



# Hennepin-Carver

## Workforce Development Board

### MEETING MINUTES

**January 8, 2025 at 12:30pm**

**CareerForce - Bloomington**

**4220 Old Shakopee Road W #200**

**Bloomington, MN 55437**

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**Attendees:** Garfield Clark, Elise Durbin, Sarah Gutzman, Shannon Seaver, Cara Garrett, Doug Muller, Emily Watts, Tim Mayer, Melissa Scherer, Kim Schrupp, Andrea Erickson, Rebecca Stearns, Cindy Larson, and Nicole Mattson, Matt Udermann

**Absent:** Dave Muscoplat, Brad Markwell

**Excused Absent:** Derrick Givens

**Staff:** Shannon Quigley, Erik Aamoth, Bri Steirer, Nicki Hanson, and Virginia Rose Kane.

**Guests:** Isabella Ojitin, Steve Kolcinski, Holly Masek, Carissa Johnson, Raji Shabad, Sam Peterson-Item

**Online:** Erin, Barwis, Brenda Dickinson, Emily Schloesser, Tim O'Neill, Tara Munroe, Velvet Walker, Brad Markwell, Gary Jones, Keith Brooks, Mark Mann, Nola Slagter-Johnson

**Call to Order – Chair Nicole Mattson**

*Items in **red** require a vote to move forward.*

**1. Approval of Agenda**

MOTION: Elise Durbin

SECOND: Doug Muller

**MOTION PASSED: 14 Yeas, 0 Nays**

**2. Approval of Meeting Minutes (November 2024)**

MOTION: Shannon Seaver

SECOND: Emily Watts

**MOTION PASSED: 14 Yeas, 0 Nays**

**3. Success Story – Minnesota Training Partnership**

- a. Minnesota Training Partnership (MTP) is the newest Dislocated Worker provider who the Board had an opportunity to learn more about during the November Board meeting.

1. MTP currently has a small but mighty team. MTP's program manager, Raul, and counselor, NengJo, work very closely with one another to provide responsive and individualized

- services to participants. They are continuing to operationalize their services, build up internal working documents and policies.
2. MTP is continuing to leverage their strong partnerships to promote State DW services with new and existing partnerships, including union affiliates, community-based organizations, businesses and Adult/DW providers across our WDA.
  3. MTP began enrolling participants in State DW program during the 2<sup>nd</sup> week of October & to date they have enrolled 18 participants.
  4. They began enrolling participants in training services mid-November and to date there are 5 participants who have, or are currently enrolled in, training—all 5 are in IT.
  5. They have exited their first two participants to employment, starting at the end of December. Participants secured in public accounting and as an IT manager. Employment Counselor, NengJo, supported participants with career planning, job search support (such as leads and conducting mock interviews).
  6. Staff is excited to have MTP as a part of the provider team to serve residents in suburban Hennepin County. Staff would also like to thank Avivo, Carver County, Goodwill, and HIRED for welcoming MTP along with their willingness to proactively connect and support MTP in joining our provider team to collectively serve WDA-09.

#### **4. Presentation by Polar Semiconductor**

- a. Becca Stearns provided an overview of the 8" wafer focused microchip industry (attached pdf?) as related to workforce development.
  1. Polar Semiconductor operates a class 1 clean room and has been in business 60+ years.
  2. They employ 550 with the majority in production and equipment maintenance.
  3. CHIPS funding \$525K; double it's current US capacity to 40K wafers/month; 160+ new jobs.
  4. Robust workforce development initiatives include pre-apprenticeship, apprenticeship, internships, grants, guest lecturing, and outreach events.
- b. Discussion and questions:
  1. Production back at pre-COVID levels; unknown impact of possible tariffs.
  2. 200 – more than 1000s of microchips in a car depending on the type of vehicle.
  3. PS hires across the educational spectrum: training varies from high school credential to PhD depending on positions; partnering with Hennepin Tech robotics program for apprenticeship; looking for sustainable solutions.
  4. 160 openings, 18 more internship positions opening utilizing career fair database; production staff typically comes from employee referrals; pay range \$20.14 entry level to \$190K engineer.
  5. Diversity in Manufacturing Initiative helpful in outreach.
  6. Immigrant talent pool a challenge across industries in anything STEM-related; supply-and-demand issue needs to be addressed in general, including health care; business-driven and practicable solutions are needed and VISA programs revamped.
  7. CHIPS coalition focus on recruitment and alignment in the industry; PS created universal job descriptions for the equipment maintenance technician position; MN Forward Fund conversations on funding in correlation with CHIPS
  8. Bloomington Schools partnership event well attended, could be helpful in exposing students to STEM; elementary and middle school awareness is critical with students and parents as well as access and affordability; gap in hands on experience.
  9. Polar offers tuition reimbursement and helps employees navigate degree planning; MN Poly college credits offered.

