

Chautauqua Works WORKFORCE INVESTMENT/DEVELOPMENT BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, October 29, 2025

11:30 am – 1:00 pm

Moonbrook Country Club

2879 N. Main Street Ext.

Jamestown, NY 14701

PRESENT:

Shelby Bilskie
Amber Blashak
Marie Carrubba
Angel Garcia
John Healy
Daniel Heitzenrater
Michelle Jones
Frank McAndrew
Candace Pacitti
Michael Pease
Dave Pihl
Dan Smith
Paul Stage
Vincent Trippi
Grant Umberger

EXCUSED:

Heather Brown
Christine Emmick
Kent Joesel
William Smock
Heather Turner

ABSENT:

Todd Trantum

ALSO PRESENT:

Katie Geise– Chautauqua Works WIB/WDB
Jody Cheney – Chautauqua Works WIB/WDB
Cheryl Lawson – Chautauqua Works WIB/WDB
Krista Leone – Chautauqua Works WIB/WDB
Clair Swanson – Chautauqua Works-CSD
Ed Bysiek, Bysiek CPA, PLLC



Meeting was called to order by Paul Stage, Chair at 11:32 am.

Revised Agenda provided (see attachment #1)

Agenda Item 1 – Roll Call

15 - present 5– excused 1– absent

Agenda Item 2 – Chair’s Report

Paul introduced 2 new Board Members: Shelby Bilskie, who is replacing Rich Dixon, and Candace Pacitti, who is replacing Christin Lyon. He also introduced our guest, Ed Bysiek who will be presenting the Audited Financial Statements.

Agenda Item 3 – Audited Financial Statements – Ed Bysiek

Ed started his presentation by saying that he has done the Audit for the last 7 years for the WIB and therefore has a lot of experience with the organization. He is issuing a clean, unmodified opinion. There were no Audit findings. We are 7 for 7 on having a clean Audit. This is very good news from an audit perspective.

He stated he reviewed, in detail, the results of the Audit with the Finance Committee. He will present a summary of the Audit to the full Board.

Summary of Audit Results:

- The auditor’s report expresses an unmodified opinion on the financial statements of W.I.B., Inc.
- No material weaknesses in internal controls related to the audit of the financial statements were identified in the Report on Internal Controls over Financial Reporting.

- There were no significant deficiencies in internal control reported in relation to the audit of the financial statements in the Report on Internal Controls over Financial Reporting.
- No instances of noncompliance material to the financial statements of W.I.B., Inc. were disclosed during the audit.
- No deficiencies in internal control relating to the audit of the major federal awards programs were reported in the Report on Compliance with Requirements Applicable to each Major Program.
- The auditor's report on compliance for the major federal award programs for W.I.B., Inc. expresses an unmodified opinion.
- No audit findings relative to major federal awards programs required to be reported in accordance with 2 CFR200.516(a) were disclosed in our audit of the financial statements.
- The programs tested as major programs included: TANF Cluster – CFDA No. 93.558
- The threshold for determining Type A and Type B programs was \$750,000.
- W.I.B., Inc. was determined to be a low-risk auditee.

Ed reviewed :

- Statements of Financial Position
- Income Statement
- Notes to the Financial Statements

All numbers for the 990 come directly from this audited report.

Agenda Item 4 – Katie Geise

Government Shutdown/WIOA Funding – The bad news is we remain in a government shutdown and we know that eventually, this will negatively impact service delivery for some programs that serve our community and mutual customers. The good news is that the FY 25 Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Admin WIOA funds are accessible by the state and we received our PY25 NOA (Notice of Obligation Authority) on Friday, October 24th for our WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Admin funds. This means that we have been obligated our Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Admin WIOA funding for the remainder of PY 25 and that means we can request cash as usual and expect to receive all cash requested. This is different than previous shutdowns that we have endured. In all other shutdowns, our WIOA funding was not available to us at the local level. We are not sure why this time is different and no one else seems to know why either. We are anticipating that anything requiring USDOL review and/or approval will be delayed significantly due to the reduction in staff from ~1000 to 30. To date, this has not been an issue.

Katie is actively advocating and educating on the impacts of the House Appropriations Committee passed FY26 budget, which would eliminate WIOA Title I Youth and Adult funding, and Title II funding – essentially destroying the workforce system. A letter was shared with all of you that was sent to Representative Langworthy which resulted in a zoom meeting with his labor and education policy staff person.

