification with the information that we had most up to date from the United States Department of Labor (USDOL) and the United States Department of Education (USDOE). If these partners issue any additional further guidance, we will need to come back to the board with any necessary changes or inclusions based on any updated guidance we would receive. No substantial changes. Attachment 5 was covered in August board meeting. On paper it looks like a lot of changes, but majority of the updates were the common element sections, along with Title II, III, and IV. General information updated as well as a lot of Labor Market Information (LMI). LMI has changed over the last couple of years and has been updated throughout the plan. Title I section had updates to the dislocated worker allocation formula.

Michelle McNertney - I had very little to do with writing this plan, the rest of the team did all of the work. Thank you to everyone for that. I think this is the perfect example of an area where the new Systems and Policy Committee would be used to more closely work with the SWDB when we are going through these kinds of policy development and changes. The state plan requires the WIOA Title I program that has three funding streams. Adult, dislocated worker, and youth funding streams. Allocation formulas we are required to establish within the state plan. In the eight years I have been at IWD and I think prior to that, the allocation formulas have been the same. Last summer and fall we looked at the Title I dislocated worker allocation formula as it has not ever been updated. Title I team worked very hard to look into the requirements of this formula and determine where potential changes can be made. Throughout the month of October there were four separate consultation sessions held with local partners that included the local workforce development boards, board members, staff to the board, chief elected officials, and

other local stakeholder partners to discuss the allocation formula. We had great attendance, feedback, and conversations as a part of those consultation sessions. We ultimately decided on what is included in today's draft. Short overview. Federal guidelines that are required with six sets of data elements to determine how we are going to distribute the money. Very high level, the federal government passes the funding down to the state (Governor) and it comes to IWD on her behalf. We use this allocation formula to determine how much money is given to each of the local workforce development areas (LWDA). Currently there are six LWDA in Iowa. As indicated in the August meeting effective July 1 there will be five LWDAs which is the next time we allocate funding. We use this formula to fill in data as defined by the federal government. Six data factors 1) insured unemployment data - gathering the number of people who received unemployment insurance over the previous year and putting that in for each of the local areas. 2) unemployment concentrations data - areas of the state with higher unemployment than the average unemployment of the state. 3) Plant closing and layoff data - look at closings, mass layoff data and WARN notices, which companies are required to file if they are going to lay off twenty-five or more people, if plant or business is closing permanently. 4) declining industries data - we receive from USDOL, total number of jobs lost. 5) is farmer-rancher economic hardship data - we receive from the Federal Department of Agriculture for the number of farmer-rancher hardship loans that are applied for in the state over the previous twelve months. 6) long-term unemployment data are people who have essentially exhausted their unemployment or been on unemployment long-term. These six data elements are gathered up with the help of LMI. Data is always historical and we use this to determine how we are going to send the money out in the future. It's always about a year behind. The law requires the sum of the weight of those six data factors to add up to percent. We are not allowed to weigh factor zero unless we get approval via the state plan process. The two middle boxes talk about a minimum, stop loss and maximum stop loss. We do apply a minimum stop loss to the formula that no local area can receive less than 90% of the funds that they received on average over the previous two years. This prevents major swings in how much funding a local area receives. The data could show that one local area should receive a million dollars of DW funds one year, and if that minimum percentage stop loss, or what we call a hold harmless, is not in place, the data next year could show they should only receive \$400,000. It's very difficult for a local area to plan and provide services if there are such major swings in funding, because they may have already obligated out money to send somebody to a multi-year training, or things like that. The minimum percentage stop loss is in place, and we are required to use it, we have and will continue to use it. We have the option to also put in on the opposite side, a maximum percentage or a stop gain, which would prevent one local area from receiving too much money from year over year. Historically, we have not used a stop gain, and we do not have a stop gain in the plan for the future. Given the fact that the state received such little funding, we have so few local areas, and because there is a minimum stop loss, we really don't see the swing in the other direction for a local area to really gain too much. We do not use a stop gain. Does anybody have any questions about just overall, at a very high level, how the formula works. I know it's a lot of information.

McKenzie Snow - Michelle, are these six indicators statutory, or are they state-developed?

Michelle McNertney - Statutory.

McKenzie Snow - Thank you.

