

NORTHWEST WISCONSIN CHIEF ELECTED OFFICIALS' CONSORTIUM WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AREA (WDA) 7

Friday, February 27, 2026 | Time: 10:00 AM

In Person & Virtual

Northwest CEP Office Meeting Room, 417 9th Ave W, Ashland, WI

Virtual Meeting via Teams

MEETING MINUTES

CEO Consortium Members

☒ Emmett Byrne	☐ Larry Fickbohm	☒ Charlie Glazman	☐ Elizabeth Franek (excused)
☒ Steve Kariainen	☒ Bob Olsgard	☐ Patricia Stephan	☒ Rollie Thums
☒ Terry Wedwick	☒ Larry Youngs		

Guests

☒ Melissa Rabska (notetaker)	☒ Skyler Dural-Eder	☒ Mari Kay-Nabozny	☒ Michelle Smith
☒ Sue Stephens	☒ Mary Zinnecker	☒ Dave Willingham	☒ Bob Kopish
☒ Bill Kacvinsky			

Call Meeting to Order

Meeting was called to order by Bob Olsgard at 10:00 AM.

Roll Call & Report on Public Meeting Notice

Roll call was taken, a quorum was present. The public meeting notice was posted and shared with area libraries and Class A newspapers.

Mission Statement

Charlie Glazman stated that the mission of the Consortium is to maintain the integrity of the WIOA funds by the Chief Local Elected Officials.

Review/Approval of October 15, 2025 CLEO Consortium Minutes

Motion to approve Meeting Minutes from October 15, 2025 as presented: Rollie Thums

2nd: Emmett Byrne

Carried unanimously.

PY24 DWD Monitoring Update

Presented by Mari Kay-Nabozny. The Program Year 2024 DWD monitoring review has been officially closed, with a formal close letter issued by DWD. One item remains outstanding:

installation of an ADA-compliant grab bar in the CEP office restroom, scheduled for completion by June 30, 2026.

Completed via e-vote: Approve NWWIB Board Member Jenice Meyer, The Development Association

The Consortium noted the completion of an e-vote approving Jenice Meyer, representing The Development Association, as a new NWWIB Board Member.

Upcoming WIOA State and Local Plan Revisions

The state conducts a full Local Plan revision every four years, with boards required to update plans every two years to reflect infrastructure changes, facility closures, and evolving economic conditions. The current cycle presents an opportunity to incorporate waivers and program adjustments. Significant revisions to the local plan are not anticipated at this time.

CEO Reappointment Letters

NWWIB staff will assume responsibility for preparing and distributing CEO reappointment letters, a function previously handled by CEP staff. Letters will be sent to county clerks in May, following local elections.

Programmatic Updates

One Stop Operator Report

The NWWIB, serving as One Stop Operator, continues to coordinate Job Center Partners within WDA 7 to meet mandatory compliance requirements. In partnership with other boards, the NWWIB is a part of an initiative currently underway to review how job seekers interact within the workforce system. A customer satisfaction survey is planned, with results to be presented at a future meeting.

Job Pods (Iron River, Medford, Webster)

The Medford JobPod has been operational since fall 2025; JobPods are being deployed in Iron River and Webster. JobPods are physical access points for workforce services housed within public library facilities. Equipment and JobPod are maintained by the library. Workforce boards certify the JobPods, but do not determine placement locations, as all placement decisions flow through the library system.

Members expressed interest in targeting counties with higher unemployment rates, including Iron County and Rusk County (Ladysmith). Mari Kay-Nabozny will distribute Brown

County Library contact information to the group for dissemination through the library network.

Youth RFP program

The Youth program RFP is currently open as part of the regular procurement cycle. Two letters of intent have been received and an RFP review committee is in place. Award decisions are expected by early April 2026. Awards may be made to one or multiple providers, with performance-based contracts renewable for up to three years.

WIOA Waiver request from WDAs 4, 6, and 7

WDAs 4, 6, and 7 jointly submitted a waiver request through the State Plan process to remove the requirement for rural workforce areas to maintain a comprehensive one-stop job center. Supporting data for WDA 7 indicate that computer access utilization at Job Services locations declined 72–79% between 2022 and 2024, with only 580 visits recorded in 2024. While the state has signaled openness to this waiver, federal DOL approval remains uncertain. It was stated that the waiver would not be pursued without CEO approval if it does come available.

Waiver requests statewide

The Wisconsin Workforce Development Association (WWDA) is pursuing additional statewide waivers through the State Plan modification process, including:

- Increasing the 5% cap on serving over-income or low-barrier youth to allow greater flexibility in eligibility determinations.
- Expanded flexibility in the use of Rapid Response funds.
- Modifications to Measurable Skill Gain (MSG) and credential requirements to support micro-credential attainment.

The CWI Board began reviewing the State Plan modification this week. Final decisions on waiver inclusions are expected by end of April 2026, with DOL determinations anticipated by summer 2026. No significant WIOA legislation is currently advancing federally; flat funding is anticipated for the coming year.

Revisit Governance Discussion

The Consortium continued its review of governance in response to a prior DWD letter requesting continued exploration of the governance model. No formal response deadline has been established by DWD.

Staff provided background on the role of Consortia of Chief Elected Officials (CEPs) under current and prior federal workforce legislation. Key points discussed:

- Under WIOA, CEPs retain an advisory and oversight function with less formal statutory authority than under WIA. WIA provided automatic recognition to CEPs; WIOA granted the governor discretion over WDA boundary changes, subject to CEO consent.
- The additional funding advantage historically associated with CEP designation has not been in effect since WIA.
- Procurement was also discussed. It was stated that CEP receives Adult and Dislocated Worker funds because the NWWIB has chosen not to procure for these programs- it is not due to a CEP status or designation. The Youth Program is the only program that the NWWIB must procure because there has been competition in the recent past for RFPs and sole source is not justified at this time.
- CEPs retain the ability to pursue 501(c)(3)-eligible grant funding and serve as fiscal agents. No grant opportunities exclusively available to CEPs have emerged to date.
- Only three CEPs exist nationwide. Discussion was held on whether restructuring would materially affect service delivery.

The Consortium discussed potential structural options, including the WIB serving as fiscal agent as a means of reducing perceived conflicts of interest. A diagram of the current funds flow will be distributed to the Consortium for reference as requested.

The Consortium agreed to continue this discussion at upcoming meetings, with both the CEO Consortium and NWWIB. The CEP Board should be engaged in a restructuring discussion. A review of CEP bylaws was identified as a necessary initial step. It was suggested to keep this on the agenda as a reoccurring topic at both the CEO and CEP Board meetings. It was stated that the NWWIB Board has an interest in participating in this process as well and as needed.

Next Meeting Date & Location – April 15th or at the call of the Chair

The next meeting is tentatively scheduled for April 15, 2026, at the call of the Chair. The date may be adjusted based on local election schedules and the Youth RFP timeline.

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn: Rollie Thums

Seconded by: Steve Kariainen

Carried unanimously. Meeting adjourned.