ALE – A Large Employer – We have met with multiple entities such as Paychex, Chamber of Commerce Benefits Contact, Attorneys, and Reps at Lawley Insurance about becoming an ALE –. In order to continue to run our programs, we are going to become an ALE. To be categorized as an ALE, an organization/business must have 50+ FTE equivalents. We will reach that number this calendar year. Following our meeting with Lawley, we have a much better understanding of the impacts, what we will need to do, and the timeframe to meet this new qualification. There will be additional reporting (1095-C) required which will have a cost. Paychex can do this reporting and we are getting a quote from Lawley for this as well. Basically, we were fearing something that we simply didn't know enough about. We are in compliance with our regular FT permanent employees and all program participants are temporary part time workers who are not eligible for benefits.

YEP – We just started our second full school year (9/1/25-6/30/26) funded program. As of yesterday, we have received 70 completed applications. 20 youth have been placed at worksites and started working in the last two weeks. The YEP staff continue to do an amazing job implementing this program with Jody leading the effort as the WIB staff lead.

SYEP – We had a very successful SYEP this year. 129 youth were placed at worksites and 24 were hired in subsidized employment following the program completion! Additional SYEP data and final reports are in

your packet. If you haven't had a chance to read them, there are some testimonials from our participants that really tell the story of our program and the work we do. We were also reviewed by the program funder, OTDA, this summer. We included the review letter in your packet.

CAP – There were a record number of CAP interns this year – 20!! All of their testimonials are included in your packet. There is a small amount of funding available for this program and should be able to work with 4-5 more interns. We have received two CAP applications and are currently working on potential placements for them.

Manufacturing and Tech Workforce Ecosystem Development Program – This is our newest program funded through Empire State Development and the Ralph Wilson Jr Foundation.

Workforce Ecosystem Developers have planned, hosted, and facilitated two (2) Manufacturing and Tech business meetings and one (1) training provider meeting, and two (2) Manufacturing and/or Tech Job Fairs.

- 28 participants have enrolled in Manufacturing and/or Tech related training programs.
- 15 participants have completed a Manufacturing and/or Tech related training program.
- 9 graduates of a Manufacturing and/or Tech related training program have obtained industry related employment.

SWIB – With Todd's leadership as Vice Chair of the SWIB, the Strategic Investments and Evaluation Committee, which Katie Chairs, have been actively engaging in a project with local workforce areas and statewide workforce partners to identify innovative approaches to managing anticipated WIOA funding reductions while ensuring continued high level of service provision. There is a lot to this initiative and the work is ongoing. Currently, NYSDOL is completing a Technical Advisory on a process for LWDA's merging. There is one potential merger being discussed and another potential merger discussion has started. Finally, the SIEC has identified the need for an informational document that "tells the workforce system's impact story" through data points in a "cool" way. NYSDOL is taking the lead on this and is working on such a document. The hope is that local areas could swap local data for statewide data using the same document to tell the local story as well. Much more to come on this work as we progress.

Local and Regional Planning – Chautauqua has successfully completed the Local Plan and Regional Plans. Both Plans have been officially approved by NYSDOL. These required items are complete! Thank you to all of you for your review of the Draft documents and comments. Your assistance and input is greatly appreciated.

Business Seminar – November 6, 2025 from 12:00 - 3:00 at Chautauqua Harbor Hotel. Registration Deadline is tomorrow, 10/30/25. Registration forms are in your packet if you are interested in attending.

Jamestown Office – As of May 29, 2025, we have a new owner/landlord for our Jamestown location. His name is Robert Schneider and his company name is Greenhurst Development LLC. We ensured that we received a letter from Mr. Schneider stating that he will assume, with no changes, our current lease agreement and any addendums. This ensures our Jamestown lease will remain in effect at our current cost through August 31, 2034.

Dunkirk Office – We just completed a lease negotiation with our Dunkirk location landlord, Rob Curry. We have occupied this space at no cost increase since March 1, 2012. That cost has been \$8.75/sq foot - \$48,000/year. Our current lease expires on February 28, 2027. However, NYSDOL requires us to begin lease negotiations with them for the space that they sublease with us now. The need to complete the NYSDOL OGS documents by the due date of this Friday, we met with Rob Curry to negotiate a new lease. The new lease would start March 1, 2027 and terminate February 29, 2032 with the option for us to renew two additional terms which would take us to February 28, 2042. The negotiated rate for the 2027 – 2042 timeframe is \$9.10/sq foot - \$50,050/year.