Michelle McNertney - The federal government established these six data factors. We do have the ability to add additional data factors if we want. That is something we discussed during the consultation sessions and ultimately determined not to include a seventh data factor we couldn't really determine any additional data factors that we thought were important that we had a good data source to use. Staying with six statutorily required data elements. Keep in mind that the total of how we divide the funding up has to equal 100%. If you look at the current numbers, the way the formula works is we have historically, we are going to give equal weight to all six of these elements. Easiest way to think about that is if the state receives, let's say, \$600 in DW funding that we are going to pass through to the local areas. We take that \$600 and we put \$100 over each of these data factors. Then each data factor is divided up amongst the five local areas individually. Let's say Central Iowa for the first data factor, they should receive 15% of that \$100, so they get \$15. You should get 20% based on unemployment consultation, and you go across the board, across the six data factors, you add it up, and that's how much the local area receives for DW. Today's new state plan draft is to change our DW allocation formula to percentages listed in blue. Focus is the farmer-rancher economic hardship data. Historically given equal weight 16.67% of the funding has been based on the farmer-rancher economic hardship data and proposing to drop that to 5%. Reason is that historical data shows that this factor, we have been using too much of the money for that small data factor compared to the others. For example, last year's data showed that there were 488 farmer-rancher economic hardship loans applied across Iowa. This is a federal government process that they apply for these loans, and we are just provided with the data. When we look at the data for the people that were served under the DW formula there were three participants that indicated they had a farmer-rancher economic hardship loan. .006% of the 488 that were applied so less than 1% of the people for that one-sixth of the data were eligible because of a farmer-rancher hardship but we are giving out 16.67% of the funding based on that data factor. We felt the need to reduce the percentage of impact that that data element to 5% that will increase some of the other ones. The other change was decrease from 16.67% to 15% the plant closing and mass layoff data. This data is based off the WARN data that we receive. USDOL gave us specific plant closing and mass layoff data. They have not done that for at least the past eight years. Since I have been here, we have been using WARN data which is only as good as the businesses that send give us a WARN. There is a law that says you are required to send a WARN if you're going to lay off twenty-five people or more or close your plant. Reality is there's not a lot of teeth in that law and not a lot we can do if businesses don't follow it. Data is only as good as the businesses that are providing it. For that reason, we felt it necessary to set that one at 15% and set 20% to the four other factors where we do have more reliable data. The DW funding for five local workforce areas are based on the amount of DW dollars we received this year. Shows the percentage of share of funding that each local area would receive and what that equates to in a dollar amount. Using 16.67% for each of the six data factors being weighted evenly. Based on the proposed change to the formula, how that would potentially impact on each local area's allotments. You will notice that it positively impacts the NE Iowa area, the Central Iowa area, and the Mississippi Valley, which is Eastern Iowa, the newly formed eastern Iowa area that will be in effect on July 1, and the East Central Iowa stays the same. That's most likely due to the hold harmless provision. Iowa Plains area loses some funding because the vast majority of those farm or rancher

hardship loans that had been applied for in the state were in the western part of the state. Shows you the estimate of how this could potentially impact. All based on historical data. We don't know how much funding we will see going forward or the yearly data that will be plugged into these six data factors for next year. We are doing an estimate. I think it's been a long time coming and it was a really great effort by the team and consultation with the locals to get to this point.

Kyle Clabby-Kane – if plan is approved today, next week we would open the public comment period to run from December 10 - January 21. The required comment period is 30 days but with holidays coming up we wanted to provide additional time for anyone to provide comments. We will hold two virtual town halls, January 5 and January 16. Town halls to gather feedback from participants. January 22 - February 6 to review and answer all public comments and then finalize and prepare plan for submission. This will come back to the SWDB on February 13 for that last final review and approval. Once we have that approval, we will be ready to submit plan to the federal partners at the beginning of March. Timeline is dependent on us not getting additional guidance from USDOL on any additional pieces that need to be included. If we get any additional guidance, we may need to revise some of these dates.

Teresa Hovell – great and nice work. Thank you very much to the whole team. I'm amazed Michelle with your math. That's awesome. So, with that, is there a motion to accept the proposal for the WIOA plan as proposed today?

