

MINUTES

NORTHWEST WISCONSIN WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD, INC. MEETING March 27, 2025



- Attendees:**
- | | | |
|--|--|--|
| ☒ Judy Aspling | ☐ Brent Harju - excused | ☒ PC Rasmussen |
| ☐ Andrea Chartier | ☐ Michelle Johnson - excused | ☒ Crystal Rohde |
| ☒ Skyler Dural-Eder | ☒ Dale Kelm | ☒ Cindy Rouzer |
| ☒ Thomas Draghi - excused | ☒ Mary McPhetridge | ☐ Jennifer Shearer - excused |
| ☒ Katey Perkkio attended | ☒ Ashley Moore | ☒ Mary (MJ) Sills |
| ☒ Tami Follet | ☒ Elaine Ogilvie | ☒ Carl Svendsen |
| ☒ Brad Gast | ☐ Bambi Pattermann - excused | ☐ Dr. Russell Swagger |
| ☒ Edward Gruhl | ☒ Kristine Porter | ☐ Kerri Trubachik - excused |
| ☒ Gene Stanchfield | | |

Staff & Guests Present: Ryce Davis, Matthew Filipek, Mari Kay-Nabozny, Dawn Knapp, Bella Potack-Rettler, Melissa Rabska, Eric Faber, Jay Seppanen and Lisa Westberg.

☒ Thomas Michels

Call to Order - Roll Call

The meeting was called to order at 10:00 AM. Bella Potack-Rettler conducted the roll call.

Report of Public Meeting Notice

Bella Potack-Rettler reported that the **public meeting notice was published on the NWWIB social media, website, and distributed to the regional library systems and Class A newspapers within the WDA.**

Pledge of Allegiance

Judy Aspling led the NWWIB Board into the Pledge of Allegiance.

Welcome/Introduction of Guests

Judy Aspling noted that Kelly Klein has resigned as Chair and a member from the NWWIB Board and committees.

Approval of December 12, 2024, Meeting Minutes

Motion to approve meeting minutes as presented: Gene Stanfield

2nd: Dale Kelm

Board vote is unanimous, motion carries.

Election of NWWIB Officers - Mary McPhetridge

Judy Aspling was nominated to the Chair position. The nomination was accepted without objection, and by unanimous consent, Judy Aspling was elected.

Dale Kelm was nominated to the Vice-Chair position. The nomination was accepted without objection, and by unanimous consent, Dale Kelm was elected.

Crystal Rhode was nominated to the Secretary/ Treasurer position. The nomination was accepted without objection, and by unanimous consent, Crystal Rhode was elected.

Consent Agenda (NWWIB, Inc. Sub-Committee Reports)

NWWIB Executive Committee - Judy Asplin, Chair

Judy Aspling reported that the NWWIB Executive Committee met in March. Everything discussed in the NWWIB Executive Committee will be discussed in the meeting. Main discussion was about the NWWIB and WIPFLI.

Judy Aspling began the discussion of the NWWIB Board Meeting Allowance and Mileage Vouchers and potentially changing how the NWWIB should handle NWWB Board Meeting and Mileage allowances to members.

Tami Follet brought up the idea of .50/mile. Thomas Michels shared that DWD pays .51/mile for their travel mileage.

There is a motion to pay at .50/mile for Meeting Mileage and no Meeting Allowances. A motion to approve .50/mile for Meeting Mileage and no Meeting Allowances was made and passes unanimously.

First: Dale Kelm

Second: Gene Stanchfield

Will initiate changes at NWWIB June Board Meeting and in effect for upcoming committee meetings

NWWIB Strategic Directions & Development Committee Report - Judy Aspling, Chair

Judy Aspling shared that SDDC met on January 21st. Discussed the different NWWIB grants that have been received by the organization and highlighted the CLICK grant.

There were no further questions or comments.

NWWIB OSO Committee Report - Brad Gast, Chair

Brad Gast reported on OSO. Met January 21st. OSO discussed NW CEP's Superior relocation and costs related to that contract. Ashland and Park Falls recertification were submitted to DWD. Customer Satisfaction Surveys were sent out.

