

WIB Meeting Minutes
Monday – March 16, 2026 at 4:30 p.m.
Northfield Inn and Conference Center, 3280 Northfield Drive, Springfield, IL 62702

Attendance:

WIB Members Present: Carrie Brady, JT Britton, Gloria Brummer, Karen Conn, Heather Cosby, Jenifer Deweese, Jason Dockter, David Fowler, Robert Frazier, Robert Kerr, David Lacy, David MacDonna, Patty Mendoza, Suellen Morgan, Christine Novaria, Indra Perry, Amanda Sandner, Mark Sprehe, Terri Walker, Matthew Yard

WIB Members Absent: Brittany Clark, JP Fyans, Ryan McCrady, Nicole Porter, Andrea Runge, Atlene Washington, Mark Winkler

Staff & Guests in Attendance: Michelle Griebler, Michelle Brookens, Diane Jones, Stephanie Danielson, Guenevere Black Ford, Djourdel Gresseau (proxy for Nicole Porter), April Buscher (guest of Terri Walker)

Meeting Called to Order:

Welcome/Attendance/Introductions:

Mark Sprehe, Board Chair, welcomed Indra Perry to the Board. Roll call was taken by Guenevere Black Ford. Mark Sprehe welcomed Djourdel Gresseau, who attended for Nicole Porter.

Approval of Minutes (pgs. 3-7)

Motion to Approve November 2025 Minutes: Motion made by JT Britton, seconded by David Lacy. **Motion Carried.**

Program Information:

1. County Liaison Reports (pgs. 8-14)

Cass County

There have been 40 Career and Training Services provided to 25 job seekers and participants. There are currently 8 enrolled in occupational training and 6 in follow-up services.

Christian County

There have been 60 Career and Training Services provided to 46 job seekers and participants. There are currently 12 enrolled in occupational training and 5 in follow-up services.

Logan County

There have been 60 Career and Training Services provided to 43 job seekers and participants. There are currently 14 enrolled in occupational training and 10 in follow-up services.

Menard County

There have been 38 Career and Training Services provided to 24 job seekers and participants. There is currently 1 enrolled in occupational training and 3 in follow up-services.

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Sangamon County

There have been 9,491 Career and Training Services provided to 5,477 job seekers and participants. There are currently 207 enrolled in occupational training and 165 in follow-up services.

Michelle Brookens added that there have been 60 referrals to LLWA from Partner organizations, and LLWA has provided 123 referrals to Partner organizations.

Michelle asked if there were any questions regarding the County Reports and there were none.

2. Business Services (pgs. 15-16)

Stephanie Danielson reported on Business Services. She reported on layoffs and closures affecting LWIA 20, including 6 restaurants, a solar company, and Francesca's at the mall. A new Mediterranean restaurant opened, employing 7 people. Bob's Discount Furniture also opened in February. Stephanie then reported that the On-The-Job Training at Andrews Tire & Service was successful and an exception was approved to extend the customer's contract. Andrews Tire and Service realized a reimbursement of \$20,531.84. There was a successful OJT placement at Modern Brake & Alignment that saw the employer realize a reimbursement of \$22,503.00. A customer was placed at Richardson Manufacturing Company for LLWA's first apprenticeship and Richardson will realize \$14,040.00 at the end of the contract. Next Level Mastery/Bless'It Salon will realize a reimbursement of \$11,232.00 at the end of the customer's OJT. Stephanie met with the Administrator of Regency Care to discuss business services and potential OJT placements.

Stephanie reported on the many job fairs LLWA has hosted and participated in. Highlights include the Youth & Adult Chamber Job Fair on March 3rd, 2026, the Beardstown High School Career Fair on February 26th, the Taylorville High School Career Fair on January 30th, and the Sam's Club Hiring Event, which LLWA hosted on January 20th. Stephanie highlighted upcoming events including the on-site Manufacturing Hiring Event at the Illinois workNet Center on March 19th, 2026. UIS, CACC, and Riverton all have events coming up in March as well.

Robert Frazier asked where we post the job listing information for our events, and Stephanie and Michelle Brookens clarified online, on the website, on social media, and in the Resource Room. Flyers for the Manufacturing Hiring Event were included in the March WIB Packet.