- **ACTION ITEM: Motion to approve draft PY26 WIOA State Plan Modification.**

Jack Hasken motioned to approve draft PY26 WIOA State Plan Modification and Jason Shanks seconded the motion. Members of the Board in attendance voted on the motion by voice vote, which carried unanimously.

Teresa Hovell - Is there any further discussion Regarding the proposed plan. If there's no further discussion the plan as proposed. There has been a motion and a second to approve. All in favor say aye. It has been approved! Nice job, team.

Agenda item 8. Director's Report

Director Townsend provided her report.

Beth Townsend - We have entered our busy time of the year, post-Thanksgiving and we got the double whammy of a snowstorm. We have seen a lot of seasonal workers be able to work right up till Thanksgiving week, which is kind of unusual, but good. Good news is that even with our modernized system, which we implemented in June, some of the new seasonal layoffs, or folks who are generally laid off during, seasonal layoffs, are new to the system, and it appears that everything's going well, that we're seeing an increased number of call volume, which is not unusual for this time of year. But we've been able to handle that, and things seem to be going very well, so we're happy about that.

In connection with Veterans Day, I thought I would give you some of the veterans' numbers and the impact that our program has had in 2025.

- Since the beginning of 2025 we have served 1,700 veterans, service members, and spouses.
- We have helped 287 of those members or spouses find employment in Iowa. Home Base Iowa (HBI) and the Jobs for Veterans Day grant have accounted for 580.
- 1,700 individuals, and those numbers include 566 veterans, 14 who were transitioning from active duty to, or off of active duty.
- HBI is currently working with 54 veterans and or their spouses, 20 that are in-state and 34 that are out of state. Hopefully we will get to bring some of those out-of-state veterans into Iowa, to take employment in Iowa.
- We do a large number of outreach activities for our veterans throughout the course of the year. We had 735 outreach activities, to date in 2025, including 267 community events, 280 veteran service organization events, in conjunction with other Veterans Affairs organizations that serve veterans, there are numerous ones around the state, so we like to partner with them.
- 39 education events.
- 48 events for the Garden Reserve.
- 101 business events so we are recruiting employers to take a good look at veterans that are interested in working for them, whether they are already in the state or transitioning out back to duty.
- Recruit Military Outreach Operation - we have contacted 1,460 veterans and 36 of those requested follow-up meetings, and 6 are entering into or seeking assistance to find work here in Iowa.
- SkillBridge Program in Iowa - program that allows transitioning active-duty folks to spend the last few months on active duty, working for an employer here in Iowa. We became sponsors in November of 2023 and have approved 51 programs, to be skill-rich employers. We always hope to increase that number but it's a really good start. We have 35, approved industry partners and five service members who completed the program. We hired within IWD two of those individuals, including one in a leadership position who came to us through SkillBridge. It's a really great opportunity for veterans to try on their employment in Iowa and the specific employer that they're working with and also for the employer to determine if their veteran is going to meet their workforce needs. We are very excited. A couple of highlights from SkillBridge
 - Owen Industries accepted a service member from SkillBridge in June of 2025, and after a 90-day period, offered him, and he accepted a permanent position.
 - City of Burlington Fire Department was approved in September to be a SkillBridge industry partner and has received its first application. Since the first application, they have received 3 other applications. We know a lot of service members want to transition into law enforcement and first responder positions. It's a really good connection for duty members looking to come back to Iowa.

We have weathered the federal government shutdown. Unfortunately, we had to furlough about 67 employees during that time. Some are because of funding issues and the lack of cash available. Others were furloughed because the federal program that

they worked on was completely turned off and there was no work for them to do. They were furloughed for the entire shutdown. We have received approval to give them back pay. From Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) had to be laid off because we had no work for them to do and we are working with USDOL to ensure that we can provide back pay to the unemployment insurance folks who were also furloughed during that time. I think everyone's going to be made full in terms of any lost time during the shutdown. The good news was that even though we had to furlough 67, we did not see any degradation to the services we provided. It did not affect our ability to provide claim service or to process claims and pay them on a timely basis. You may have noticed, obviously, that there have not been any new unemployment numbers that have come out since September. We have not yet received September's numbers, although we will be announcing that next week. A little bit up in the air about what October is going to look like but we hope that the November numbers, which will be released sometime in late December, will be released in a timely fashion, and then we'll get back into a regular cadence in January barring any subsequent government furloughs.