#### **5. 2025 HCWDB Visioning Exercise**

- a. Board members (and guests) participated in an exercise to review the state, regional, and local goals outlined in the Local Plan and develop priorities and action steps for 2025.
  1. Board members were broken into four “Focus Groups”:
    - I. Industry
    - II. Preparation
    - III. Alignment
    - IV. Equity
  2. Board members were tasked with discussing current and ongoing initiatives within the WDA that relate to their assigned focus group and creating one “SMART” action step that the board could undertake in 2025.
  3. These ideas and additional input will be compiled and discussed with Internal Operations and action steps disseminated to the appropriate work groups for further action.

## **6. Board Business**

- a. Board Work Group Report Outs
  1. Program Design & Development:
    - a. Question of the Month Survey
      - i. We continue to see excellent response rates on our Question of the Month survey – thank you to providers that continue to push this initiative forward!
      - ii. We have collected five months’ worth of data on trends regarding how residents learn about our services, what follow-up resources are most helpful after landing a job, what resources are most helpful when working with an employment counselor, as well as suggestions to improve the intake and enrollment process.
      - iii. We will plan to put together a presentation to share our learnings during either the March or May Board meeting.
    - b. 2025 Priorities
      - i. At our December meeting we discussed what we would like to prioritize as a group in 2025.
      - ii. We are looking forward to bringing on the new One-Stop Operator and working together to increase alignment and coordination among our local workforce programs.
      - iii. We also discussed focusing on Work-Based learning partnerships and how upcoming benefits mandates may affect our programs and program participants.
  2. External Relations:
    - a. [MN Job Quality Principles for Employers](#) discussion recap
      - i. New DEED BSR Armah Dabla Lansanah (Drive for 5 focus) and Robert Willis (vets), Doug Muller met with Robert to discuss recruiting and turnover.
      - ii. Cindy recommended inviting Liz Jennings to speak.
      - iii. Erik will invite Patricia Fitzgerald to speak about [Elevate Hennepin](#).
      - iv. Group focus: segmentation or which businesses and resources to focus on; Erik will explore with other directors.
      - v. Job Quality focus will be on workplace as a compliment to workforce (e.g. Workforce Leadership Council resources for employees.)
      - vi. Tim O’Neill and Erik will discuss data DEED LBI office data and definition on small/medium businesses.
      - vii. Patricia Fitzgerald Elevate Hennepin platform description, link, resources.

- viii. Identify the target market, e.g. companies with HR generalists who are spread thin, companies without advanced processes in competency-based hiring.
  - b. Skills Accelerator Workshops
    - i. How to resource those and ways to promote and support the effort; determine the right market.
    - ii. 1-pager current post in SharePoint (Bri will resend link to Doug.)
  - c. 2025
    - i. Clarification from DEED on business needs and their focus and how it aligns with county and partners.
    - ii. Connecting recruiters with workforce centers; skill sets clarification.
    - iii. Drive for 5 Talent Hub information.
  - d. Mohamed Malim from Epimonia Transportation - overview of company that provides transport to and from employment for residents.
- 3. Data & Measurements:
  - a. No Report
- 4. Internal Operations:
  - a. We are looking forward to hosting upcoming Board Meetings in the community. Possible locations include Northwest Family Service Center (Brooklyn Center) and Labor Union Hall (Minneapolis).
  - b. There was a soft launch of DEED CareerForce's new location in Brooklyn Center December 02
    - i. There will be a local area meet and greet in January for building partners
    - ii. The county and DEED are looking at a larger "grand opening" event in the spring
  - c. The OSO (One-Stop-Operator) process is moving forward
    - i. Applications have been reviewed
    - ii. There were interviews with the top scoring applications
    - iii. Hennepin County staff will finalize their decision and make a recommendation to the Board of Commissioners
    - iv. Then contracts will need to be drawn up and MOUs created before a public announcement can be made
  - d. The MOU/IFA is in process
    - i. The MOU will be signed followed by the IFA (infrastructure funding agreement); now that the BC CareerForce is open, updates will be done
  - e. Open Board Positions
    - i. There are still a number of open board positions; especially in Labor and Business
  - f. WIOA re-authorization is underway at the federal level; implementation would be planned for July 2026 based on any updates or changes that may show up in the re-authorization. One thing being watched closely is the percentage of participants who are intended to be in training programs
  - g. Upcoming Board Meeting agendas
    - i. Review of the local plan
    - ii. Polar Semiconductor presentation

## 7. Board Updates

- 5. Directors Report:

- a. OSO- We are moving forward with the process of selecting a provider to provide OSO services.
  - b. MOU-Bri and Erik are working on completing the MOU
  - c. IFA-Cindy and Erik discussed the IFA and will work to complete the IFA.
  - d. WIOA Reauthorization- WIOA Reauthorization is on hold.
  - e. Board Members- We received applications for all open board seats. New board members will be appointed before the March board meeting.
  - f. March Meeting- Walter Simmons from Prince Georges County, Maryland will share how his board set up its structure to meet WIOA regulations.
6. Program Updates:
- a. Wagner-Peyser
    - i. CareerForce started serving customers on Dec 2, 2024, at the new Brooklyn Center CareerForce office location at 7051 Brooklyn Boulevard, Brooklyn Center, MN 55429 in the Northwest Family Service Center, 2nd Floor (within the Hennepin County office). Our office hours are:
      - 1. Monday – Thursday: 8:00 AM – 4:30 PM (onsite)
      - 2. Friday: 8:00 AM – 4:30 PM (virtual services)
    - ii. We are offering 4 scheduled 1:1 job search appointments most days and have the availability to meet with drop in customers also. We had 12 drop ins one day, but 3-4 per day is more typical.
    - iii. We started partnering with Hennepin Tech in Sept 2024 and have been holding workshops at their Brooklyn Park location about 1-2 times per month and also offering workshops 1-2 times per month at Bloomington.
    - iv. A look at some numbers of people served:
      - 1. Bloomington Nov- Dec 2024: Number of people through 1:1 job search appointments, UI referrals, workshops, and drop in services = 449 Number of people who used the Career Lab 113
      - 2. Brooklyn Center Nov- Dec 2024: Number of people served through 1:1 job search appointments, UI referrals, workshops, and drop in services = 361
    - v. January 2024 CareerForce for Bloomington and Brooklyn Center started reaching out to SNAP participants to share about the services CF offers. We continue to do that serving about 78 SNAP participants per month out of our location and about 500 SNAP participants per month throughout all the CF office.
  - b. Adult Basic Education
    - i. Aligned with the local plan, highlighting the work happening at Metro South Adult Basic Education:
    - ii. Developing a Skilled Workforce:
      - 1. Metro South recently hosted an online, statewide PCA (personal care attendant) training for 19 students. 17 of the 19 passed their state certification on their first attempt. Six of the participants were also able to complete their CPR certification and are now actively looking for work!
      - 2. Metro South has been piloting a Community Interpreter certification training course for multilingual students in the community. Students learn, among other things, the importance of confidentiality, how to handle protected conversations, how to interpret words versus how to

- interpret intent, and more. Two recent graduates of the course are now working as multilingual staff with Bloomington Public Schools.
- iii. Creating employer partnerships:
    - 1. A newly developing partnership! Metro South ABE recently met with a local trucking and transportation company to learn more about how they can support the newly hired employees in studying for their Commerical Driver's License permit.
  - c. Adult/Dislocated Worker
    - i. Final reports were issued to the Adult/Dislocated Worker providers for PY22 grants.
    - ii. MN DEED updated their Monitoring and Oversight policy. Internal processes were updated to ensure compliance with the updated policy.
    - iii. A PY23 grant monitoring schedule has been developed and will begin shortly.
  - d. Youth
    - i. We are anticipating receiving our 2025 TANF Youth Innovation allocation in the next month or so. These funds are used to provide young parents receiving MFIP benefits with internships and work experiences within Hennepin County or external employer partners.
    - ii. PY23/SFY24 monitoring for Youth sub-grantees is continuing. We anticipate monitoring will be wrapped up sometime in early Spring.
    - iii. Provider partners and program staff will be added to the new Hennepin-Carver WDB Sharepoint site after the 1/23 meeting with Adult/DW providers, during which Bri will provide an short training on using and navigating the site.
  - e. Vocational Rehabilitation
    - i. No Report
  - f. Carver County
    - i. County career pathway funding is being used at this time on 2 projects (we will be working on more throughout 2025):
      - 1. CDL for city employees – 7 employees from 5 Carver County cities have started training in January – hoping to finish by May
      - 2. Trades 360 – our tiny cabin project for youth (Carver County working with SW Metro Educational Coop and Three Rivers Park District on this initiative) – using funds to purchase materials for the cabin build, and paying stipends to 44 youth as they move through training modules
    - ii. OSY recruitment push throughout 2025 – restarting tabling at Hennepin Tech (Eden Prairie campus), outreach to CBOs in the community, as well as ABE and school districts for referrals (in addition to our own Carver County departments which is ongoing)
    - iii. Summer WE applications will be available 3/1
    - iv. Skills Based Hiring on 1/28 at Carver County – we have 11 employers registered and we continue to market
    - v. Quarterly Hiring Events at CareerForce Chaska – 1<sup>st</sup> is scheduled for March 4 and will be focused on health care industry – will share flyer when ready
    - vi. Re-establishing our work with Carver County libraries (this had been put on pause in 2024 due to our staff turnover situation) – we have 1<sup>st</sup> quarterly workshop scheduled at Chanhassen branch in March (advanced resumes) and I am meeting with library leadership to get our EC office hours restarted at various branches to expand access to our programs and services
  - g. Hennepin County
    - i. No Report

## 8. Adjourn

## **Mission Statement**

The Hennepin-Carver Workforce Development Board fosters individual and family economic well-being through the development of meaningful career pathways and employment opportunities, provides a skilled talent pipeline to our employer partners through the strategic investment of workforce development resources and the building of collaborative partnerships, and works alongside community organizations to identify and recruit community members to participate in workforce development services based on the workplace requirements expressed by our employer partners as well as the needs and interests of the community.

## **Vision Statement**

The board works in partnership with all community members and employers to support and enhance an effective, efficient, and inclusive workforce development system which assures alignment between available talent and employer needs resulting in economic prosperity for all.

*The Hennepin-Carver Workforce Development Board is a Proud Partner of the American Job Center Network and Minnesota CareerForce.*

