

Lorain County Workforce Development Board Meeting
Thursday, August 28, 2025
9:00 am
Meeting Minutes

Members Present

Chris Cabot	Tracy Green	Tim King (v)
Hannah DiVencenzo	David Greenspan	Dave Larson
Ryan Flanigan	Lisa Hutson	Sha-Niqua Matthews(v)
Tony Gallo	Nick Jarmoszuk	Mary Murphy (v)
Charlotte Gardiner (v)	Carl Johnson	Donald Ortner
Mark Goffinet	Tim King (v)	Dave Zunis

Also Present: Kaci Roach (New Growth Partnership Consultant), Chief Fiscal Officer, Shawn Roeder

Members Absent

Shauna Mitelski, Erin Schneider, Susan Meek, Andy Kasubienski

Call to Order Ben called the meeting to order at 9:00.

Roll Call Ben asked Lesley to conduct the roll call. Lesley indicated that there was a quorum.

Approval of Minutes

Ben asked for a motion to approve the minutes from May 20, 2025. A motion was made by David Zunis and seconded by Lisa Hutson. The motion passed.

WDB Chairperson Report

Ben shared that Chris Brown resigned from the board to accept a position with the state of Ohio; the board is waiting for the manufacturing sector partnership to offer a potential new board member for submission to the commissioners.

New Growth Partnership Consultant Update

Kaci Roach provided an update on her work as the new Growth Partnership Consultant. Her current work is tied to a key objective: to review and create a community scoreboard. She has been interviewing all managers to gain perspective on service delivery and to compare the organization with other Ohio Means Jobs (OMJ) centers and connecting with similar-sized workforce boards in Northeast Ohio, including those in Erie, Stark, Summit, Tuscarawas, and Lake counties. She will share her findings in the bi-weekly meeting.

Partner Updates

Bridges to Success Program: It targets students without a post-high school plan, who are typically in low-wage, low-trajectory jobs. Currently, 290 individuals have been identified through LCCC who may qualify for OMJ programs. The partnership includes sharing data and emails. OMJ and LCCC have an integrated curriculum, allowing students to get college credit for career counseling and work-ready skills already being done at OMJ. This collaborative design aims for a seamless transition between programs.

Goal: The first cohort is targeting 20 students with a hopeful start in January 2026.

Funding Breakdown:

- **LCCC Grant:** Will pick up tuition, which can be up to \$6,500 per student. and student meals and a reception at the end of the term.
- **OMJ:** Will pick up the youth wages and credentialing costs (so everyone walks out with a certificate). OMJ will provide students enrolled in the program with gas cards for transportation to LCCC and other areas.

Next Steps: OMJ is tasked with developing more business relationships for legitimate career paths, including career exploration events (online or in-person) for fields like nursing, welding, and manufacturing maintenance.

High School Outreach:

- **OMJ** is working to provide case managers on-site at Elyria High and Lorain High. A potential partnership with Elyria Catholic (the only Catholic high school in the county) for career development for freshmen is also being explored.
- **LCCC Fast Track Programs:** LCCC has found ways to blend state and federal funding to make Fast Track (16 weeks or less) programs free to the student who enrolls in the program.

Partner Accountability

The Director has been proactive in ensuring partners meet the terms of their Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), specifically the "commit to hire" requirement.

First Step: Funding was stopped for not meeting the commit-to-hire requirement; the organization has promised to improve. The Director is exploring a concept for First Step to potentially become the downtown Lorain Health Center.

Hondros Career Centers: The director has addressed concerns regarding the high cost and failure rate of a particular program. The new director is focused on accountability.

Local and Regional Plans

- A two-year update to the four-year local and regional plans was submitted.
- There was a 30-day public review with only one comment, which came from within the industry and suggested providing a mental health plan for industry partners.
- The Director noted that partners are built to handle mental health issues and is not sure OMJ is the appropriate place to do so.
- Updates to the local plan included changing board members, the chairman, and the director.
- Plans are expected to be out for signatures by September 5th and delivered to the state by September 30th.