I did look at available space to lease in the Dunkirk area and found two potential options for comparison:

- The first location is 2/3rds the size of our space but is located very close to our current location right downtown. This space is available for \$15/sq foot (pricing was available online).
- The second location is located in a plaza not right downtown as slightly larger than our current space. This space is available for \$12/sq foot (pricing was available verbally only).

Agenda Item 45 - Operator Report – Katie Geise for Clair Swanson

Katie reviewed the Data for 7/1/25-6/30/25 Active Participants, New Enrollments, Carry-In Exits, New Enrollment Exits, Entered Employment, completed Services, and Average Wage for Adult, Dislocated

Workers, and Youth. She also reviewed Training Activities for Adults, Dislocated Workers, and Youth. The Performance Indicators Report was reviewed. The Operator is exceeding all Performance Indicator with the exception of Median Earnings for Youth. For this indicator, there was one youth whose wages negatively impacted the measure. The youth, who is disabled, was limited to only 4-8 hours a week. This is a win for us, even though the Performance Indicator does not reflect it, as the Youth has shown progressive improvement, having been hired by the employer and still employed one year later.

Agenda Item 6 – Finance Report – Cheryl Lawson

Current Budget/Changes in Current Budget

Cheryl Lawson discussed the budget through August 31, 2025 and changes in the fiscal year budget. WIB was close with their estimated budget for the current fiscal year. The actual budget came in about \$54,551 under what we originally budgeted. The total budget is just over 5 million.

We are showing a variance in our WIOA funds to date. We expect that variance to decrease, over the next few months as fall trainings continue to come in. The largest variance is with the OJET RETI funding, which has been extended from November 2025 to March 2026. Most of the trainings for that funding began in August and September and total about \$36,000. As those invoices come in, the variance will decrease. We expect to fully expend those funds by the March timeframe.

In regards to the Special and Unrestricted Revenue, we will be under-expended on the summer youth funding. This summer we had 24 individuals hired on by their worksite during the program. The YEP program is showing a variance, as that program began in September. We released the youth applications on October 1st and expect to see that variance decrease over the next several months. The Empire State Development (ESD) Workforce Development Grant and the Ralph C Wilson Jr Foundation Grant (RCWJRF). grants go together, they are showing variances, as we continue to recruit businesses and trainees for those programs. We've expended about \$25,000 in training on those grants so far. The HHS Self Sufficiency is showing a variance due to staffing, they just filled the two open positions and so you will see this variance decrease. The Chautauqua County Workforce Development Initiative and NCCF variance is due to the Internship program primarily operating in the summer months as internships run during their summer break. We anticipate funding about 4 more interns and that will conclude that funding.

Looking at the expenses, we are pretty close on the Operator Contract. We are showing variances with Dislocated Worker and Adult training, however we plan to fully expend the program and fiscal incentive funds before we spend down the adult and dislocated worker training dollars as the incentive funds expire first. It is not reflected in the August budget, but we have expended nearly \$150,000 in training on the two incentive grants, as most of those invoices came in October. The OJET RETI we already discussed, this is the one they are extending and we expect to fully expend those funds.

The operating expense line is showing a variance which will go the other way by December as we have several equipment purchases this year including computers and hardware refresh which is approximately \$116,000, Meraki Security and Firewall, which will cost about \$21,000 and we will probably need to replace either 2 or 3 copier machines which will cost approximately \$10,000.

The WIB program support and Admin support is showing variances as the WIB staff expends a lot of their time on other grants over the summer months, such as Summer Youth and the Internship grants.