3. Contractors and Special Projects (pgs. 17-20)

Michelle Brookens reported that the PY' 25 State Supplemental Grant has 3 focus areas: Manufacturing Incumbent Worker Projects, Workforce Exploration for High School Students, and Individualized CDL Training for Justice-Touched Individuals. There are 6 companies involved in Incumbent Worker Training: Solomon Colors, Drake-Scruggs, Richardson Manufacturing, Simplex, Mel-O-Cream, and Eaton Corporation. There have been 8 individuals enrolled in CDL training

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with 3 having completed the training to date. Michelle reported on the results of the Springfield Chamber Youth Job Fair. Approximately 275 students attended from 11 area high schools.

Michelle then discussed the 1E Manufacturing Grant and planned activities. LLWA has partnered with employers and 3 other workforce areas to assist in continuous improvement in apprenticeship services for the manufacturing sector. Currently, LLWA has provided outreach to 234 individuals from RESEA referrals, attended a hiring event, attended 12 outreach events, and assisted 10 manufacturing businesses. There have been 2 Youth served with the manufacturing ITAs/Work Experience Contracts. The March 19th Manufacturing Hiring Event will also include a Lunch & Learn for employers to learn more about IWT from IMEC and benefits of apprenticeships from USDOL. The 1E Manufacturing Grant ends September 30th, 2026. Michelle discussed the Apprenticeship Specialist Grant, its activities and goals, and ongoing plans. Local policy has been drafted to address an employer incentive structure, and ongoing plans are looking to explore the training and apprenticeship opportunities to assist local ambulance companies with a shortage of EMTs. One apprentice was placed at Richardson Manufacturing Company in January. Other companies, including one in Logan County, are interested in Apprenticeship opportunities. The current Apprenticeship Specialist Grant end June 30th, 2026.

There was discussion led by Robert Frazier regarding the loss of retail and restaurant businesses to manufacturing or Union positions. Michelle Brookens clarified the manufacturing positions are non-Union. There was also discussion regarding the demographic data collected on customers and how that data is shared with the Board.

Michelle Brookens provided updates on the current Youth provider programs. The total planned Contractual Enrollments across all providers is 49, and there are currently 23 enrolled. Fishes and Loaves has enrolled 24 / 24, with 8 participants currently in the process of testing for their CNA credential. One participant is enrolled in WBL/OJT at Springfield Suites and there are 20 participants in follow-up services. Capital Area Career Center had 25 planned enrollments with 8 currently enrolled, and 6 in follow-up services. There were 8 participants who earned OSHA 10 certificates, one earned the AWS credential, and one earned the EPA 608 HVAC Credential.

4. Center/Enrollment/Performance Reports (pgs. 21-23)

Michelle Griebler reported that LLWA has provided 9,689 career and training services to 5,615 job seekers, participants, and claimants across the five counties YTD. There have been 333 participants served during the program year, with 242 participants currently enrolled. LLWA is currently meeting 12/15 performance measures and exceeding 3/15.

Michelle Griebler asked if there were questions on any of the presented program information, and there were none.

The full Program Reports were emailed and included in the March 2026 WIB Packet.

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Motion to Approve Program Reports: Motion made by Carrie Brady, seconded by Jenifer Deweese. **Motion Carried.**

Fiscal Information Review:

1. Expenditure and Grant Reports (pgs. 24-28)

Diane Jones reviewed and summarized all active grants. There are 2 Formula Grants, the PY24 and PY25 Formula Grants. Each are 2-year grants. Diane explained the requirement that the Formula Grants must be 80% obligated by the end of the first year. The PY' 24 Formula Grant is 99.5% expended and 100% obligated. It will end June 30, 2026. The PY' 25 Formula Grant is 31.7% expended and 77% obligated, ending June 30, 2027. The other 3 grants include the 2025 Apprenticeship Specialist Grant, which is 31.7% expended, and ends June 30th, 2026. The 2025 Central IL 1E Grant has been 29.0% spent, and Diane stated that we will not spend the allocated \$2,500 for travel expenses within the 1E Grant, but the rest of the \$25,000 will be spent. The Central IL 1E Grant ends September 30th, 2026. The 2025 State Supplemental Grant has been 18.2% expended, and it will also end June 30th, 2026. Diane added that a large amount of the SSG payments will go out in March, April, and May. Diane then presented a detailed summary of the PY' 24 and PY' 25 Formula Grant expenditures by funding stream. Diane explained that 20% of Youth funding needs to be spent on Work-Based Learning (WBL). Currently, there needs to be an additional \$37,276 obligated for Youth WBL to reach the 20% requirement. Detailed grant information broken down by each county was also reviewed, and the expenditures roughly correspond to the populations of each county. LLWA is required to keep operating expenses for Adult and Dislocated Workers less than 50%, and we are currently at 35.9%. The PY' 25 Operating Budget was then discussed, and at 8 months into the program year, we should be 66.7% expended, and we are currently at 52% expended overall. Diane explained some specific line items and asked for any questions on the Expenditure and Grant Reports.

Karen Conn asked what the "Sangamon County Cost Allocation" line item covered, and there was discussion regarding what services the County provides LLWA. Jenifer Deweese asked what "Other Training" on the PY24 and PY25 Formula Grants covered, and Diane answered anything that was required for customer training but not training itself (such as misc. parking costs for example). Indra Perry asked what the expenditure level will be for the State Supplemental Grant once Spring bills go out. Michelle Brookens confirmed it will be 100% spent the end of June. Diane discussed concerns about spending the Apprenticeship Specialist Grant amount, and she added that any unspent money would go back to the State, and because it is a standalone grant, we will not get penalized for not spending the full amount. A modification would be required.

Mark Sprehe, WIB Chair, offered for the Board to bundle the remaining Fiscal Action Items.

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Motion to Bundle the Expenditure and Grant Reports and Fiscal Action Items:

Motion made by Robert Kerr, seconded by Amanda Sandner. **Motion Carried.**

2. PY' 2026 Youth Contracts (pg. 31)

Michelle Griebler reported that the RFP for Out-Of-School Youth programs was released in January, and we received 2 responses from Capital Area Career Center and Fishes & Loaves. She requested approval to fund Capital Area Career Center's Skilled Trades Essentials Program (STEP) and Fishes and Loaves' Pathway to Success Program (PTS) in the total amount of \$299,341. These amounts would also be contingent upon PY' 26 funding allocations which should be received in late May or June 2026.

3. IWP Dues Increase

Michelle Griebler explained the Illinois Workforce Association, fka (IWP) dues increase. The IWA is an organization of workforce directors which helps lead workforce activities across the state. The organization is growing and rebranding, and as a result of strategic planning and membership approval, the membership dues are increasing from \$1,500 per year for 2 voting members to a temporary tiered increase over 3 years based on funding allocations. LLWA falls into Tier 2, which would increase the annual dues to \$4,000. After three years, the rates would return to a flat rate. Michelle requested approval to pay the temporary dues increase.

Motion to Approve the Expenditure and Grant Reports, PY' 2026 Youth

Contracts, and the IWA Dues Increase Amounts: Motion made by David Lacy, seconded by Patty Mendoza. **Motion Carried.**

Administrative Information:

1. Director's Report (pgs. 29-30)

Michelle Griebler reported that LLWA's fiscal and programmatic monitoring was completed the week of December 8th, 2025, and we had an exit meeting on February 26th, however, we are still waiting on the formal findings letter. Michelle explained the 10-day requirement for information to be entered into IWDS, and she anticipates some findings related to the required data entry timing.

Michelle reported on the progress of the building move. As of March, there are now several agreements in place. Once construction begins, it might be approximately 15 months until the physical move.

Michelle reported on the progress of the updated IWDS 2.0 system. LLWA staff will participate in virtual and in-person trainings on the new system in April and May. The new system is expected to go live July 1st, 2026.

New SNAP/ Work Requirements-- SNAP recipients are now required to work 80 hours a month. One exemption from the requirement is being enrolled in training programs like WIOA. By May

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2026, some recipients may reach the cutoff deadline for the requirement. LLWA staff and front-line staff will receive training on the new requirements on March 26th.

Michelle also provided updates on the status of Workforce Pell Grants which will be effective July 1st, 2026. They are geared toward short-term trainings (CNA, CDL, etc.). Michelle anticipates learning more about the requirements and how to collaborate with colleges and training providers by the end of April.

