



**Workforce Alliance**  
**Executive Committee Meeting Minutes**  
January 8, 2025 – 11:30 AM

**1. Welcome and Introductions**

The Workforce Alliance (WA) Executive Committee met on January 8, 2025 in person at the Wichita Workforce Center and virtually via Zoom. Chair Jeff Longwell welcomed Committee members and called the meeting to order.

**2. Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Reauthorization**

Reauthorization of the Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act (WIOA), “A Stronger Workforce for America” (ASWA), was not included in the Continuing Resolution approved by Congress and signed by the President on December 21, 2024. The reauthorization would have included more restrictive funding requirements. Staff and board members will continue to work with elected officials to toward reauthorization that includes a less restrictive funding mandate. The WA has a good relationship with the Congressional delegation and they have a strong level of knowledge of the workforce system; staff must solidify their understanding of the impact the WA has with the federal funding it receives and how that could be affected by changing funding mandates. Although reauthorization was slated for 2019, the system continues to be funded by appropriations. Staff are hopeful that reauthorization will occur as there is a strong case for continued funding due to the workforce system’s ability to generate federal revenue through job placements and upskilling.

*Report was received and filed.*

**3. 2025 Workforce Alliance Work Plan and Goals**

The Executive Committee reviewed some current operations and programs as well as identified action items and goals to address in 2025. Lawing provided some presentation slides and an article on economic mobility.

Lawing reviewed the organization's current strategic goals, which focus on performance, leveraging resources and aligning services to create community impact beyond WIOA funding and supporting youth employment services and programs.

The proposed 2025 Work Plan for the WA was discussed. The proposed focus of the work plan is to enhance economic mobility, particularly for at-risk youth, justice involved individuals (Fair Chance, returning citizens), veterans, transitioning workers (layoffs, sector growth, etc.) and employer partners.

In line with recommendations of the Board’s Leveraged Funds Task Force, the Committee discussed the need for better communication and understanding among the Board members, particularly regarding the planning and execution of projects. There is a need for the organization to be positioned better to generate revenue.

The 2025 WA Board Work Plan proposes strategies to increase Board member engagement in order to define and/or measure Board member support such as inviting senators and representatives to visit the workforce center annually to visit with board members, increasing industry partner engagement by participation by conducting lunch-and-learn sessions at workforce centers for a fee with valuable content such as labor market information and youth employment that is targeted to hiring managers and human resource professionals. Alana McNary suggested the sessions be promoted with social media teasers and quick questions and answer sessions that explain the content of the sessions. Chair Longwell asked that staff continue to improve communication and notify Board members when staff are engaging with their organizations or geographic area. The work plan also includes developing a plan for raising \$50,000 from the annual Jobs FORE Youth golf tournament and a challenge for board members to assist with that goal.



Related to the importance of Board members using WA services and supporting the WA as an organization, the creation of two broad categories for board members was proposed: employer partner (job postings, job fairs, pre-screenings, on-the-job training, registered apprenticeship and youth employment) and strategic funders (Jobs FORE Youth golf tournament, Camp HYPE, matching funds for grants and special projects).

The Board will need to undergo strategic planning to develop goals for 2026 through 2028. Planning would take place during the 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> quarter of 2025. In the past, the board has conducted planning engaging a formal consultant or through a series of topical sessions. Lawing suggested if a consultant is engaged to facilitate it would be a workforce system subject matter expert. Blackburn suggested a focus on community fundraising since WIOA funds are decreasing.

The Executive Committee will present and recommend the 2025 Work Plan to the full Board for adoption at the January 22nd meeting.

*Take appropriate action.*

#### 4. **Workforce Alliance (WA) Board and Committee Membership**

The WA Committee assignments were reviewed and updated for appointments in 2025 by the WA Board Chair. Memberships will also be discussed at the Board meeting on January 22.

The transition of board members and committee assignments was discussed. Dr. Krull's retirement from Butler Community College was acknowledged. Dr. Jackie Vietti will be the interim president. Dr. Rachel Bates from Cowley College will replace Kami Moore as the WIOA Adult Education rep, and Jameison Saudino from IBEW will replace Russ Kennedy. Gabe Schlickau will transition off the Executive Committee in 2025 and will remain on the Board. Cheryl Childers from Cox Machine has been asked to join the committee. Gabe's recognition for his long service was acknowledged and he expressed his appreciation for the opportunity to step down from the Executive Committee. He will become the Wichita Regional Chamber of Commerce Board Chair in 2026. Schlickau and Lawing discussed the importance of the partnership between the Chamber and the Workforce Alliance. Lawing proposed hosting a Chamber board of directors meeting at the workforce center and suggested inviting Chamber Chair Victor Ojeleye, Cargill to visit the center as well.

It is important for Board members to serve on committees when possible, and staff will work with the Board chair to fill committee roles such as a co-chair for the Youth Employment Committee, additional public sector POP members and Finance Committee members.

*Report was received and filed.*

#### 5. **Consent Agenda**

Approval of meeting minutes for December 12, 2024, Program Year 2024 (PY24) budget update, Operations & One-Stop operator report, Registered Apprenticeship and Communications reports and an addition to the Eligible Training Provider (ETP) List for Elite CDL School were presented to the Committee for review and approval.

Elite CDL School's application to be added to the ETP list was discussed and staff recommended approval. Staff from the school were present to provide information and answer questions. The school's CEO, Michael Hall explained their unique program, which offers a fast-track to becoming a CDL driver and includes job placement services. The need for drivers continues to be great. There is a potential for partnerships with local businesses and the possibility of expanding their services to other areas.

Lindsay McWilliams, One-Stop Operator, reported that a second one-stop operator position has been posted and will possibly be hired by the end of the month. In-service training for staff is planned for February and will include team building, review of operational reporting and tours of local partners facilities.



*Gabe Schlickau (Pat Jonas) moved to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. Motion adopted.*

**6. Announcements**

- WA Board member, Kathy Jewett, who has served on the National Association of Workforce Boards (NAWB) for the past eight years has resigned from that board. She will attend her last meeting next week and provide an update on discussions regarding WIOA reauthorization to the board at a future meeting. Staff and board members thanked Kathy for her service to the NAWB Board. She will continue to serve on the WA board and the Executive Committee.
- Lawing discussed the potential for legislative reform in response to the recent uptick in gun violence, particularly in relation to juvenile justice reform. He mentioned a meeting with community groups, judges, and legislators to explore this issue further. There is the potential for workforce development to partner with community groups to reduce the number of at-risk youth. Pat Jonas touched on the topic of high school graduation rates and the need for forward-thinking companies to start contacting potential candidates earlier through programs like high school internships and asked if high school credit can be earned through a high school internship. The WA is working with schools toward this goal.

**7. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 12:40 PM.

**Attendees:**

LWDB Executive Committee Members

Rod Blackburn  
Kathy Jewett via Zoom  
Pat Jonas  
Jeff Longwell  
Alana McNary  
Gabe Schlickau

Staff/Guests

Marcy Aycock  
Amanda Duncan  
Denise Houston via Zoom  
Keith Lawing  
Shirley Lindhorst  
Mary Mann  
Chad Pettera  
Janet Sutton via Zoom  
Kevin Brassler, Elite CDL School  
Michael Hall, Elite CDL School  
Samantha McAllister, Elite CDL School  
Erica Ramos, KS Dept. of Commerce  
Lindsay McWilliams, One-Stop Operator, Goodwill