

NORTHWEST WISCONSIN CEP REGULAR BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

MEETING MINUTES

February 18, 2026 | 11 AM
Virtual, by Teams due to weather

IN ATTENDANCE

BY TEAMS/PHONE

Bill Kacvinsky
Bob Kopisch
Steve Kariainen
Emmett Byrne
Bob Olsgard
Terry Wedwick
Larry Youngs
Dee Gokee-Rindal

Excused

Larry Fickbohm
Charlie Glazman
Dave Willingham
Rollie Thums
Elizabeth Franek
Patricia Stephan
Brent Blomberg – Alt.

Staff/Guests

Skyler Dural-Eder, CEP
Michelle Smith, CEP
Sue Stephens, CEP
Mary Zinnecker, CEP
Winnie Momberg, CEP

Mitch Davis, Wegner CPAs

CALL TO ORDER, ROLL CALL, & REPORT OF PUBLIC MEETING NOTICE

Bill Kacvinsky, CEP Board Chair, called the meeting to order at 11:02 AM. Skyler Dural-Eder conducted the roll call. Quorum present. Skyler reported that the public meeting notice was published according to open meeting laws. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited, and the mission statement was read.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION: Approval of the minutes from the regular board meeting held on December 17, 2025. The minutes were reviewed. A motion was made by Dave Willingham to approve the minutes as presented, and it was seconded by Bob Kopisch. Approved unanimously.

AUDIT UPDATE

Mitch Davis of Wegner CPAs presented an audit update. He reviewed the standard audit communication letter, financial statements, and compliance-related portions of the audit. Mitch reported that the financial statements received an unmodified opinion, meaning the financial statements were fairly stated in accordance with GAAP. Total revenue was approximately \$1.6 million, which was a decrease from the prior year due largely to reduced WIOA funding and the end of certain grants. Expenses decreased by a larger amount, resulting in a positive change in net assets of more than \$80,000.

Michelle Smith noted that the Form 990 would move forward once the audit was completely finalized.

Board members commented that the audit showed meaningful improvement from the previous year and thanked staff for their work.

No board action required.

REPORTS AND DISCUSSION

Organizational Update: Skyler provided an organizational update covering activities from January and February. Skyler reported on grant applications and grant searches that CEP has been working on. She stated that CEP is also working on the competitive WIOA Youth grant through the Workforce Investment Board. Proposals are due March 26, with selection expected April 25.

Skyler reported that CEP hired Mason Weber as a part-time, 29-hour-per-week Career Planner in the Ashland office. Sue Stephens shared that Mason is doing well in training, has already been assisting with

applications, and is catching on to processes very quickly. Skyler reported increased traffic in the Park Falls and Ashland offices and there are a wide variety of needs being addressed by staff.

Winnie Momberg provided an update on upcoming Rapid Response activities and Youth Apprenticeship. She currently works with Hayward, Northwoods, Northwestern, and Butternut schools. Larry Fickbohm asked how schools become involved in Youth Apprenticeship and whether contact is made through counselors, principals, or superintendents. Winnie explained that schools choose which consortium they work with and that participation is handled through school leadership, including principals and superintendents.

Skyler noted the continued use and development of the CLARA system by Mary Zinnecker to support monitoring, participant management, and records keeping.

Skyler reported that DVR remains in waitlist status, though CEP's DVR activity has remained steady. Skyler reported that Public Service Commission payments are still delayed, with approximately \$18,000 still owed to CEP from several months ago. She also noted that CEP had not yet used PY25 WIOA Adult or Dislocated Worker funds and had only recently begun using PY25 Youth funds. She contrasted this with the prior year, 2024, when CEP was nearly fully spent in current year funds by March.

Program and Data Impact: Skyler reviewed current program and impact data. Sue Stephens reported that WIOA enrollment activity is strong and that career planners are busy with both WIOA and DVR enrollments. Skyler explained that CEP has tried to balance available funding by working in strong collaboration with NWWIB staff/programs and WRI FSET staff/programs to serve people with co-enrollments.

Skyler reviewed WIOA enrollment goal data for the region along with comparisons across the state. She reported that CEP was enrolling approximately 12.6 individuals per 10,000 people in the labor force using November data. Charlie Glazman commented that this type of data provides a strong case for considering demographics and regional context when comparing one Workforce Development Area to another. David Willingham recommended that CEP continue tracking this information.

Elizabeth Franek commented on the value of DVR and CEP services in helping people return to work, school, and the community. Skyler agreed and noted that workforce programming also supports economic development by helping individuals stay in the area, contribute to the tax base, and strengthen local communities.

Skyler reported that DVR revenue for July 1, 2025, through current, had reached 129% of the annual revenue goal.

Financial Status Update - 2024 County Loan Status: Skyler reported that Price, Bayfield, Douglas, Rusk, and Sawyer County loans had been repaid. Ashland County forgave its \$5,000 loan. Price County offered a payment plan, but it was decided to pay it back in full with the other loans. In total, CEP repaid \$25,000, \$5,000 was forgiven, and there are no county loan balances pending. She also explained that the county loans cannot be repaid with WIOA funds and must be paid through general available revenue, even though some of the original need for the loans stemmed from prior WIOA overspending in quarter 1 and quarter 2 of 2024.

Skyler added that conversations with county leaders and boards were positive and that county officials recognized the value of CEP's work overall. She stated that county outreach also created opportunities to share data, discuss CEP's services, and potentially explore future support.

Financial Status Update - General: Michelle Smith provided a financial status update. Michelle reported that DWD has not yet provided WIOA funding information for the upcoming year which makes budget planning difficult. Michelle stated that CEP does not want to pursue additional county loans and would instead prefer to explore being included as a line item or project support where appropriate. She also reported that CEP still has an AADC loan related to moving expenses, with a balance of a little under

\$10,000, and that she hopes to pay it off within the next few months so CEP has no remaining loans or debts outstanding. The Line of Credit will remain open in case short-term use is needed.

No board action required.

ACTION ITEM: FUTURE BOARD MEETINGS

The Board discussed future meeting locations, including whether to continue meeting in Ashland, use Sawyer County/Hayward as a more central location, or hold select meetings virtual. Skyler stated that the Ashland Job Center conference room remains available as that space was not condensed. She also noted that Steve Kariainen and Sawyer County had previously offered meeting space. Dave Willingham stated that any alternate meeting location should have technology that allows virtual participants to participate at a quality level similar to the Ashland office. He also stated that virtual access is useful when travel is not practical, but that regular virtual meetings may reduce board cohesion, relationships, and engagement over time. Bill Kacvinsky agreed that in-person interaction is important, while still recognizing that virtual participation can be useful when needed. Board members also discussed the effect of travel time on staff and board members. Larry Youngs stated that he preferred in-person meetings because it allows members to better read the room and interact with one another.

The Board reached consensus to hold the April CEP Board meeting in Hayward/Sawyer County, if arrangements can be confirmed, and then evaluate how that location works. Skyler will follow up with Sawyer County regarding space and logistics.

No formal motion was taken.

NEXT MEETING

The next regular meeting is planned for Wednesday, April 15, 2026, in Hayward/Sawyer County, with specific location details to be confirmed, or at the call of the chair.

Meeting concluded at 12:32 PM.