



North Central Wisconsin Workforce Development Board

CHIEF ELECTED OFFICIALS Meeting

December 21, 2023 • 9:30 a.m.

Zoom

Minutes

CEO Members Present: Jim Winkler (Oneida County), Craig McEwen (Marathon County), Al Haga (Portage County), Rick Pease (Adams County), John Hokamp (Wood County), and Don Friske (Lincoln County)

CEO Members Absent: Ben Pierce (Langlade County), Richard Logan (Vilas County), and Cindy Gretzinger (Forest County)

Others Present: None

Staff Present: John Cokl, Peter Gelhar, Brian Kalish, Jane Spencer, and CJ Tangedal

1. **Call the Meeting to Order** – Winkler called the meeting to order at 9:34am
2. **Announcements, Correspondence and Communications** – None
3. **Approve Agenda** – Haga moved to approve the agenda; it was seconded by Friske. Motion carried.
4. **Approve Chief Elected Officials' Minutes from October 19, 2023** – Hokamp moved to approve the amended minutes; it was seconded by McEwen. Motion carried.
5. **Approve NCWWDB Bylaws** – Haga moved to approve the presented NCWWDB Bylaw edits; it was seconded by Pease. Motion carried.
6. **Accept Treasurer's Report** – Haga moved to accept the treasurer's report as presented; it was seconded by Hokamp. Motion carried.
7. **NCWWDB Membership – Role of Chief Elected Officials** – Spencer updated the group that the board chair, Joe Kinsella, had announced his retirement at the last meeting. The chair position has been filled by Al Chaney. Spencer reminded the group of their role in regard to membership. Spencer is anticipating more retirements and will need the help from the CEOs to fill vacancies.
8. **Approve New Board Member Nomination Jodi Gruhn, Talent Acquisition & Employee Experience Manager for County Materials and Conney Edmondson, Executive Director**

for **CWIMA** – Haga moved to approve Jodi Gruhn and Conney Edmondson as new board members; it was seconded by Friske. Motion carried.

9. **NCWWDB Updates**

- **Program Year 2023 Job Center Agreements** – Spencer mentioned that all the job center agreements have been submitted to DWD and are in review. Once they are received and approved by the state, they will be brought back to the group for review and approval.
- **QUEST Grant** – Spencer updated the group of this newest grant to help build the childcare and education workforce. We have partnered with MSTC, NTC, and Nicolet, as well as Childcaring, Inc. Career Planners are out recruiting people for the programs that are starting in January. The grant is scheduled to end September 2024 and the training will need to be completed at that time.
- **Wisconsin Pathways Home 4 Grant** – We received this direct Department of Labor grant as of July 1st. It is a \$4 million, four-year re-entry grant. Currently two county jails have signed MOUs, but there are more interested parties.

10. **Discussion on Workforce Issues in Each County**

- **Marathon County** – McEwen reported they are getting a new car wash and have several new restaurants open. They are looking for correctional officers, they had 17 applicants and are conducting interviews. At the December 14th County Board Meeting they approved the Regional Forensic Science Center. It will go out for bids in late January and early February. It will be attached to NTC near the north end of their campus. There will be five or six new employees hired. They're experiencing issues with CNA and housing shortages like other counties.
- **Adams** – Pease reported things are going well. They are still struggling with housing. Economic development is trying to get a company from Europe to build a manufacturing plant. The population is increasingly elderly; therefore, it is difficult to lure younger workers to the area with a lifestyle. They are struggling with dispatchers and have vacancies in service-related industries.
- **Lincoln** – Friske reported they are focusing on housing and retention for businesses and their employees. They are rebranding the county to establish an identity; the county board came up with a mission statement and branding logo. They are targeting the younger population.
- **Langlade** – No report.
- **Forest** – No report.
- **Wood** – Hokamp reported they are struggling with their Post Office. Almost every two weeks there are posted positions. Many auto service facilities have auto mechanic positions open. They are in need of CNA and nurses; the senior living facilities and hospitals are short staffed. Norwood in Marshfield has six openings for

CNAs which are being filled by agency CNAs which is costing the county quite a bit of money.

- **Oneida** – Winkler reported they are the destination county, the people come then leave. They have a shortage of workers and have had businesses close due to not having workers. Post COVID, they have seen some workforce coming to the area from the larger cities. The largest population in the county are retired, they are working on tapping into that population to return to part-time work. They struggle to find qualified workers and also have a shortage of housing.
- **Portage** – Haga reported the city of Stevens Point has acquired the old ShopKo building and is looking to develop that area. The old Walmart has been converted to a Ross, Five Below and Big Lots Home. The new Wendy's is doing great in the Crossroads Commons area. Plover has just approved a new carwash. There are incubator buildings being built near MSTC for start-up businesses. Mullin's Cheese has continued to make improvements. McCain's is getting closer to completing their \$100 million addition. There will be a 98-unit high rise building in Plover.
- **Vilas** – No Report

11. Adjourn – Meeting adjourned at 11:01a.m.