



Jefferson-Lewis Workforce Development Board

Bringing Jobs & People Together

1000 Coffeen Street

Watertown, New York 13601

A proud partner of the American Job Center Network

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DRAFT Board Meeting Minutes DRAFT

December 18, 2025, at 8:00 am

Hilton Garden Inn

Welcome/Call to Order: 2nd Vice Chair Castillo welcomed Board Members at 8:03 am. He then moved to approval of resolution and minutes due to having exact number for the quorum and one member notified of leaving early.

Privilege of the Floor: There was none.

New Business:

- Resolution: 25-05 – Approval of Membership Renewal GWNCC
Motion by Mr. Prasuhn, seconded by Ms. Pettit; approved unanimously.

Approval of Minutes:

- September 18, 2025 Board Meeting minutes – Motion by Ms. Dwyer, seconded by Mr. Weir; approved unanimously.
- December 12, 2025 Executive Board Meeting minutes – Motion by Ms. Pettit, seconded by Ms. LaVallee; approved unanimously.

Correspondence: There was none.

Guest Speaker: Ben Cruz, Next Move NY Program Administrator

Mr. Cruz introduced his team, Eric Lo and Sarah Wilder, and provided an overview of the program's mission to retain transitioning service members, military spouses, and families in the North Country by connecting them with regional employers. He reported on outreach and engagement activity since the program's April launch, including partnerships with regional businesses, events attended, and service members served. Mr. Cruz highlighted the recent launch of Next Move NY's job-matching platform, which aggregates job postings and matches military talent with local employment opportunities. He noted the program is state funded, works closely with Fort Drum, and focuses on personalized support to help transitioning service members successfully enter the local workforce.

One-Stop Operator Report: Ms. Garno presented the One-Stop Operator Report for July–September 2025, prepared by Ms. Munson prior to her departure. Program and service levels in Jefferson and Lewis Counties remained generally steady compared to the same quarter in PY24, with higher youth participation due to the summer youth employment program. Job orders were slightly lower, likely to reflect cautious hiring amid broader economic uncertainty. Customer satisfaction surveys (36 in Jefferson, 20 in Lewis) were completed and were 100% positive, with no actionable concerns identified. Thirteen business surveys were also completed; one noted a mismatch between job postings and applicant skills, which was shared with the Business Services section. The quarterly desk review found files to be well organized and compliant, with only minor, non-systemic issues. A One-Stop Partners meeting was held in September to share organizational updates. The December meeting was canceled, and the next meeting is scheduled for March.

Executive Director's Report/Financial Report: Director Mayforth provided a fiscal update, noting that PY25 funding is fully appropriated through June 30, 2026 and was not affected by the federal shutdown, though PY26 funding remains uncertain pending Congressional budget decisions. Several programs continue to operate successfully, including Youth Employment (YEP), WIOA Adult, Youth, and Dislocated Worker programs, with flexibility to shift funds as needed. Additional incentive funding helped offset recent cuts, and overall program spending is on track.

Unemployment trends were reviewed, with unemployment rates increasing slightly. Locally, Jefferson County is at 4.1%, and Lewis County is at 3.4%, with typical seasonal unemployment. Manufacturing and tourism saw the largest recent job losses, while healthcare, government, and education remain strong. Employers are exercising caution in hiring due to economic uncertainty, resulting in fewer job orders. Changes to unemployment work-search requirements for seasonal workers were noted as a concern. Director Mayforth also discussed workforce and SNAP/ABAWD updates, noting waivers remain in place through February, with a focus on supporting participants in securing sustainable employment.

Recent and Upcoming Events:

Director Mayforth highlighted recent and upcoming events, including a successful Workforce Connections event, Manufacturing Day student tours, and plans to reschedule Careers in Government Day. Upcoming activities include a Workplace Forum in January, Spring Job Fair in April, summer youth program planning starting next month, and Career Jam in May.

Roundtable Discussion: Ms. Garno invited Board members to suggest topics for future Workplace Forums. Director Mayforth noted ongoing collaboration with United Way on workforce stability initiatives. Mr. Prasuhn suggested a future presentation on BOCES, noting it may be valuable for employers.

Next Meeting: March 18, 2026, at 8:00 am (breakfast at 7:30), location to be determined.

Adjournment: Motion to adjourn by Ms. Pettit; seconded by Ms. LaVallee. The meeting adjourned at 9:05 am.

WDB Attendance:

Anderson, George
Castillo, Rod
Dwyer, Amy
Flint, Travis
Keruski, John
LaValee, Marybeth
Mayforth, Cheryl
Pettit, Jody
Prasuhn, Mark
Weir, Marshall
Yarina, Tracey

Others in Attendance:

Cruz, Ben
Garno, Anne
Lo, Eric
Smith, Nana
Wilder, Sarah