

DRAFT Board Meeting Minutes DRAFT

June 18, 2026, at 8:30 am

Lewis County DSS

Welcome/Call to Order: Chairman Cooper welcomed Board Members at 8:30 am. As some of the new members were present, everyone introduced themselves.

Privilege of the Floor: There was none.

Guest Speakers:

John VanNatten, North Country Representative to the State Workforce Board provided updates from Albany, noting that the state is modernizing its IT systems and shifting workforce funding toward accredited apprenticeships and short-term skills training. After thanking Director Mayforth for her long-standing leadership and support of regional directors, he invited board members to submit feedback and questions so he can directly advocate for North Country interests during his quarterly state meetings.

Steve Hunt, North Country Regional Director for Empire State Development provided updates on the North Country Regional Economic Development Council's strategic vision for its seven-county footprint. Focusing on core pillars like housing, workforce, and tradable sectors, he highlighted regional successes, including major downtown revitalization initiatives (DRI) and the "Next Move New York" military transition pipeline. Mr. Hunt commended Director Mayforth for her vital role in authoring the region's workforce strategies and announced that the state's Consolidated Funding Application (CFA) portal is open through July 31st. He concluded by noting that the council is actively seeking physical, capital-focused anchor projects to pitch for the state's competitive grant.

Approval of Minutes:

- March 19, 2026 Board Meeting minutes – Motion by 1st Vice Chair Pettit, seconded by Secretary Aiken; approved unanimously.
- June 12, 2026 Executive Board Meeting minutes – Motion by 1st Vice Chair Pettit, seconded by Secretary Aiken; approved unanimously.

Correspondence: There was none.

One-Stop Operator Report: Ms. Garno presented the PY25 third quarter report, noting stable enrollment and on-track job orders, including an increase at the Lewis County hospital. Customer and business surveys yielded overwhelmingly positive feedback, with strong satisfaction regarding staff care and the recent Career Jam event. Additionally, Ms. Garno completed a sub-recipient compliance desk review for Lewis County, verifying 100% data accuracy, training fund eligibility, and exceptional long-term client follow-up tracking by staff in the OSOS system. Quarterly One-Stop partner meeting was held earlier in the month to streamline joint-service coordination across regional organizations.

Executive Director's Report/Financial Report: Director Mayforth reported that while the North

Country regional unemployment rate is stable at 4.6%, long-term labor shortages persist due to a shrinking workforce. The region is meeting its current performance measures, but faces tighter budget driven by a 10% federal WIOA funding cut and lost state incentive awards; however, local funding was legally protected at a minimum 0.62 share via the WIOA "Hold Harmless" clause. The board must vote on a preliminary budget now to meet state deadlines—reflecting a youth funding increase for Lewis County from 10% to 15%—with a revised budget vote scheduled for September. Additionally, the department reviewed its diverse state and federal grant portfolios (WIOA, SCION, TANF, YEP) and celebrated the success of recent community initiatives, including a highly attended Spring Job Fair, the Career Jam for 8th graders, and a "Careers in Government Day" tour for BOCES students highlighting stable public service careers.

New Business:

- Resolution: 25-09 – Membership Renewal NYATEP
Motion by Secretary Aiken, seconded by Ms. Marks; approved unanimously.
- Resolution: 25-10 – Membership Renewal NAWB
Motion by Secretary Aiken, seconded by 2nd Vice Chair Castillo; approved unanimously.
- Resolution: 25-11 – Approval of PY26 Meeting Dates
Motion by 2nd Vice Chair Castillo, seconded by Ms. Dwyer; approved unanimously.
- Resolution: 25-12 – Nomination-Election of Officers PY26
Mr. Kilmer agreed to serve as 1st Vice Chairperson.
Motion by Ms. Murray, seconded by Secretary Aiken; approved unanimously.
- Resolution: 25-13 – Approval of PY26 Budget
Motion by Secretary Aiken, seconded by Ms. Marks; approved unanimously.
- Resolution: 25-14 – Approval of Youth Services for PY26
Motion by Mr. Prasuhn, seconded by Secretary Aiken; approved unanimously.
- Resolution: 25-15 – Renewal One-Stop Operator Agreement
Motion by Secretary Aiken, seconded by 2nd Vice Chair Castillo; approved unanimously.
- Resolution: 25-16 – Adapting the Supportive Service Policy
Director Mayforth provided a quick explanation. Motion by Chairman Cooper, seconded by 2nd Vice Chair Castillo; approved unanimously.

Upcoming Events and Programs:

- July 6, 2026 – Beaver Camp Day, a team building day for our youth to get to know each other.
- July 15, 2026 – OFA Picnic, a picnic day for 600 seniors, and youths help with serving lunch.
- July 29, 2026 – Careers in Government Day
- August 14, 2026 – End of Summer Picnic, a day to bring the youths back together.

Roundtable Discussion:

Before the discussion started, Director Mayforth noted two of the board members, 1st Vice Chair Pettit and Ms. Marks, are coming off the board. She thanked them for their years of service.

- **Hospitality and Tourism Updates:** 1st Vice Chair Pettit and Ms. Parker noted that business conditions have improved compared to last year's severe downturn. While hiring needs have remained low, they have seen an increase in bookings, by activity with the nearby military base.
- **Construction and Trades Labor Shortage:** Mr. Flint reported a significant rebound in the construction sector compared to last year's shaky, late start. Electricians and other trades reached full employment by early April, and contractors are now actively facing manpower shortages and struggling to find enough labor to meet project demands.
- **BOCES and Trade Enrollment Trends:** Matt shared that local recruitment into the trades has been highly successful, noting that in the Copenhagen junior class, his son is the only boy not currently attending BOCES. Mr. VanNatten added that gaining these practical, hands-on trade skills is increasingly seen as a valuable prerequisite for students pursuing future engineering degrees.

Next Meeting: September 17, 2026 at 8:00 am (breakfast at 7:30 am), Location TBD

Adjournment: Motion to adjourn by 1st Vice Chair Pettit; seconded by Ms. Marks. The meeting was adjourned at 10:05 am.

WDB Attendance:

Aiken, Rob
 Anderson, George
 Castillo, Rod
 Cooper, Matthew
 Dwyer, Amy
 Flint, Travis
 Marks, Shellie
 Mayforth, Cheryl
 Murray Lynn
 Pettit, Jody
 Prashun, Mark
 Yarina, Tracey

Others in Attendance:

Garno, Anne
 Hennessey, Sean
 Hetzner, Lisa
 Hunt, Steve
 Kilmer, Robert
 Parker, Shannon
 Sikhaou, Konstantine
 Smith, Nana
 Soper, Dylan
 VanNatten, John