Our mobile workforce center continues to go out and work with employers who are experiencing wide, or mass layoffs. They went to Michael Foods in November to work with the folks that had been laid off there, and they had a mass hiring event. They also were able to help individuals' complete applications, sign up for Iowa Works, and if they have any questions about filing for unemployment insurance, we were able to answer those questions. We continue to see successful stories coming from our work in the mobile unit that goes into communities to help people that might not otherwise come into the American Job Centers and get that extra assistance that they need and find employment. There are still over 50,000 open jobs in Iowa, so even though we have seen an increase in layoffs across the state, we're still able to transition folks into that next job. Our average duration has gone up a little bit, it's now at about 10 weeks when it was 9 weeks last year. That's pretty good, given the level of and the number of WARN notices we received in 2025. We continue to see the success of that program and the help that it's providing to individuals who are affected, by a mass layoff. Also wanted to give you some apprenticeship members for the end of the year, from the Iowa Office of Apprenticeship, we have 958 active programs. We had five new programs started in November. There are 35 that are in the process of being created or revised and the number of apprentices who completed their programs so far in 2025 is 764, which is a number we're very excited about and hope to see that number increase as time goes on. We are also working very closely with the Department of Education (DOE) and the Workplace Learning Unit. We are going to be expanding youth apprenticeship programs across the state, rolling those out hopefully this spring, and that really is doing a big push. Youth apprenticeships are allowed or permitted under the state leadership agency legislation that was passed, two years ago, and then revised a year ago, and signed into law and became effective July 1. It allows employers and schools to create programs that do not have to comply with the 2,000-hour requirement that you see in a registered apprenticeship program. It's more, it's something you can use the apprenticeship model for, programs that are shorter duration to earn a credential, and that would better fit, students' schedules so that you can do it in a semester or over the course of the school year. Whereas a registered apprenticeship oftentimes takes, you know, a couple of years, even, and may not even get completed by the time, graduation rolls around. We are excited about that, because we're hoping that it will expand the number of employers and industries that apprenticeship programs will be available to and also

make it more accessible to schools and high school students who have very busy schedules. Just introducing people to that model, earning a credential, and then, hopefully helping, helping, them develop a pathway, post-secondary. We have posted the IVRS division administrator position and that posting closed last night so we hope to introduce our new IVRS Division Administrator, and we'll be completing the hiring process, hopefully right after the first of the year.

Any questions about any of that, or anything else that I didn't touch on?

Nick Glew - one of the things I know that we've talked about is just the anticipated change in workforce training programs with 260E and F. Is there any update or ways that you'd like or anticipate this group helping to assist in whatever direction that might ultimately helping to, you know, eventually advocate for whatever proposal might come forward in that space.

Beth Townsend - I would encourage, I believe, Shelly sent out the link to the DOGE recommendations, about a 145-page report, to all state workforce board members. About one third is workforce-related, so I would really encourage all of you to look at that because what it's recommending is just kind of an update to the way that we do workforce training in the state of Iowa in terms of providing easier access for employers to workforce training dollars. The 260E program is a 10-year bonding program, which is very expensive, it's cumbersome for employers and community colleges, and so we want to make money available to our employers that they can access without having to pay it back over 10 years. More options in terms of the platforms and the programs and the timing of the programs, because, of course, with bonding, you must actually sell the bond and buy the bond, or however that works, but it can be a long process. The DOGE recommendations were centered around how we can make the workforce training system more efficient and more accessible to employers. The Governor is currently going through those reviews and reviewing those recommendations to determine how she wants to propose legislature, look at those recommendations and how those get implemented. What I would suggest to the board is to be familiar with the DOGE report. Be sure to tune in for the Governor's condition of the State speech where she will talk then about what her proposal is going to be. I believe this will be a Governor's bill, where she'll make some recommendations in terms of what it looks like moving forward. Probably sunset 260E but find an alternative for employers so that they still have access to money, that is going to be far, far easier for them to utilize, and hopefully the state can see, bigger and better returns from the money that they put forward. In terms of the other recommendations that they have made, there's a variety of them. One of them that the SWDB might be interested in is they have proposed that a board of employers' review workforce programs that exist about every 3 years to vet them and to make sure that the workforce programs are producing what they are envisioned to produce. I've advocated to the Governor that it would be a big role for the Workforce Board to play because this is an employer-driven board. We also have representatives from the legislature from several state agencies, including education. We have post-secondary representation on the board from community colleges, from the, the regions, and so, you know, I think we would be well-suited to doing that work. The DOGE would like to see is a group of employers looking at every dollar we're spending on workforce training, what we are getting out of it and is this the best way to use that money? If not the best way or we're not getting the results we want, what would we recommend for the changes to be

