



MEETING MINUTES

September 10th, 2025

CareerForce in Bloomington

Attendees: Emily Watts, Elise Durbin, Cindy Larson, Kim Schrupp, Rebecca Stearns, Shannon Seaver, Andrea Erickson, Tim Mayer, Garfield Clark, Nicole Mattson, Doug Muller, Sarah Gutzman, Melissa Scherer, Julio Vargas-Essex, Amanda Rusch, Jennifer Kielas

Excused Absent: Kate Black, Derrick Givens, Christa Seaberg

Unexcused Absent: Brad Markwell

Staff: Erik Aamoth, Bri Zaiss, Virginia Rose Kane, Sarah Garbis

Guests: Jolene Rotich, Andrea Tieku, Asha Ali, JP Holwerda, Matt Udermann, Becca Lopez, Leah McNamee, Jess Niebuhr, Tim O'Neill

Online: Nicki Hanson, Debbie Ferry, Shannon Quigley, Tanika Reese, Kate Probert, Alejandra Sinecio, Warsan Artan, Avery Bardell, Becky Raymond, Holly Masek, Jen Albrecht, Jennifer Main, Nola Slagter-Johnson, Robert Guzman, Richard Grigsby

1. Approval of Agenda

MOTION: Shannon Seaver

SECOND: Kim Schrupp

MOTION PASSED: 16 Yeas, 0 Nays

2. Approval of Meeting Minutes (May 2025)

MOTION: Emily Watts

SECOND: Rebecca Stearns

MOTION PASSED: 16 Yeas, 0 Nays

3. Board Business

o **Board Action Request (HCWDB Action Request 2025-4 Youth at Work and Carver SRRT Grant Funds)**

i. MOTION: Doug Muller

ii. SECOND: Elise Durbin

iii. MOTION PASSED: 16 Yeas, 0 Nays

4. Success Story – BrookLynk alumnus Andrea Tieku

- o Internship Experience: Andrea detailed her various internships, starting in high school with a sales team, then working on a supply chain team, and later in project management and marketing roles. She highlighted the skills she gained, such as using SAP and Excel, and how these experiences shaped her career path.
- o Career Development: Andrea explained how her internships helped her discover her interest in analytics and marketing, leading her to major in marketing in college. She also shared her recent role as a liaison supporting strategic initiatives and program design.
- o Impact of MYP Grant: Andrea emphasized the significant impact of the MYP grant funds on her career, providing her with opportunities to explore different career paths and develop valuable skills. She expressed gratitude for the support and opportunities provided by the program.

5. Introduction of One Stop Operator – National Able Network in partnership with scaleLIT

- o Introductions: Alejandra Sinecio, Chief Program Officer, National Able Network; Robert Guzman, Director of External Affairs, scaleLIT, and Becky Raymond, Executive Director, scaleLIT.
- o Overview of Services: Robert Guzman explained the role of scaleLIT and National Able Network in providing seamless coordination of service deliveries across partners, focusing on integrating services and offering tools like the Airtable referral system.

- o Implementation Plans: Robert Guzman shared the implementation timeline, including site visits, onboarding for the unified referral system, and plans for cross-training and monthly partner meetings to ensure effective service integration.
- o Partnership Goals: Becky Raymond highlighted the goals of the partnership, emphasizing the importance of making the public workforce system more accessible and integrating services to support job seekers effectively.

6. Initiatives Supporting Immigrant and Refugee Populations – Presentation by Nicole Mattson, Asha Ali, and JP Holwerda.

- o Initiative Overview: Nicole and Asha Ali presented an initiative aimed at supporting immigrant and refugee populations by building career pathways and providing support to both job seekers and employers.
- o Program Goals: The initiative aims to create career pathways for new Americans, support job seekers in navigating barriers, and assist employers in creating inclusive workplaces. The program includes high-touch coaching, employer coaching, and partnerships with community organizations.
- o Success Stories: Asha Ali shared success stories, including attending job fairs, connecting with community organizations, and supporting CNA students through training and job placement. The program has met with over 125 potential job seekers and provided high touch coaching and support.
- o Future: The initiative plans to continue building partnerships, expanding career pathways, and focusing on career progression for new Americans. The goal is to create sustainable practices for employers and support job seekers in achieving long-term career success.

7. New HCWDB Work Group Structure

- o Executive Internal Operations: The executive internal operations group will continue to focus on planning meetings, setting agenda items, policy advocacy, and high-level governance. Membership recruitment and coordination with Deed or MAWB will also be part of this group's responsibilities.
- o Program Design & Development: The program design and development group will continue to focus on program service delivery coordination, bringing in more program partner staff, and working closely with the one-stop operator to ensure effective service delivery.
- o Strategic Talent Pathways: The new workgroup, strategic talent pathways, will focus on career pathway development, including apprenticeships, pre-apprenticeships, dual training pipelines, and coordinating with employer relations to identify new opportunities. The group will also bring in post-secondary and adult education representatives and training providers.

8. Board Updates

- o Director's Report (included in meeting materials)
 - i. OSO Partnership: Erik provided updates on the OSO partnership, highlighting the progress made and the importance of having a dedicated OSO expert to lead the efforts. The partnership aims to enhance service integration and support workforce development initiatives.
 - ii. Federal Budget Concerns: Erik discussed concerns about the federal budget, including the potential impact of continuing resolutions and the need to monitor funding levels for workforce development programs. The executive order on streamlining federal employment services and the pending WIOA reauthorization were also mentioned.
 - iii. System Collaboration: Erik emphasized the importance of system collaboration and alignment for future workforce development efforts. The goal is to create effective partnerships and collaborations to support job seekers and ensure compliance with MOUs and IFAs.
- o Program Updates
 - i. Adult Basic Education: Emily provided an update highlighting the impact of federal policy changes on enrollment and funding potentially impacting career pathways training; providers moving online or high flex model leading to barrier reduction.
 - ii. Wagner-Peyser: There were 614 drop-ins in June – August: 373 in Bloomington and 241 in Brooklyn Center. 126 one-on-one appointments; 225 visitors to the Career Lab; 605 referrals to DW; 39 referrals to WIOA; and 1183 RESEA calls.
 - iii. Adult/Dislocated Worker (provided with meeting materials)

- iv. Youth (provided with meeting materials)
- v. Vocational Rehabilitation: Sarah reported they are also watching federal funding; seeing more individuals in the 55+ age group experiencing mental and physical health concerns; childcare limitations impact employment options.
- o Carver County: Jen reported a childcare wait list; skills-based hiring event coming up on 9/23 and career fair a Chaska CareerForce on 10/15; follow them on their new Facebook page; a ribbon cutting ceremony for the new family resource center on 11/18; working with 76 people laid off from Apple Valley Foods on training and upskilling.
- o Hennepin County: Nola provided an update on Hennepin County's implementation of a Federated model for workforce development, emphasizing the importance of internal coordination and partnerships to address workforce challenges.

9. Adjourn

Serving communities of suburban Hennepin and Carver counties

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.

