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WIB Board Meeting Minutes
1:00 p.m. Tuesday, October 28, 2025
Twin Pines Conservation Center – Winona

Board members present: Becky Brooks – Chair, Steve Halter – Secretary, Trent Courtney – Treasurer, Lisa Aden, Diana Ball, Ingrid McCallister, Jennifer Taylor and Joan Wright.

Members present via Webex and phone: Nicole Reese, Omar Galal and Katrina Williams.

CLEO members present: The Honorable David Stubblefield – Oregon County, The Honorable Jesse Roy - and The Honorable Zach Williams - Wright County.

SCWIB Staff and guests in attendance (including Webex/phone): Jody James - Executive Director, Lisa Engelhardt – Fiscal Manager, Heather Wolf - West Plains Job Center Supervisor, Steve McCann, Veterans Representative, Zohn Engelhardt, Employment Specialist.

Call to Order: Becky Brooks, Board Chair, called the meeting to order.

Roll Call: Jody James, SCWIB Executive Director, completed the roll call and it was established there was a quorum.

Approval of Minutes: Trent Courtney made a motion to approve the minutes from the July 22nd meeting. Lisa Aden seconded the motion. Motion carried. CLEOs concurred.

Leanna Eckhoff provided compliance and monitoring reports. Leanna Eckhoff provided an update on the Annual Sub-State Monitoring Report. She said Office of Workforce Development (OWD) findings were minor things, and OWD had accepted our response in May. Leanna discussed the WIOA enrollment report. She stated Dislocated Worker and Youth enrollments have increased and look fantastic. The final performance report for program year 2024 was reviewed. Leanna said the South Central Region missed the Dislocated Worker and Youth median earnings measure. She explained that the state had used an inflated number in the prior year that was not accurate, so we have an opportunity to renegotiate this measure for program year 2025. She will also keep a close eye on the youth credential rate. Leanna said she completed first quarter monitoring with no big findings and only minor corrections. She said things look good and staff are great to work with. Leanna said she will provide detailed training for new staff. She concluded by stating how we are doing things work well.

Lisa Engelhardt provided the financial report for July 1 – September 30, 2025. She pointed out that Business Services is behind, but we have a plan to focus more time on employers. She also explained this is a narrow grant which only allows specific activities. Lisa Aden made a motion to approve the financial report. Jennifer seconded the motion. Motion carried. CLEOS concurred.

Lisa requested to transfer up to \$50,000 from Fiscal Year 2025 Dislocated Worker money to Fiscal Year 2025 Adult funds. Becky suggested moving up to \$100,000. Trent made a motion to transfer the funds as requested up to \$100,000. Lisa Aden seconded the motion. Motion carried. CLEOs concurred.

Jody James provided the Executive Director's Report. She discussed the non-WIOA grants. Jody explained the QUEST (Quality Jobs, Equity, Strategy and Training) Disaster Recovery National Dislocated Worker Grant was written to serve twenty-four students by providing supportive services. The grant was \$171,000 and scheduled to run from October 2023 – October 2026. She said the grant was completed on September 30, 2025, by providing supportive services to over fifty individuals and assisting with tuition in the last month of the grant. She also briefly discussed the status of the SkillUP and Jobs League grants.

Jody discussed the plant closures and layoffs. She informed the committee Arlee Home Fashions in West Plains closed their doors on September 26th, affecting thirty-five employees. She said staff were not informed until after the closure. HLJ Consumer Products is a new company that bought some of their inventory and equipment and leased the same building. HLJ hopes to hire many of the affected workers. Jody reported that Ozark Action, Inc. laid off several staff effective September 30th. Nine employees were permanently laid off and eleven were temporarily laid off with a call back date. MERS/Goodwill put their Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) employees on pause in July and had to permanently lay them off the first of October. This affected one employee locally. MERS will also no longer be able to contribute to their portion of the cost share at the Job Centers.

Jody informed the committee that the required seat for Vocational Rehabilitation is temporarily filled by Robin Thomas. The new area supervisor has resigned so Robin will remain on the board until someone new is hired. Zora Mulligan, Chancellor of MSU West Plains, has agreed to serve on the board to represent higher education. She was recommended by Dennis Lancaster in his letter of resignation. Jody presented a letter from Howell County presiding commissioner, Ralph Riggs, recommending Zora to the CLEOs and full board. Joan made a motion to approve the nomination. Ingrid McCallister seconded the motion. Motion carried. CLEOs concurred.

