



Board and CEO Meeting Minutes

The Workforce Connection Board, Workforce Board for Boone, Winnebago, and Stephenson Counties

Meeting: June 3, 2025

Time: 8:00am

Location: Rockford Public Library, 215 N Wyman St. Rockford, IL

Attendee Name	Organization	Status	Arrived
Bernsten, Ben	Goodwill of Northern IL	X	
Bloomquist, Scott	Boone/Winn Regional Off of Ed	Absent	
Brown, Karen	Highland Community College	X	
Cagnoni, Todd	City of Rockford	Absent	
Carter, Len	Freeport Hospital	Absent	
Cassaro, Michelle	Chicago Rockford Airport	X	
Crandall, Kathy	Crandall Stats & Sensors	Absent	
Dunn, Michael	Region 1 Planning Council	X	
Fahrenwald, Jeff	SupplyCore	X	
Fettes, Pamela	Growth Dimensions of Belvidere	X	
Fischer, Suzanne	OSF Healthcare System	Absent	
Gaulrapp, George	ComEd	X	
Grayewski, Jeremy	Berner Food & Beverage	Absent	
Guirl, Robert	Community Member	X	
Harle, Greg	Plumbers & Pipefitters Local	X	
Hill, Sheila Dr	Hill & Hill Enterprises	X	
Hulsebus, Brant Dr	Hulsebus Rockford Chiropractic	X	
Krupke, Mark	IL DHS-Div of Rehab Svcs	Absent	
Montalbano, Matt	RBC Wealth Management	Absent	
Nolley, Paul	Project First Rate	X	
Nord, Amy	Belvidere Chamber of Commerce	X	
Ott, Amy	Boylan Catholic High School	X	
Pirages, James	AGHL Law Office	X	
Primus, Troy	AAR Corp	Absent	
Proctor, Jamie	Americold Logistics LLC	X	
Ross, Dan	Community Foundation of N IL	Absent	
Rotello, Zack	Alpha Controls & Services LLC	X	
Salazar, Max	Collins Aerospace	Absent	
Schwebke, Casey	Swebco Manufacturing	X	
Spearman, Howard Dr	Rock Valley College	Absent	
Stewart, Amanda	Hughes Resources	Absent	
Wagner, Tricia	Rock Valley College	Absent	
Wells, Todd	Bourn & Koch, LLC	X	
Williams, Mark	Greater Freeport	Absent	
Zeal, Jeff	IL Dept of Employment Security	X	

Chiarelli, Joe	Board Chairman – Winn Co	X	
Helms, Scott	Board Chair – Stephenson Cty	X	Proxy George Gaulrapp
McNamara, Thomas Mayor	City of Rockford	X	
Johnson, Karl	Board Chairman – Boone Co	Absent	
Taira, Logan	IL Dept of Employment Security	Absent	
Duckett, Ted	IL Dept of Employment Security	Absent	
Geiger, Courtney	Goodwill of Northern IL	X	
McDonald, Karyn	Workforce Connection-Elevate Prog	Absent	
Sims, Tabitha	Rock Valley College	X	
Saccucci, Erica	Goodwill of Northern IL	X	
Caronna, Gina Dr	The Workforce Connection	X	
Busto, Anibal	The Workforce Connection	X	
Jaquez, Berenice	The Workforce Connection	X	
Huntress, Tina	The Workforce Connection	X	
Oysti, Chris	The Workforce Connection	X	
Rabe, Joan	The Workforce Connection	X	
Welsh, Emily	The Workforce Connection	X	
Guest:			
E.J. Dilonardo	North Boone Fire District #3	X	
Mitch Dickey	Transfer VR	X	

1. Call to Order

- a. TWC Board Michelle Cassaro, TWC Board Chair
TWC Board Meeting called to order at 8:06
- b. Chief Elected Officials Mayor Thomas McNamara, CEO Chair
Chief Elected Officials Meeting called to order at 8:07

2. Roll Call

- a. TWC Board
- b. Chief Elected Officials

3. Approval of Meeting Minutes

- a. TWC Board Meeting Minutes – 3/4/2025 Michelle Cassaro, TWC Board Chair
Amy Ott motioned to accept Jeff Fahrenwald 2nd
- b. CEO Meeting Minutes – 3/4/2025 Mayor Thomas McNamara, CEO Chair
Joe Chiarelli motioned to accept George Gaulrapp 2nd

4. Board Member Recognition

Michelle Cassaro

Amy Ott will be retiring from the Board as she has accepted a position outside of the area
Dan Ross will be retiring from the Board as he has also accepted another position

5. Training Provider and Program Approvals and Re-Approvals

Emily Welsh

Emily spoke on the training provider and program approvals and re-approvals.

Bob Guirl motioned to approve Pam Fettes 2nd
Joe Chiarelli motioned to approve George Gaulrapp 2nd

6. Approval of One-Stop Operator & Title 1-B Career Services for Adults Dislocated Workers, and Trade Award Pam Fettes

One-Stop Operator & Title 1-B Career Services for Adults Dislocated Workers and Trade is awarded to Goodwill of Northern IL

Greg Harle motioned to approve
Joe Chiarelli motioned to approve

Amy Ott 2nd
George Gaulrapp 2nd

7. Approval of Youth Services Award Todd Wells

WIOA and Youth Services Award is awarded to Goodwill of Northern IL

Karen Brown motioned to approve
Joe Chiarelli motioned to approve

Amy Ott 2nd
George Gaulrapp 2nd

Dr. Caronna advised received appropriation on Friday afternoon and a couple of things that are different from previous years. Checking with DCEO to see if a special meeting needs to be called prior to the September meeting.

Approval of the budgets as presented by Dr. Caronna

Greg Harle motioned to approve
Joe Chiarelli motioned to approve

Pam Fettes 2nd
George Gaulrapp 2nd

8. Approval of Program Year 2025 Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) Ben Bernsten

Program Year 2025 Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) presented by Ben Bernsten

Jeff Fahrenwald Motioned to approve
Joe Chiarelli motioned to approve

Jim Pirages 2nd
George Gaulrapp 2nd

9. Program Year 2025 WIOA Budget Dr. Gina Caronna and Dan White

Dr. Caronna advised that we received level funding.

10. Finance Paul Nolley, Finance Committee Chair

Paul Nolley presented the Financial Report

**11. Keynote Speaker
EMT and Firefighter Apprenticeship** E.J. Dilonardo, North Boone Fire District #3

E.J. Dilonardo Fire Chief of North Boone Fire District #3 presented the EMS Apprenticeship program

12. Virtual Reality Presentation Mitch Dickey, Transfer VR

Mitch Dickey presented VR Headsets and how they work

13. Board Chair's Remarks Michelle Cassaro

5 approvals that had been prepared for voting on, thank you to the Board & Staff for getting things ready

14. President & CEO's Remarks Dr. Gina Caronna

CEJA funding has been renewed for year 2. More metrics to be reported to the Board
Contracts for the Incubator for Think Big and Rock Valley College coming in July
September meeting will be at Think Big, 1311 N. Main St.
Thank you to The Workforce Connection Staff for a lot of work being done

15. Member Comments

Greg Harle commented on Mitch’s presentation that headsets were used at the Rockford Career Expo for High School students, and to make sure you try them.

16. Board Member Engagement Opportunities

Dr. Gina Caronna

September Meeting, annual breakfast

Check out Think Big’s facility

17. Public Comment

None

18. Adjournment

Greg Harle motioned to adjourn

Amy Ott 2nd

Joe Chiarelli motioned to adjourn

George Gaulrapp 2nd

DRAFT