made? Because we really don't do any type of review of workforce training programs currently, and so they saw that as a much-needed change, to the entire process so that we don't wait 40 or 50 years to do a review of a workforce program and decide that maybe we need to make some changes. For your purposes, I think that it would be an excellent thing for the SWDB to be looking at and depending on the recommendations that come out of the Governor's office, and her condition on the speech, that will kind of be helpful to where we want to go. I encourage all of you to just get out and talk to your fellow employers and say, what do you like about workforce training, what works for you, and what doesn't? If you can make any changes to the way the system works, what would that look like? Most employers will tell you that it's the access to the funds that they like. The bureaucracy, obviously, they don't, which we know that 260 is very bureaucratic. It can take a while. It takes a long time sometimes to get the money, but then also to pay it back can take years, through tax credits. So, I think getting that feedback from employers is beneficial and something we should be looking at as a board. I to give a shout out to Michelle's team. We did receive a 4.8 million dollar grant from USDOL, which is going to allow us to kind of pilot exactly what the DOGE recommendation was in terms of giving employers' access to training dollars, so it's basically almost \$5 million that we can make available to employers in specific industries, and we're going to use Manufacturing 4.0 as kind of our basis, so those companies that have already received some money and are looking to automate, use AI, robotics, you know, helping them go even further than that, or meet some needs that maybe they haven't been able to meet.

Ofelia Rumbo - Since they first implemented their Manufacturing 4.0 changes so that's a grant that will live over five years and will be a really good barometer, I think, of how this could all work.

Jack Hasken - Good.

Beth Townsend - Anybody else got any questions? Thanks, Nick, that was a good question.

Ofelia Rumbo - Probably. I was just curious; would you give us an update with the STEM Internship Program funding for this year?

Beth Townsend - STEM internship. The \$725,000 we were able to award that very quickly and received more applications than we were able to fund. That is all in the works, as I understand it, Michelle, is that right?

Michelle McNertney - I think so. Sorry that Kathy's team.

Beth Townsend - Just as engaged.

Michelle McNertney - that sounds right to me.

Beth Townsend - we had more than enough applicants for that money. As always, we struggle to get applications in our 84C money, which is the Startup Registered Apprenticeship, where you can get \$25,000 for a new program. We historically are not able to give all of that out every year, so we'd like to see, we're hopeful that maybe some

schools or some employers working on work-based learning will view that as an opportunity to get some of that money to help them expand their programs.

Ofelia Rumbo - Do you have an estimate as to when those were approvals were communicated, and where the funding was exhausted?

Beth Townsend - don't affiliate, but I can get that information from Kathy, and Shelly, if you just want to make sure that we get that to you, that's happy to do that.

Ofelia Rumbo - That'd be great, thank you.

Beth Townsend - Alright, anybody else? Okay, well, thank you!

Agenda item 9. Public Comments.

Teresa Hovell - Thank you, Director. We're now open to public comments. If there are public comments, I just want to make sure that it is understood that it is a 3-minute time limit. Again, I would ask if anyone who comments would have their camera on, if available. So, are there public comments? I'm going to say that there are none.

No public comments.

Do we have a motion to adjourn?

Charlie Wishman motion to adjourn and Jack Hasken second.

Adjournment.

Teresa Hovell - With that, we will adjourn this meeting of the SWDB, the last of 2025. I want to wish you all a very, very Merry Christmas, Great New Year, and we will see everybody again in February or January for onboarding.

Chair Hovell adjourned the meeting of the Board at 12:40 pm.



Shelly Evans - Executive Assistant to the SWDB