Mari Kay-Nabozny shared discussions on the Superior space and a need for less space by the partners. She reminded the Board that the NWWIB does not have a lease there and is just trying to lead discussion. NW CEP has a part-time career planner in the Superior area again.

There were no further questions or comments.

NWWIB Youth Committee – Mary McPhetridge, Chair

Mary McPhetridge shared that the Youth Committee met on January 21st. Mary McPhetridge shared that she was not there. Discussion from the NWWIB Youth Committee be shared in the meeting. Shared that there are a couple of new members that have joined the committee.

Motion to approve Consent Agenda: Crystal Rohde

2nd: Carl Svendsen

Board vote is unanimous, motion carries

Organizational Updates and Compliance (10:15 AM)- *Mari Kay-Nabozny*

a. Program Success Stories

Mari Kay-Nabozny shared with the NWWIB Board the success stories for the CLICK and QUEST programs that are in the packet. She encouraged the NWWIB Board to read them in the packet. Ryce Davis elaborated on a particular QUEST story that was a co-enrollment with QUEST and GROWS.

b. Funding Update

i. WAI 2.0

a. Hiring Training Navigator

Mari Kay-Nabozny shared that NWWIB was awarded a WAI 2.0 grant funded by ARPA. Requirements are a little different. Submissions were due early March. The NWWIB will hear back on it in April. The NWWIB is expecting a grant of \$920,000 in WAI 2.0 funds.

NWWIB wrote in a 9-week cohort with Midwest Trucking, with supportive services for heavy operation, CDL and OSHA as also a cohort for Building Science Principles. These cohorts and specific trainings were written in with the idea of individuals finding employment with the Duluth Bridge and Line 5 projects.

NWWIB will ask employers to come to a mini job fair when training is complete.

Mari Kay-Nabozny shared that one distinction from WAI and WAI 2.0 is that training for this round of the grant cannot exceed 12 months. The NWWIB can only pay for short-term training opportunities.

The NWWIB proposed to serve 100 participants. The NWWIB is hiring another full-time staff member. Her name is Sarah Weiland and she will be the Training Navigator for WAI 2.0. Mari Kay-Nabozny shared that she will be at the June NWWIB Board Meeting.

Elaine Ogilvie asked when CDL training will begin. Mari Kay-Nabozny shared that she is not sure yet but will update the NWWIB Board when it begins. Elaine Ogilvie asked how the NWWIB will be recruiting for WAI 2.0? Mari Kay-Nabozny shared that the NWWIB will do broad outreach and referrals are accepted. Elaine Ogilvie asked where Midwest Trucking was located? Mari Kay-Nabozny answered that Midwest Trucking is in Escanaba, Michigan.

No other questions or comments.

ii. **PH-6**

Mari Kay-Nabozny shared that Pathways Home got another round of funding. Shared that this is year four of the program. Mari Kay-Nabozny reminded the NWWIB Board that it is a Federal DOL grant. Part of a grant application that was put in by Southwest Workforce Board. Pathways Home 6 will have a \$767,000 budget.

No other questions or comments.

iii. **Human Centered Design/ Senator Baldwin**

Mari Kay-Nabozny shared Project ROBUST. NWWIB is a subaward for the Workforce Board project in Fox Valley. She shared that this grant would begin in May, hopefully. This grant is all about looking at the processes that NWWIB uses to interact with participants and having the funding to improve them. The NWWIB will be able to bring in a data quality specialist.

No other questions or comments.

iv. **Great Lakes Grant**

Mari Kay-Nabozny shared the Great Lakes Grant, went in March. \$231,445 dollars. The NWWIB is working with EmployMKE on this grant. The NWWIB would run a cohort in Southeast and in La Crosse. She shared that the NWWIB will also run a couple pilots for Wisconsin utilities to take on more individuals to add to their workforce.

No other questions or comments.

v. **HCST**

Mari Kay-Nabozny informed the board of the HCST grant. This grant is through WisDOT. The NWWIB had a meeting in February with WiDOT. Mari shared she will update the board when more information about HCST comes in as there has been no further communication.