Agenda Item 6 – Resolutions (Revised – see attachment #2)

Motion 1: To approve the minutes from May 14, 2025 meeting. **Motion to approve was made by Dan Smith and seconded by Dave Pihl.** Prior to voting, the question was asked if anyone needed to abstain from voting. There were no abstentions. **Vote approved and motion carried.**

- Motion 2:** To approve the Finance Audit Committee recommendation to accept the Single Audit, Management Letter, Form 990 and CHAR500 prepared by the auditing firm of Bysiek CPA, PLLC for fiscal year ending June 30, 2025. **Motion to approve was made by Michelle Jones and seconded by Marie Carrubba.** Prior to voting, the question was asked if anyone needed to abstain from voting. There were no abstentions. **Vote approved and motion carried.**
- Motion 3:** To approve the Finance Audit Committee Recommendation to accept the 7/1/25 – 6/30/26 revised budget. **Motion to approve was made by Dan Smith and seconded by Dan Heitzenrater.** Prior to voting, the question was asked if anyone needed to abstain from voting. There were no abstentions. **Vote approved and motion carried.**
- Motion 4:** To approve the Finance Audit Committee Recommendation to accept the 7/1/25 – 8/31/25 budget to date. **Motion to approve was made by Marie Carrubba and seconded by Mike Pease.** Prior to voting, the question was asked if anyone needed to abstain from voting. There were no abstentions. **Vote approved and motion carried.**
- Motion 5:** To approve the Training Committee Recommendation to accept the revised Chautauqua Demand Occupation List. **Motion to approve was made by Marie Carrubba and seconded by Dave Pihl.** Prior to voting, the question was asked if anyone needed to abstain from voting. There were no abstentions. **Vote approved and motion carried.**
- Motion 6:** To approve the Training Committee recommendation to accept the revised On-the-Job Training Program Document: Responsibility Questionnaire. **Motion to approve was made by Dan Heitzenrater and seconded by Candy Pacitti.** Prior to voting, the question was asked if anyone needed to abstain from voting. There were no abstentions. **Vote approved and motion carried.**
- Motion 7:** To authorize WIB/WDB Staff to submit grant proposal(s) to any entity in support of Workforce Development and Training Services for PY 2026 and PY 2027. **Motion to approve was made by Mike Pease and seconded by Grant Umberger.** Prior to voting, the question was asked if anyone needed to abstain from voting. There were no abstentions. **Vote approved and motion carried.**
- Motion 8:** To approve the RFP Review Committee's recommendation to renew Synergy's contract to provide IT Services for the period of 10/1/25-9/30/26 for an estimated amount of \$34,000 and planned Special Projects projected at \$38,500. **Motion to approve was made by Dan Smith and seconded by Shelby Bilskie.** Prior to voting, the question was asked if anyone needed to abstain from voting. There were no abstentions. **Vote approved and motion carried.**
- Motion 9:** To approve authorization of Kathleen Geise to sign a new lease with Rob Curry for space at 405-407 Central Avenue in Dunkirk for 5,500 sq feet at \$9.10/sq. foot for total amount of \$50, 050/year. The lease term is 5 years (March 1, 2027-February 29, 2032) with the option to renew for 2 additional 5 year terms. **Motion to approve was made by Marie Carrubba and seconded by Candy Pacitti.** Prior to voting, the question was asked if anyone needed to abstain from voting. There were no abstentions. **Vote approved and motion carried.**

Agenda Item 7 – New Business

Dave Pihl asked about layoffs at Absolute Care and Serta, two big employers in Chautauqua County. Katie responded that the Rapid Response Team had been out to both companies to let them know what services were available to the laid off workers. Most of the Absolute Care employees have been absorbed into the Healthcare employers in Chautauqua County as they are much in demand.

Dave Pihl also mentioned that the maximum amount for Unemployment is going up, cost of living is going up, so will there be increased unemployment? Frank McAndrew answered that unemployment is based on wages the person earned. He doesn't foresee this affecting many unemployment claimants.

Paul Stage brought up childcare issues as an area of concern. There are barriers for people getting back into the workforce. It is difficult to secure childcare in Chautauqua County. You must apply on line for Subsidy Programs and they have raised the income levels. Marie Carrubba noted that both Headstart and Early Headstart currently have openings. There is a push to have a program where family members can get paid for providing childcare, although we are not there yet. Childcare is not adequate in Chautauqua County and we are considered a Childcare Desert.

Dan Heitzenrater commented that the Chautauqua County Chamber of Commerce participated in the CAP program this summer and hosted a CAP Intern. He stated they had a fantastic intern and hated to see her leave at the end of the internship. It was a very positive experience!

Meeting was adjourned at 12:57 pm.

Reminder: The next Workforce Investment Board Meeting will be in Spring 2026. Date, time, and place to be determined.

Jodell Cheney, Administrative Assistant

Christine Emmick, Secretary

Date Approved: _____