



**WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD
MINUTES
March 14th, 2025**

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 9:33 a.m. by Chair Leanne Panduren.

Avendt, Scott		Mose, Sandi / Jeff Cook	X
Baird, Rick		Mosier, Brianna / Amy Watts	X
Batistoni, Pete	X	Nas, Paula	X
Byers, Kimberly	X	Panduren, Leanne	X
Collison, Dennis	X	Prill, Yvonne / Diane Ricevuto	
Gasso, Rochelle / Dennis Weinand	X	Rogers, Lisa	
Gaudet, Dan / Zach Desrochers		Shelton, Mary / Meredith Donahue	X
Hipes, Howard / John Hartwell	X	Sheppard, Daniel / Verona Terry	X
Kappen, Jason / Duston Fenner	X	Turner, Rafael	
Kunisch, Chuck		Zahn, Correen	X
Lewis-Jennings, Tracie / Steve Peterson	X		

Fourteen members were present. An X indicates present members.

Staff present were Jody Kerbyson, Sharon Bowen, Kelly Cook, Jessica Billiau, JulAnn Kuenzli, Cindy Thornthwaite, Sheila Rock, Wendy Paxton and Stephanie Polmanteer. Other attendees present included: James Avery, Mary Babcock, Roger Ballard, Brad Haggadone, Gary Howell, Bill Lutz, John Moody, and Nick Morehead.

II. Approval of Agenda

Chair Panduren called for approval of the agenda. Member Howard Hipes moved to approve the agenda. Member Dennis Collison supported the motion. Chair Panduren called for discussion and a vote. All members present voted AYE.
MOTION PASSED

III. Introductions

Members, staff, and other attendees introduced themselves.

IV. Public Comments

There were no public comments.

V. Action Items

a. Election of Officers:

- Chair – Leanne Panduren
- Vice Chair – Correen Zahn
- Secretary – Sandi Mose

Member Pete Batistoni moved to elect the officers as slated. Member Howard Hipes supported the motion. Chair Leanne Panduren called for discussion and a vote.

All members present voted AYE.

MOTION PASSED

b. Approval of the minutes from the previous meeting on December 13th, 2024

Member Sandi Mose moved to approve the December 13th, 2024 minutes. Member Dennis Collison supported the motion. Chair Panduren called for discussion and a vote.

All members present voted AYE.

MOTION PASSED

c. Approval to appoint Dr. Madonna Jackson, Dean of the Technology Division at Mott Community College to the CEAC to represent a post-secondary institution

Member Amy Watts moved to appoint Dr. Madonna Jackson to the CEAC. Member Mary Shelton supported the motion. Chair Panduren called for discussion and a vote.

All members present vote AYE.

MOTION PASSED

d. Approval of GSTMW Plans

Sharon Bowen presented the following GSTMW! plans: National Farmworker Jobs Program (NFJP); Young Professionals 2025; Going Pro Talent Fund Cycle 1; and Partnership, Accountability, Training, Hope (PATH), Employment Related Support Services (ERSS). Member Howard Hipes moved to approve the plans as presented. Member Mary Shelton supported the motion. Chair Panduren called for discussion and a vote.

All members present voted AYE.

MOTION PASSED

e. Approval of the 2025 RFP Recommendations for Services

Member Pete Batistoni moved to approve the 2025 RFP Recommendations for services as presented by Sharon Bowen. Member Howard Hipes supported the motion. Chair Panduren called for discussion and a vote.

All members present voted AYE except Mary Shelton who abstained due to her affiliation with the Family Literacy Center, and Sandi Mose who also abstained due to her position on a Board that serves the Greater Flint Health Coalition.

MOTION PASSED

VI. Finance

Kelly Cook reviewed the expenditure report in the packet for July 1st, 2024 – January 31st, 2025 with the members. Member Jason Kappen moved to approve the budget and expenditure report. Member Tracie Lewis-Jennings supported the motion. Chair Panduren called for discussion and a vote.

All members present voted AYE.

