**ST. LAWRENCE COUNTY WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD**

**MEETING MINUTES**

**June 11, 2025**

**CALL TO ORDER:**

Ms. King called to order the meeting of the St. Lawrence County Workforce Development Board at 8:32 a.m.

**Members Present:**  Louanne King, Jack Backus, Scott Hilyard, Dave Evans, Shena Patrick, Zvi Szafran, Chris Coffey, Ben Dixon, Katelyn Autry-Agen, Marijean Remington, Peter Reiter, Dale Rice, Ellie Sullivan Stripp

**Others Present:** Pam Lewis – WDB, Adam Peters – WIOA, Paige Whitton – WIOA, Koby Jordan – SLL BOCES, Sean Hennessey – NYS DOL, Konstantin Sikhaou – NYS DOL

**Absent:** Lauren Hughes, Ron McDougall, David Ferris, Brian Bush, Ruth Doyle, Dallas Sutton, Lynn Pietroski, Naresh Singh

**MINUTES:**

Mr. Dixon moved and Mr. Hilyard seconded a motion to accept the 1.8.2025 WDB Mtg. minutes, the 1.15.2025 WDB Executive Committee minutes, the 3.19.25 WDB Mtg. minutes, and the 4.14.2025 WDB Executive Committee minutes; approved unanimously

**CHAIRPERSON’S REPORT:**

Ms. King requested that Ms. Lewis introduce Clara Cummings, HR Director for Empire State Mines, LLC. Ms. Cummings is filling the seat previously held by Ryan Schermerhorn. Ms. Cummings gave a brief introduction. Ms. Lewis asked everyone in attendance to introduce themselves.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

N/A

**NEW BUSINESS:**

Resolution: Modify PY23 Budget for the NY SCION Initiative (Approved by Executive Committee on 1/15/25)

Moved/seconded by Autry-Agen/Dixon; Approved unanimously

* Ms. Lewis expressed to the Board that this resolution is for year 4 of the NY SCION funding, which is an initiative that started with NYS DOL to employ Disability Resource Coordinator. DOL provides $100,000 a year. Ms. Lewis stated this is a 5 year program, and we are currently working on year 4 money. The funds are usually available for use from January 1st through December 25th. However, we received an additional NOA extending that time frame to June 30th of 2026. This resolution had been approved through Executive Committee and has already gone before the SLC Board of Legislators.

Resolution: Hire Temporary Staff for 2025 Summer Youth Employment Program (Approved by Executive Committee on 4/14/25)

Moved/seconded by Dixon/Hilyard; Approved unanimously

* Ms. Lewis expressed to the Board that 2 Counselors as well as 3 Crew Leaders were hired for the 2025 Summer Youth Employment Program. Ms. Lewis explained that Crew Leaders are essentially Job Coaches, each Crew Leader will have a group of 4 individuals that have a disability. These Crew Leaders will be placed in the following locations: Ogdensburg School District, Massena School District, and Brasher Falls School District.

Resolution: Appointment to the WDB (Attached BIO Data Sheet – Andy McMahon) (Approved by Executive Committee on 4/14/25)

Moved/seconded by Rice/Dixon; Approved unanimously

* Ms. Lewis expressed to the Board that there is still one available spot, previously held by Lynn Blevins.

Resolution: Establishing the WIOA PY25 Budget (attached budget)

Moved/seconded by Hilyard/Dixon; Approved unanimously

* Mr. Peters directed the Board to look on the bottom of the resolution. The first column contains the allocated figures presented by NYS DOL for PY’25. The middle column is an estimate of PY’24 funding unobligated by June 30, 2025 that will roll over into PY’25. The third column contains the total of PY’25 allocations and PY’24 roll over funds.
* Ms. Lewis stated that far as WIOA funds are concerned, we took a cut in Adult and a cut in Dislocated Worker with an increase in Youth funding. Overall, there was approximately $65,000 cut from last year’s obligation.

Resolution: Modifying the WIOA PY24 Budget – Fiscal Incentive Grant

Moved/seconded by Autry-Agen/Coffey; Approved unanimously

* Ms. Lewis expressed to the Board that when we receive WIOA funds we have 2 years to spend that money. 80% of the funds need to be spent by the end of year 1. In PY’23 we spent our 80% by June 30th. As of right now we are on track to spend our 80% for PY’24. As a result, St. Lawrence was awarded a $100,000 Fiscal Incentive Grant from NYS DOL. The incentive funds are available until June 30th, 2026 and can only be obligated for training and supportive services.