Electronic Files Transition

The Director shared that it is ongoing and slow. The agency will not abandon paper files yet, although the director prefers to minimize reliance on paper. Comprehensive Case Management and Employment Program (CCMEP) staff advised keeping paper.

Mega Site Update

The Director shared that the county commissioners recently received almost \$70 million for infrastructure for the Mega site. The project is several years off. The goal is to attract a partner company that provides clean and high-paying jobs.

Dave Greenspan provided clarification of Funds:

- The \$67 million from the state is focused on the western part of the county's water and sewer project, where the Mega site is located.
- This \$67 million is not for the creation of an eastern part of the county's storm/sanitary sewer organization (A6119).
- The \$67 million also has nothing to do with airport or runway expansion.

Economic Impact: If the end user is an employer of approximately 4,000 jobs, the traditional multiplier suggests another 12,000 supply chain jobs could follow, for a total of up to 16,000 jobs.

Financial Updates

Shawn Roeder shared that the financial situation is not good; WIOA funding has decreased. The adult and dislocated worker program spending has outpaced current allocations. The allocation this year has dropped by about 10%. and the fixed expenses (e.g., utilities) have increased. Funds are available for two years from allocation; however, the agency has spent all the previous funding.

Recommendations & Board Action

Ben asked for a motion to approve the CDL cap to 15%. A motion was made by Dave Greenspan and seconded by Donald Ortner. Motion passed.

Program	Current Status	Recommendation	Motion Outcome
CDL Program	Cap at 20% of funds	Drop cap to 15%	Approved. Motion carried; no opposition.
Registered Nursing Program	Cap at 20% of funds	Remove the cap (Uncap)	Approved. Motion carried; no opposition.
Income Eligibility (All Programs)	275% of Poverty Level	Change to 200% of Poverty Level (For a single person, this lowers the cap from \$43,000 to \$31,000)	Approved. Motion carried with an agreement to revisit. The board requested tracking of applicants who would have qualified under the old cap.

Ben asked for a motion to approve the uncap of the Registered Nursing Program. A motion was made by Donald Ortner and seconded by Lisa Hutson. Motion Passed.

Discussion on Income Cap:

- The 200% level aligns with other counties.
- It was noted that lowering the cap is intended to prioritize those who are more in need since funding is scarce.
- A board member suggested revisiting the 200% range to avoid an overlap with Pell Grant eligibility and maximize program utilization, which will be an agenda item for the next meeting.

Ben asked for a motion to approve the Poverty Level Range to 200%. A motion was made by Dave Zunis and seconded by Donald Ortner. Motion passed.

Community and Partner Updates

Tracy shared updates on **Manufacturing Month (October)**: Lorain County has a robust schedule of events, including a summit, kickoff and wrap-up events, job fairs, and a two-day student engagement event at the fairgrounds, expecting 1,500 students.

Lisa shared updates on the **Tech Prep Program**: The framework and administration for this Career Tech program is changing statewide, with a new RFP due in the third week of September for a regional consortium.

LCCC Healthcare Programs:

- LCCC applied to deliver an Applied Bachelor's Degree in Nursing with a cost of around \$15,000 for all four years; hopeful for a Fall 2026 start.
- LCCC is working with the Cleveland Clinic on creating a nursing academy to address a shortage of 200 nurses.
- The college has seen a significant expansion of tech education in the Artificial Intelligence (AI) space, now offering 21 different certificates in AI.

Jobs Ohio Incentive: A new incentive program offers a \$15,000 credit to companies hiring a STEM-based employee who is relocating from out of state to Ohio.

Legislative Action: A board member and Director, Dave Blevins, volunteered to testify in Columbus on a bill concept to require superintendents to share the names of students who drop out or separate from high school with OMJ, allowing the agency to better capture and serve this population.

Ben asked for a Motion to conclude the meeting. Motion approved by Donald Ortner and seconded Nick Jarmoszuk

Meeting Adjourned

Next Meeting: Thursday, February 26, 2026