Jody recommended the following changes to policies. The SEP (Simplified Employee Pension) Plan should remove the "full time" wording from the retirement policy in the employee handbook. The firewall policy needs revision and contact information updated. Trent made a motion to approve both revisions to the policies. Lisa seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Jody informed the committee that the Office of Workforce Development (OWD) onsite monitoring visit is scheduled for December 2nd & 3rd at the SCWIB administrative office in West Plains. Kerry Savage, OWD Monitor, plans to visit the Poplar Bluff and West Plains Job Centers

Jody discussed the status of operating WIOA Programs in-house. She said the reports show enrollments and expenditures remain strong. She told the board we should expect a drop second quarter (Oct – Dec) due to the start dates of our larger training programs which have August and January start dates. She said Leanna continues to monitor 100% of new enrollments for WIOA eligibility to ensure customers meet criteria before training dollars are spent. She said staff also meet with the OWD state monitor monthly for Q & A which allows for open lines of communication between front line staff and the monitor assigned to our region.

Jody said staffing continues to be a challenge, including the One Stop Operator position. Since our July meeting, she said we have lost three of our three staff in Poplar Bluff. Phyllis Guthrie, One Stop Operator, left on July 23rd. Jessica Jones planned to take maternity leave the first week of September but was unable to return after a doctor's appointment on July 29. Jessica has since decided to stay home with her new baby. Meagan Skaggs left work September 9th due to medical issues and could not return. Jody said they have hired Sue Ann Treat and Amber Stamps as Employment Specialists, and they still plan to hire one more person for Poplar Bluff.

Jody said last week she received a resignation from the senior Employment Specialist in West Plains, Zohn Engelhardt. His last day will be November 7th due to accepting a position with Ozark Healthcare Behavioral Health. The position has already been advertised and resumes are being reviewed. The plan is to fill the position as soon as possible.

One Stop Operator Position – Jody discussed the history of the OSO position and the challenges we have faced. Scott Davis filled the OSO position from November 2023 until April 2024. Amber Herren was hired in April 2024 and took extended medical in December 2024 and resigned in March 2025. Phyllis Guthrie accepted the OSO position in March 2025 and left in July 2025. The position has been vacant since July 23, 2025. This position is required to be competitively bid according to WIOA regulations. We completed the RFP process in July and did not receive any responses. At that time, sole source procurement approval was requested and received from OWD for the WIB to provide OSO duties. Jody informed the committee that we continue to struggle with keeping this position filled.

Jody asked the committee to consider a proposal submitted by MaryAnn Lawrence from PowerNotes. The proposal would provide services for \$2,000/month which includes virtual monthly training for front line staff. Jody provided MaryAnn's bio and highly recommended her as a professional trainer who has national insight on the direction of workforce programs and board development. Jody explained that PowerNotes is one of the options for virtual classes when pursuing the National Association of Workforce Development Credential. Jody also reached out to Melissa Robbins, previous SCWIB Executive Director. Melissa 100% recommended MaryAnn Lawrence to provide OSO services. Steve made a motion that MaryAnn Lawrence, PowerNotes, be recommended to provide One Stop Operator services in the South Central Region effective November 1, 2025. Lisa seconded the motion. Motion carried. CLEOs concurred.

Two Year Plan Modification – Jody informed members the two year plan modification is due in April 2026. She hopes to have an initial plan to the board in January with minor revisions available in April.

The calendar of WIB, CLEO, and committee meetings for 2026 was discussed. Jody said Twin Pines Conservation Center is no longer an educational facility. They have completed a remodel and will no longer be able to host meetings in the basement. The main floor can be used for our committee and full board meetings. The loft area can be used for CLEO meetings. Members agreed they like the location and would prefer to continue to meet at Twin Pines.

A One Stop Committee update was provided by Becky Brooks. She said the committee met on October 14th via Webex. She said much of the meeting was spent discussing the staffing challenges and the One Stop Operator proposal.

An Executive Committee update was provided by Becky Brooks. She said the committee met on October 14th via Webex. Becky said the committee discussed the vacancy of the One Stop Operator and the importance of finding a strong person to fill this position.

Joan Wright reported on the Inclusion Committee/Youth Committee which met earlier on this date (October 28). Joan said the committee did not have any action items. They received an update on the current staffing concerns. Zohn Engelhardt discussed the expansion of WIOA youth services. Upcoming Job Fairs/Hiring Events were also discussed.

Becky asked the board if anyone had any announcements or questions. Joan Wright discussed the classes which will be offered for paraprofessionals. She shared information with members.

As there was no other business, Trent made a motion to adjourn. Jennifer seconded the motion. Motion carried and the meeting adjourned with CLEO concurrence.

**Next Meeting Date: Tuesday – January 27, 2026
1:00 p.m. at Twin Pines Conservation Center - Winona**