MOTION PASSED

VII. Agency Updates – Jody Kerbyson

In January, Jody was invited to participate on a workforce panel for a Consumer's Energy event. The focus was on the changing energy sector and ensuring equitable access to information, opportunities, and training. The event was held at the Riverfront Conference Center in downtown Flint.

Jody met with Flint & Genesee Education & Talent and Michigan State University to discuss participating in the "Flintern" program. GSTMW! will be hosting a summer intern to provide robust experience around the work of GST Michigan Works! through several departments and events occurring in the region.

In February, Jody attended a LEO-WD Infrastructure Roundtable event in Waterford. The intent of the meeting was to discuss proposed infrastructure funding with employers and community partners and to hear ideas and best practices that could be implemented.

Jessica Billiau and Cindy Thornthwaite attended the Governor's Budget Roundtable discussion at Genesee Career Institute (GCI), where Director Corbin and Stephanie Beckhorn discussed the Governor's proposed budget and investments she is proposing, that would help the state and the region.

GSTMW! recently awarded Fessler & Bowman with the agency's 2025 Impact Award. In February, a video was filmed at the location highlighting the company and the culture they have worked hard to implement. Also highlighted in the video was the success of one particular program participant and the impact this partnership has had on his and the company's success. The video will be unveiled at the Impact Award ceremony in April and shared with the board afterward.

The Environmental Career Worker Apprentice Readiness Training Program at GSTMW! has wrapped up the recruitment process and begun training. This year, 27 participants are enrolled in the program, an increase from previous years.

U of M-Flint is collaborating with GSTMW! for the Flint Educates Rural Nurses (FERN) program. The program will provide an accelerated Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) program to qualified participants in the rural Thumb region. Recruitment is currently underway, and the first cohort will begin in the fall. The goal of this program is to allow students to receive their BSN education and conduct their clinical training without having to travel outside the Thumb area where medical professionals are in high demand.

U of M-Flint is also partnering with GSTMW! on Michigan's Inclusive Training, Technology, and Equity Network (MITTEN) grant. The purpose of the grant is to help Michigan residents access the resources and tools they need to be successful in navigating the digital world.

Jody provided an update on the agency's virtual reality headsets through Transfr. Last year, the agency took advantage of an offer to pilot a construction pre-employment training program. The program was a great success, and as a result, the offer was proposed again by Transfr. They hope to continue tweaking the program for broader use across the nation. This year, Shiawassee County will participate and recruit youth to take part in the project. They will complete 20 hours of virtual reality construction training and round out the experience on the job with a local employer.

The Michigan Works! Association 2025 Advocacy Day is taking place in Lansing on March 19th. The event allows Michigan Works! agencies to meet with legislators to educate them on programs, priorities, and successes in their local regions. Jody provided a brief overview of the FY 2026 State Legislative Priorities document that will be shared with the legislators.

Jody shared information regarding the projected planning allocation for the coming fiscal year as received from LEO-WD. While the final allocations will not be available for at least a few months, the projected allocation shows the possibility of dramatic cuts. The agency is currently reviewing the budget to determine where cuts can be made to ensure savings while maintaining operational effectiveness and efficiency.

Jessica Billiau spoke on the variety of partnerships that are regularly represented in the issues of *Talent Talk*. She shared that those partnerships have a large impact in helping the agency's clients meet their goals and they have become an extension of the agency itself in working with the community.

VIII. Informational Items

- *Talent Talk* handouts were provided at the meeting.
- The Board Acronyms were attached to the agenda.
- The Workforce Development Board roster was attached to the agenda.
- The 2025 Meeting Dates were attached to the agenda.
- The Job Corps CRC Meeting invitation was attached to the agenda.

IX. Partner Updates

- a. **Tracie Lewis-Jennings, Michigan Rehabilitation Services (MRS):** Tracie announced that MRS can provide Farm Rehab funding. This funding aids disabled farmers or their disabled workers who may require special equipment or services to allow them to operate their farm successfully. She noted that her district has yet to use this funding this year, and any unused funds will be moved for use in the Saginaw area. Tracie shared that MRS will continue to receive funding for pre-employment training