Resolution: Modifying the WIOA PY24 Budget – Program Incentive Grant

Moved/seconded by Coffey/Rice; Approved unanimously

* Ms. Lewis expressed to the Board NYS DOL has 15 Performance Measures that are in place for all three funding streams (Adult, Dislocated Worker, & Youth) and that in PY’23 St. Lawrence County met all 15 Performance Measures and was awarded a Program Incentive Grant of $200,333. The incentive funds are available until June 30th, 2026 and can only be obligated for training and supportive services.

Resolution: Establishing PY24 Budget for the NY SCION OMH Initiative (attached Budget)

Moved/seconded by Cummings/Coffey; Approved unanimously

* Ms. Lewis informed the Board that the Office of Mental Health (OMH) had allocated funds to support the NY SCION initiative in serving individuals with disabilities. Last year, we received $30,000 from OMH. At that time, we were instructed to fully spend the $100,000 allocated by NY SCION before utilizing the OMH funds. As a result, the OMH funds were significantly underutilized statewide. However, new guidance has since been issued requiring that OMH funding be used first. Additionally, the allowable uses for OMH funds have been expanded to include staff salaries, occupational skills training for staff and participants, On-the-Job Training (OJT), Work Experience, and Supportive Services. Due to these updates, the deadline to obligate both OMH and NY SCION funds has been extended to June 30, 2026. Based on recommendations from our FOTA representatives, we anticipated an under-expenditure during this period. As a result, we requested additional funding and were approved for an extra $60,000.

Resolution: Authorizing the Disability Resource Coordinator (DRC) the Ability to Temporarily Assist Disabled Individuals with Applying For Social Security Benefits

Moved/seconded by Hilyard/Coffey; Approved unanimously

* Ms. Lewis informed the Board that there is now a growing need to assist individuals with applying for Social Security benefits (SSA). Previously, the Massena Independent Living Center provided this service, but they are no longer able to do so due to a loss of funding. As a result, individuals are now being referred to the One-Stop Center and our Disability Resource Coordinator (DRC). Although this approach may seem to contradict efforts to help individuals move off public benefits, the NY SCION project manager recommended addressing this immediate need. This support can be considered part of the benefits advisement services that fall within the DRC’s responsibilities. The DRC can help individuals complete SSA applications while also educating them on how they may be able to work part-time and still receive partial benefits.

Resolution: Appointing Officer for 2025-2027

Moved/seconded by Dixon/Backus; Approved unanimously

* Ms. King expressed to the Board that every 2 years the executive committee changes officers. In the April 14th meeting, executive committee served as nominee committee. Dallas Sutton is Chairperson, Marijean Remington is Vice-Chairperson, Louanne King is Treasurer, and Ron McDougall is Secretary. Ms. King expressed to the Board that if anybody else interested to please make it known.
* Ms. Lewis expressed to the Board that she has spoken with other Executive Directors about the process and they have it stated in their bylaws that someone stays in office until they decide they are no longer interested. The Board would like continue the 2 year process.

Resolution: Establishing Contract for Connections Program through Seaway Valley Prevention Council (attached Contract & supporting documents (2))

Moved/seconded by Hilyard/Backus; Approved unanimously

* Ms. Lewis expressed to the Board Seaway Valley Prevention Council has a Connections Program which is a work readiness/ leadership program for summer youth participants. There is usually 4 groups, approximately 16 individuals total.

Resolution: Approving One Year Extension of the One Stop Operator for PY25

Moved/seconded by Dixon/Hilyard; Approved unanimously

* Ms. Lewis expressed to the Board the One-Stop operator contract is written for 1 year with an additional 3 year extensions. This the last year that the contract can be extended. It does have to be procured every 4 years. In January the process of issuing RFP will start. This will extend the contract until June 30, 2026.