Elaine Ogilvie asked if the NWWIB would be responsible for finding instructors. Mari Kay-Nabozny shared that HCST indicated that an individual at LCO could do it. Elaine Ogilvie shared that they might end up utilizing Noel and that there are individuals from Mathy who have volunteered to train parts of that program too.

Mari Kay-Nabozny shared that the Green Bay also has this grant too. She shared that WisDOT has not reached out to Green Bay's board either recently.

No other questions or comments.

vi. **FORWD**

Mari Kay-Nabozny shared that this grant just came through. Specific to opioid misuse. The NWWIB is focusing on trying to get individuals through this program to assist in teacher aide positions and emergency service positions.

No other questions or comments.

c. **Monitoring**

i. **WIOA: Program, Fiscal, EO**

Mari Kay-Nabozny shared that the WIOA response was turned in, waiting 45 days, letter in the packet noting that it is resolved and complete. Closed out soon.

Mari Kay-Nabozny shared that for the governance review, the NWWIB has not heard anything since January. Mary McPhetridge asked how long the process normally takes. Mari Kay-Nabozny shared that it is the NWWIB's first time doing it. Therefore, the NWWIB is not sure what to expect for a timeline for completion.

No questions or comments.

ii. **Rapid Response**

CEP continues to work with the affected Northland College employees and faculty.

d. **Federal Executive Orders**

Mari Kay-Nabozny shared the DEI orders and that DOL has rescinded their original order. The Executive Committee has approved that job descriptions and the website be updated to fall in line with the Federal Executive Orders.

Judy Aspling gave credit to the NWWIB team that went over and adjusted the job descriptions in a timely manner.

No questions or comments.

Regional Data Review

a. **WIOA Dashboard - Mari Kay-Nabozny**

Mari Kay-Nabozny shared the WIOA Dashboard. July 1st - December 31st. "Yellow" is for actual "Blue" is for negotiable. She shared that the measurable skills gain is low. The NWWIB will keep an eye on performance.

Melissa Rabska shared that in the packet there is an excel sheet that is just numbers. This sheet is specifically for Board members who want to just see WIOA numbers. She advised board members to look for WDA 7's column.

Judy Aspling asked Melissa if she felt Dislocated Worker will go up once school closes. Melissa Rabska said 'Yes'.

Skyler Dural-Eder shared that for the career academies, NWCEP wanted to do ServeSafe. She shared that the CEP is getting resistance from students and schools that the training takes too long currently, and that schools want something more individualized. She shared that while this feedback is good, NWCEP does not have the resources to do more individualized training for every student. Skyler Dural-Eder shared that she has been researching alternatives to help with the issue that school's are having with the ServeSafe course, but hasn't been able to find a good resource.

Carl Svensdon asked if the feed is coming from a specific group of students. Skyer Dural-Eder shared that the feedback is coming from new and enrolled students ages 14-18.

Mari Kay-Nabozny shared that the course used to be done in-person. Skyler Dural-Eder shared that at her organization, they have discussed that as a possible alternative. Mari Kay-Nabozny noted that Scott Schultz used to teach it in-person at the correctional facilities and do testing online.

Skyler Dural-Eder shared that NWCEP is getting interest in soft skills, but getting credentials is the hard part.

Skyler Dural-Eder updated that NWCEP was using a program called TESSA and that it cost them \$15k each year. She shared that NWCEP has terminated this contract and that their IT Director, Mary Zinnecker, created new software to do what TESSA previously did. The new software feeds into NWCEP's accounting software, can track participant data and NWCEP can control it internally.

Melissa Rabska noted that these corrective changes to NWCEP's internal processes have been great for live tracking when pulling together Quarter 2 reporting.

To end this section of the meeting, Mari Kay-Nabozny shared that the cohort numbers are on track and are being monitored.

No questions or comments.

i. **Quarter 2 WIOA Contracted Performance**

Mari Kay-Nabozny

Melissa Rabska shared the Quarter 2 WIOA Contracted Performance results that were in the NWWIB Board packet. She shared that the internal changes to NWCEP processes this year have helped with the live tracking and smoothness of this report.

