



Workforce Alliance Local Workforce Development Board (LWDB)
Executive Committee Meeting Minutes
September 15, 2025 – 3:00 PM

1. Welcome and Introductions

The Workforce Alliance (WA) Executive Committee met on September 15, 2025 virtually via Zoom. Board Vice Chair Alana McNary welcomed attendees and called the meeting to order.

2. Kansas Chamber/Wichita Regional Chamber DC Fly-In Review

McNary attended the Kansas/Wichita Regional Chamber DC Fly-In on September 10 through 12 and shared takeaways from the event. The event included several networking opportunities and meeting with congressional representatives to discuss various topics.

The workforce development briefing included representatives from the House Labor Committee who acknowledged the value and priority placed on skills training and the role of local workforce boards. These representatives were unaware of the potential funding cuts to WIOA programs by the House Appropriations Committee. While there is support for workforce development at the congressional level and funding these projects, there is a lack of awareness about the extent of the proposed funding cuts that are being considered. The bill approved by the House Appropriations Committee basically eliminated the WIOA Youth Program and the Senior Community Services Employment Program (SCSEP) and cut in half WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker funding; WA operations and would lose 71% from year to year. The WA also has some large grants ending this year that would compound the issue. Congressional members received the information on the impact of proposed cuts. The Senate Appropriations Committee voted 26 to 3 to fund at existing levels. These and other topics will be discussed at the next strategic planning policy session. Committee members expressed the importance of building political capital and advocating for these programs with Congressional delegations.

Report was received and filed.

3. 2026 – 2028 Strategic Planning Sessions

Summaries of the first two sessions were provided for review. Notes were taken to review for consistent themes and patterns from the discussions.

The first session focused on labor market challenges in Wichita, with panelists discussing widespread labor shortages across sectors including construction, healthcare, and manufacturing, attributed to an aging workforce and wage differentials compared to other regions with healthcare and construction in particular paying less than other areas. The discussion also highlighted ongoing challenges about attracting talent to Wichita. Concern about AI was another issue that was discussed at the session with negative perceptions about impact to jobs and many unknowns. Opportunities that were identified included better collaboration with education partners for skills training to align with evolving industry needs, creating more of a hands-on youth summer program, and exploring hybrid internship models. The WA Youth Employment Committee plan to address some of these issues at their next meeting to plan for next year's Youth Employment Project (YEP).

In the second session, highlights included soft skills (21st Century skills) approach or model which helps students develop soft skills with role playing. Butler Community College president, Dr. Daniel was a part of such a program in Arkansas and it was very successful. Other discussions included growing partnerships around local regional economic mobility strategies with community organizations and resources needed to continue to support targeted veterans employment strategies.

The upcoming session on workforce development policy looks like it will be well attended and include elected officials and community-based organizations and board members. Primary speakers include Brad Turner-Little, President & CEO of the National Association of Workforce Boards, to discuss



federal policies and issues, John Rolfe, President of the Wichita Regional Chamber, providing a more detailed overview of DC fly-in issues and activities and Kelly Bielefeld, Superintendent of Wichita Public Schools, will discuss how workforce development works with the school system.

Report was received and filed.

4. Workforce Center Operations Update and Request for Proposal (RFP)

Workforce Center operations and an RFP for the Wichita Workforce Center leased space was discussed.

Lindsay McWilliams, the one-stop operator for Goodwill has left her position. Lawing explained that they are working with Goodwill to modify the contract due to her departure. Goodwill will be providing additional help; staff are continuing to coordinate activities and operations at the Workforce Center in the interim. The partnership remains strong and both parties are committed to the continued relationship.

Chad Pettera presented an update on the Wichita Workforce Center's lease renewal in 2026, announcing plans to issue an RFP for new space in the next few weeks to close the end of October. A task force needs to be appointed to review the proposals received, with the first meeting taking place mid-November. The current landlord has been notified and encouraged to apply. Potential changes to the budget could impact what decisions are made. Committee members were asked to contact any potential commercial real estate they have affiliations with about the upcoming RFP process. Kathy Jewett volunteered to be on the task force and McNary asked anyone interested in serving to contact her.