Michelle reported on the status of various administrative processes such as the One Stop MOU negotiations, Regional and Local Plan updates, and participating in various hiring events and workshops. The Christian County Liaison position is still vacant, and Michelle directed Board Members to view the job posting on page 35.

There was discussion with Robert Frazier regarding the SNAP benefits changes. He mentioned that the age cap for SNAP benefits has risen from 54 to 64 and there was discussion regarding how to prepare to support older workers. Michelle reported that there is a DHS training scheduled for March 26, 2026. David Fowler mentioned that Springfield Urban League has contracted with IDHS to be the administrator for SNAP. Michelle said that she will reach out to Atlene Washington and the Urban League.

2. Action Items for Approval

- Approval to Hire Program Assistant

Michelle also requested approval to hire for the Program Assistant position at \$44,500, as Guenevere Black Ford will be departing April 3rd, 2026 from the Land of Lincoln Workforce Alliance. Michelle intends to have the position posted by April 8th, 2026.

- Approval of PY' 2026 One Stop Partner MOU

Michelle requested approval for the One Stop MOU which will take effect July 1st, 2026 through June 30th, 2027. Marcella Consulting Corp. was selected as the independent negotiator. She also provided review of the updates to the MOU narrative and budget, and all Partners provided approval during the March 5th negotiation meeting.

- Approval of Revised Regional and Local Plans

Michelle requested approval for the revised Regional and Local Plan. Revisions have been based upon DCEO guidance and analysis of regional labor statistics. The major changes made were the removal of any references to “workforce equity lens.” This language was replaced with “responsiveness, inclusivity, and accessibility.” Updates were made to highlight the development of sector partnerships. Three sections were added to align with the State plan regarding serving immigrants and migrants, adhering to new SNAP requirements, and coordination of services in regard to the new Workforce Pell grants. Michelle confirmed that

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the R&L Plan modifications were posted online for a 30-day public comment period, and no comments were received.

- LLCC - New Training Program (pg. 32)

Michelle requested approval to add 2 new Lincoln Land Community College programs to the Eligible Training Provider List: the Industrial Maintenance Technology Certificate of Completion and the Industrial Maintenance Advanced Technologies Certificate of Achievement. The programs and details were included on page 33 of the March 2026 WIB Packet.

- Employer Incentive Policy for Apprenticeships (pgs. 33-34)

Michelle B. requested approval for the new Employer Incentive Policy for Apprenticeships. She explained that we are required to have a local policy in place to reimburse employers for apprenticeships and training needs. Michelle added that employers can receive incentives for each category (such as the initial involvement, registering a Registered Apprenticeship Program (RAP) with USDOL, providing classroom education, and more).

Mark Sprehe, WIB Chair, opened the option to consolidate the Director's action Items.

Motion to Consolidate the Director's Report and Action Items: Motion made by Robert Kerr, seconded by JT Britton. **Motion Carried.**

Motion to Approve Director's Report and Action Items: Motion made by Jenifer Deweese, seconded by Dave MacDonna. **Motion Carried.**

Announcements/Upcoming Events:

1. Manufacturing Hiring Event - 03/19/2026
2. Illinois Workforce Summit - 05/07/2026-05/08/2026
3. Next CEO Meeting - 06/10/2026 from 2:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.
4. Next WIB Meeting - 06/15/2026 from 4:30 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Around the Table:

Indra Perry began a discussion about where to refer older workers or older SNAP beneficiaries who now need to work to programs or locations that can provide them computer skill assistance. Goodwill, LLCC, and the Springfield Public Library all offer free programs. Michelle Brookens added that the Resource Room computers are available to use for computer literacy tutorials and that staff will be available to assist customers if needed.

Gloria Brummer commended LLWA for the number of services we have provided to the community.

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Amanda Sandner also reported that Land of Lincoln Goodwill just received a grant from Google to provide an AI Essentials Certificate. There are 2 free classes that will result in a certificate.

Public Comment: None.

Motion to Adjourn: Motion made by Indra Perry, seconded by Dave MacDonna.
Motion Carried.

Adjournment: Meeting adjourned at 5:35 p.m.