No questions or comments.

ii. **Current WIOA Enrollment**

Mari Kay-Nabozny

Mari Kay-Nabozny shared that the cohort numbers are on track for WIOA enrollment and are being monitored by the NWWIB.

No questions or comments.

b. **WDA 7 Regional Employment - Thomas Michels**

Thomas Michels shared the report that was included in the packet. Year to year change - workforce increased a bit and the number of people unemployed increased. Thomas Michels shared that the numbers for the WDA7 did do worse for the state and nation total.

Populations projections, 0-14 age group is projected to decrease by - 8000 individuals. Only the age group to increase is 70 and up. Thomas Michels also shared that there were people in the labor force.

No questions or comments.

Policy Changes

- a) **Action Item:** Review and Approve WIOA Policy Updates

- I. #07 WIOA Adult & Dislocated Worker
- II. #08 WIOA Youth
- III. #09 WIOA Youth Program Elements
- IV. #16 WIOA Incumbent Worker Training

Melissa shared that all the policies have been updated to keep the NWWIB in compliance at a State and Federal level.

b) **Action Item:** Fiscal Procedures Manual Updates

- I. Section 100 – Overview of Financial Procedures
- II. Section 1500 – Cost Allocation Plan (CAP)

Melissa shared that Section 100 to update the officers in that policy. Section 1500 updated for State and Federal compliance.

First: Mary McPhetridge

Second: Gene Stanfield

Motion made and seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Financial Review (11:05 AM) – Mari Kay-Nabozny

I. WIPFLI Update

Mari Kay-Nabozny shared that just before the end of 2024 NWWIB staff found that WIPFLI did not allocate hours for an employee no longer with the organization. This mistake on WIPFLI's part came completely out of the NWWIB corporate funds. Mari Kay-Nabozny shared that Mary Lois Bolka went through and invoiced and allocated for all these funds to determine the impact. Mari Kay-Nabozny shared that through Mary Lois's hard work, the NWWIB was able to track \$18,000 missing in wages. She shared that another \$14,000 was accounted for in hours spent doing the work to determine the problem.

Mari Kay-Nabozny shared that the NWWIB sent a letter to WIPFLI for alerting them to the error and to pursue some way to capture the funds. WIPFLI agreed to pay for the missing funds, if the NWWIB agreed to sign a letter from WIPFLI.

Mari Kay-Nabozny shared that the NWWIB was ready to sign the letter from WIPFLI – however, Melissa Rabska noted that WIPFLI had nothing in the letter about paying the NWWIB's \$19,000 dollar fine for a missing 990 that WIPFLI filed late. The NWWIB called WIPFLI and will wait to sign until that problem is resolved. Once NWWIB receives the letter, the NWWIB will sign.

Judy Aspling thanked fellow NWWIB Board Member, Ed Gruhl, for his help in crafting the legal documents.

No further questions or comments.

a) 1.31.2025 Financial Review

Mari Kay-Nabozny went over the Financial Review with the NWWIB Board. The Financial Review is included in the NWWIB Board packet. Mari Kay-Nabonzy shared that the Audit and 990 will get in before the Federal deadline and notified the State that the NWWIB will be late. She shared that there will be a finding next year from the State for this.

Mari Kay-Nabozny share that the MyOneFlow is putting a credit in the NWWIB accounts to cover 50% of their annual fee. She noted that the NWWIB has not been happy with the timeline of the service.

No questions or comments.

11. Initiatives & Project Review (11:20 AM)

a. NWWIB By the Numbers - *Mari Kay-Nabozny*

Mari Kay-Nabozny shared the NWWIB Program Numbers report that is included in the packet.

No questions or comments.

b. Social Media and Outreach Report- *Bella Potack-Rettler*

Bella Potack-Rettler shared the Social Media and Outreach Report in the packet and encouraged the NWWIB Board to read it.

No questions or comments.

i. The Northern Wisconsin Virtual Townhall - *Mari Kay-Nabozny*

Mari Kay-Nabozny shared that she moderated the Northern Wisconsin Virtual Townhall with Senator Tammy Baldwin. It was a great event and very well attended.

No questions or comments.

c. Public Relations Report - *Melissa Rabska*

Melissa Rabska shared that the PR Report is in the packet and encouraged NWWIB Board members to read it.