Committee members authorized the Board Chair to appoint an RFP evaluation taskforce.

5. Policy Changes: Credit / Purchase Cards and WA Retirement Plan Modification Task Force

It has become difficult to conduct business with limited cards and using bank corporate cards. WA staff are exploring options to issue cards to more staff and implement controls as well as seeking permission to apply for different credit and purchasing card options. Pettera presented a proposal to update the credit card policies to allow for new providers and expanded card usage, with a focus on CorePay as a potential vendor. Committee members agreed that staff continue to do research with CorePay as well as explore other options. Staff will proceed with the CorePay application process for purchasing cards and explore other options if needed. A draft policy change was provided for review.

Pettera also followed up from a previous meeting regarding updates to the WA retirement plan. A task force needs to be appointed to review changes to the plan. A virtual meeting is scheduled with Hinkle Law Firm on October 2nd to discuss these changes. McNary, Kathy Jewett, Cheryl Childers, and Scott Stiles volunteered to participate on the retirement plan review task force. Meeting invitations will be sent for calendars. Actions from that meeting will be discussed at the Committee's next meeting.

Scott Stiles (Cheryl Childers) moved to approve staff to submit application(s) with companies and update the Credit/Purchasing Card policy. Motion adopted.

6. 2025 Community Impact Projects

Amanda Duncan shared updates on several grants and programs.

- Kauffman Returning Citizen Consortium (RCC) Planning Grant - The WA is working with its workforce board counterpart in Kansas City, Workforce Partnership, to create and present a project plan to the Kauffman Foundation by the end of November. The plan is to improve support for justice-involved individuals, focusing on pre-release preparation and employment readiness. Efforts include connecting employers with incarcerated individuals to improve employment opportunities post-release, and address gaps and barriers to providing such support. The plan will be submitted in December and if accepted, awards will be made in March or April 2026 from \$5 million to \$20 million projects lasting from two to five years. A detailed outline and plan for the grant will be presented at the October or November meeting.



- Youth Employment Project (YEP) – There are plans for a large regional career fair for seniors and career exploration fair for sophomores in April at Century II. The YEP annual report will be released by October 1st. The WA Youth Employment Committee will meet on October 21st to set goals for YEP for the 2025-2026 academic year.
- Homeless Veterans’ Reintegration Program (HVRP) – This U.S. Dept. of Labor grant provides for case management, training services and wrap around support services. Staff began accepting referrals on September 2nd.
- EPA Brownfields Grant – The goal for this grant is to train 90 individuals annually to gain certifications to work in environmental and remediation occupations. An RFP for a training provider has been released and due October 3rd. Staff began accepting referrals on September 2nd.
- One Workforce Grant – This grant will end in January 2026. Staff are actively tracking exits and employment and processing a few enrollments.
- Community Talent Talks - These regional events aim to foster communication between business, industry, education, and training partners. Events were held in Cowley and Sumner and another event is being planned for Butler County on November 18th.
Report was received and filed.

7. **Consent Agenda**

Approval of meeting minutes for July 9, 2025 and special meeting on August 4, 2025, Program Year 2025 budget update, operations & one-stop operator report and on-the-job training (OJT) contracts for GE Aerospace, Omni Aerospace and Galaxy Technologies were presented to the Committee for review and/or approval.

Scott Stiles (Kathy Jewett) moved to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. Motion adopted.

8. **Announcements**

- The annual Jobs FORE Youth Golf Tournament is scheduled for September 25th and is sold out.
- A recent job fair was held at the Wichita Workforce Center for Gilley’s, part of the new entertainment district in Park City, and was attended by over 200 individuals. Gilley’s is scheduled to open on December 15th.

9. **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 3:55 PM.

Attendees:

LWDB Executive Committee Members

Cheryl Childers
Kathy Jewett
Pat Jonas
Jeff Longwell
Alana McNary, Chair
Tony Naylor
Scott Stiles

Staff/Guests

Amanda Duncan
Denise Houston
Keith Lawing
Shirley Lindhorst
Mary Mann
Chad Pettera
Tyrone Baker, YMCA
Erica Ramos, Kansas Dept. of Commerce
Amy Williams, Kansas Leadership Center