

Minutes (approved)

CEO Members Present: Rick Pease (Adams County), Bill Bialecki (Lincoln County), Michael Tautges (Oneida County), Ann Konopacky (Vilas County) and John Hokamp (Wood County).

CEO Members Absent: Terry Lukas (Forest County), Steve Maier (Langlade County), Stacey Morache (Marathon County), and John Pavelski (Portage County).

Staff Present: Brian Kalish, Ginger Keymer, John Cokl, Libby Heidmann and Peter Gelhar (10:05 am).

- 1) **Call to Order/Roll Call** – Quorum reached and meeting called to order at 9:31 a.m.
- 2) **Approve Chief Elected Officials' Minutes from December 18, 2025** – Hokamp moved to approve the minutes from December 18, 2025; seconded by Tautges. Motion carried.
- 3) **Accept Treasurer's Report** – Hokamp moved to accept the Treasurer's Report; it was seconded by Tautges. Motion carried.
- 4) **Approval of One Stop Operator Local Firewall Policy** - Hokamp moved to approve the OSO Local Firewall Policy; it was seconded by Konopacky. Motion carried.
- 5) **Subrecipient Monitoring Results** – Heidmann summarized the monitoring letter included in the packet. Each year we are required by DWD to monitor our subrecipient, in this case, FSC regarding contract expectations and perform file reviews to ensure compliance with WIOA policies. Hokamp made a motion to approve the subrecipient monitoring results; it was seconded by Konopacky. Motion carried.
- 6) **Approval of Procurement Process and Timeline** – Tautges made a motion to approve the procurement process and timeline; it was seconded by Hokamp. Motion carried.
- 7) **Approval of New Board Member and Members Renewing their 3-year Term**
 - a) **Renewal of Chaney, Eckmann, Herold, Karl, and Norlin for another 3-year term, beginning July 1, 2026- June 30, 2029.** Tautges made a motion to renew the terms of five Board members; seconded by Hokamp. Motion carried.
 - b) **Approval of New Board Member, Amanda Weber (Peterson).** Hokamp made a motion to approve the new Board Member; seconded by Tautges. Motion carried.

- 8) Discussion on possible amendment to Bylaws removing need for reappointment and approval of renewing Board Members after two terms of service** – Currently, our organization’s bylaws allow for unlimited number of Board Member terms but require reapproval of Board members after two three-year terms, or six years. This becomes difficult to document and requires completion, approval, and refile of nomination forms. Recruitment and retention of Board members can be challenging. Mechanisms are in place for the removal of a Board member, if warranted. Difficulty is often finding those willing to volunteer their time. Informational item to gauge CEO’s comfort and support with this amendment. Pease, Hokamp, and Konopacky expresses support the removal of reappointment clause in bylaws. AWE will bring back amended draft of the bylaws to the May CEO meeting for approval.
- 9) Change of meeting time beginning in April and change of date of June meeting** – Due to RFP timeline/requirements, discussion and approval from CEOs on changing spring meeting dates from 9:30 a.m. April 16 and June 25 to **10:00 a.m. on May 21 and June 25**. Keymer will request use of 2nd floor Community Room space at the Wausau headquarters of Marathon County Public Library
- 10) AWE Updates** – Continuing to update documents with our rebranding. Rapids Job Center staff will be moved out by next week. Still working with McMillan Library to arrange services and space there. Marathon County move scheduled to be completed by April 1st. Partners are preparing to move to the new building, 11 Scott Street. The State (DWD) monitored us in November. We have submitted our response to their monitoring. They have 30 days to respond to our response.
- 11) Discussion on Workforce Issues in Each County**
- a) **Adams** – Pease reports a new chiropractor and salon, sharing office space downtown. Chula Vista is expanding significantly in the south of town. Busy winter season, with Sandy Valley hosting several festivals.
 - b) **Forest** – No report
 - c) **Langlade** – No report
 - d) **Lincoln** – No report. Bialecki logged in but muted.
 - e) **Marathon** – No report
 - f) **Oneida** – Tautges added that the Woodruff development, mentioned by Konopacky, is workforce housing and receiving tax credits with units reserved for residents with certain percentage of County median income. More housing in the works in Oneida County. Businesses are happy with snow this season. Tax revenue should be up. Rhinelander has had immense success with their indoor dome for sporting and recreational events. Rhinelander and Minocqua are conducting a feasibility study for a conference center.
 - g) **Portage** – No report
 - h) **Vilas** – Konopacky shared, in the Town of Phelps, an old hospital has been torn down and will be redeveloped into housing and retail businesses on a bluff overlooking a lake. Simpson Electric expanding in Lac du Flambeau. Vilas County Economic Development, hosting well attended programs for entrepreneurs and women in business. Lack of employees in the service industry. Hopeful housing in neighboring Oneida will help.
 - i) **Wood** – Late December Prince Corporation closed in Marshfield, after 140 years in Wood County. As of today, there is no other buyer. City of WI Rapids agreed to lease 27 wooded acres in Town of Grand Rapids to Great Lakes Utilities to build a 5-megawatt solar project; could supply about 1/6 of the city’s daily energy usage. Childcaring announced \$100,000 ARPA grant to Building Blocks Learning Center in Rapids.
- 12) Adjourn** - Pease adjourned the meeting at 10:27 a.m.