No questions or comments.

d. Rapid Response Events - *Mari Kay-Nabozny*

i. Federal Workers

Mari Kay-Nabozny shared that the State of Wisconsin is going to be hosting 8 cohorts/job webinars for laid off federal workers to help and get them to work for the state. Just announced.

No questions or comments.

ii. Northland College

Mari Kay-Nabozny shared that Northland College will be displacing 150 workers. All will lose health insurance on May 31st. The biggest dislocation in the region for a while. The NWWIB has been working with partners to set up four dislocated worker sessions. Mari Kay-

Nabozny shared that most individuals she interacted with at the college probably will not rejoin the workforce till the fall. NW CEP did a nice job organizing these sessions too.

Skyler Dural-Eder shared that NW CEP will be able to support individuals from July to early August for dislocation.

12. NWWIB Board Discussion Question (11:40 AM)

"With workforce needs evolving rapidly—especially given changes at the federal level, shifts in policy, and the current regulatory environment, what's the biggest workforce challenge your business or industry is facing right now? And how do you see NWWIB playing a role in helping navigate these changes?"

Judy Aspling shared the NWWIB Board Discussion with the group:

PC Rasmussen shared that as a business owner, it is hard to find people to replace positions at Lakewoods: administrative roles like, golf course supervisors, marketing, accounting, etc. PC Rasmussen shared that he believes it all comes down to lack of housing. He shared he is not sure how the NWWIB can help with housing, but that he believes if the board can rectify this issue or, provide a valuable solution, it could solve a lot of the hiring issues. He did share that Bayfield reached out last year to organize a business coalition to put together businesses to do a housing project in the area.

Mari Kay-Nabozny shared that Kelly Westlund works with housing for Bayfield County as a part of UW-Extension. Mary McPhetridge agreed, that Kelly Westlund would be a good contact. She also shared that in Ashland, that market rate housing is slated on Beaser Avenue.

Judy Aspling shared that the discussion of housing is brought up frequently on the Gordon board. PC Rasmussen added that the lack of housing is a big limit to development. He posed the question of: How do you bring in a business if you can't find the people to staff it?

Dale Kelm shared that he is having the same staffing issues. He shared that long-term care has very bad staffing crisis and, in the area, it is hard to find people.

Carl Svendsen remarked that rates went through the roof for trucking and that the trucking industry is seeing too many drivers. He shared that Halvor Lines is in the process of putting up a CDL school and will train for anyone. Judy Aspling asked if the NWWIB would be able to use any programs to get individuals through training. Carl Svendsen shared that is possible.

13. State & Federal Updates (12:00 PM) - Mari Kay-Nabozny

A .March 5 - House Education and Workforce Subcommittee on Higher Education and Workforce Development hearing on Strengthening WIOA: Improving Outcomes for America's Workforce.

Mari Kay-Nabozny shared she will hear more about this topic at her upcoming conference she is attending. No questions or comments.

14. Comments & Announcements

I. NWWIB Board Member Vacancy

Mari Kay-Nabozny shared that the board will have a vacancy. Possible candidate from TrueNorth Goodwill. She shared that she is open to suggestions from the NWWIB Board and for individuals to send possible candidates her way.

II. Medford Library JobPod

Mari Kay-Nabozny shared that Medford Library is getting a JobPod.

III. Join us at TDCON2025!

Mari Kay-Nabozny shared that the conference will be in Milwaukee this year and will be in Green Bay next year.

IV. Enterprise Commute Program

Mari Kay-Nabozny shared that Enterprise has a program where businesses can rent a car (large suburban or mini van) at a reduced rate. Businesses can set up a ride share program at an affordable rate this way. The flyer is in the meeting packet.

15. Next Meeting Date & Location – June 26th or at the call of the Chair. Location TBD
Possibly ballroom in Superior in old Superior Post Office building.

The Board requests the presence of Mari Kay-Nabozny, Melissa Rabska, Matthew Filipek, Dawn Knapp, Ryce Davis, Eric Faber, Jay Seppanen, Lisa Westberg, Bella Potack-Rettler and Ana Minski