Resolution: Contracting Payroll Services for PY25 Summer TANF Youth Program

Moved/seconded by Coffey/Reiter; Approved unanimously

* Ms. Lewis expressed to the Board that summer youth program received an increase in funds for this year’s TANF program. This increase is enough to offset the cost of the increase in minimum wage. Due to this, the program will be the same size with approximately 100 youth. We expect anywhere from a 10% to 15% of attrition.
* Ms. Lewis informed the Board the majority of the youth will be funded under the County but there are some positions that the County will not fund due to liability. The youth that cannot be funded by the County will use the staffing agency CorTech.

Resolution: Approval of Updates to the St. Lawrence County In-Demand Occupations List (attached List)

Moved/seconded by Sullivan Stripp/Reiter; Approved unanimously

* Ms. Lewis provided an updated version of the In-Demand Occupations List to the Board and expressed that Emergency Medical Technicians was added to the list.

Resolution: Adopting Transitional Jobs for Adults and Dislocated Worker Policy (attached Policy & supporting documents (3))

Moved/seconded by Autry-Agen/Backus; Approved unanimously

* Ms. Lewis expressed to the Board that this is a program we are hoping the DRC can utilize with the additional funding. It is work experience for adults and dislocated workers. This program can also assist adults and dislocated workers that have had sporadic work history or long term unemployment. Especially if an individual has a disability and might not know what type of job they can perform given their disability and limitations. Up to 10% of funding can be spent on this type of program.

Resolution: Authorizing the Renewal of the Executive Director Contract

Moved/seconded by Dixon/Cummings; Approved unanimously

**OTHER BUSINESS:**

WDB Membership Roster:

* Ms. Lewis requested that the Board Members review the membership roster and inform her of any changes that need to be made.

Lease Negotiations (NYS DOL, DOSS, ACCES-VR & SLC):

* Ms. Lewis informed the Board that the lease agreements for NYS DOL, DOSS, ACCES-VR, and SLC are still in negotiation, all leases will expire June 30, 2026. Ms. Lewis expressed NYS DOL has the paperwork and was reminded about all information needed. Ms. Lewis needs to further discuss the lease agreements for DOSS and SLC with Ruth Doyle due to possible changes. Ms. Lewis has received a draft lease agreement from ACCES-VR, but is in the process of reviewing the document and taking note of any areas that need further discussion.

Local/Regional Plan:

* Ms. Lewis informed the Board both the local and regional plan are being developed. The local plan must be submitted to DOL for review the first part of July, the regional plan must be submitted for review the first part of September. The resolution for the In-Demand Occupations List is part of the local plan. The local plan is almost complete, at the October meeting the Board will be presented with the local and regional plan for approval.

**STAFF REPORTS:**

**Fiscal Manager/Title I**

* Mr. Peter’s referred the Board to the fiscal printout. Mr. Peter’s goes on to explain adult is spent out 77.7%, youth 75.29, DW 76.24%, admin 72.57%. Staff is currently trying to obligate more training for OJET RETI. Mr. Peter’s informed the Board he is confident we will reach the 80% spending by the end of June 2025.

**One-Stop Network Operator**

Moved/seconded by Coffey/Dixon; Approved unanimously

* SLL BOCES getting ready to run their EKG and Phlebotomy summer classes, WIOA currently funding 7 for EKG. SLL BOCES also has their CDL A & B courses starting up, there is 1 enrolled for CDL A at this time and waiting on 3.
* 5 LPNs, between SUNY Canton & NCCC, successfully complete their Practical Nursing program and waiting on NCLEX results to come in. 8 RNs, between SUNY Canton & NCCC, that completed their program and waiting on NCLEX results to come in.
* SYEP ’25 received 253 applications with 163 eligible. There were 117 Slot Crews sent out and 92 sites responded with “yes”. There are 115 slots total to place youth in. SYEP is looking to place 100 youth, offering a $300.00 incentive. There is approximately 60 youth participating in the Connections Program through Seaway Valley Prevention Council. In person orientation will start 6/30/2025.
* Counselors have been attending events. The Senior Employment Counselor has a meeting scheduled with Kelly Chezm and Doug Wildermouth from Clarkson to talk about EMT and Paramedic programs getting on the ETPL (Eligible Training Provider List) so that we are able to assist with funding.
* Southwest Tech will be starting a new program called HERO (Health and Emergency Response Occupations). This is a two year program and includes EMT training.

**NEXT MEETING:**

October 7 or 14, 2025

**ADJOURNMENT:**

Dixon moved/Reiter seconded that the meeting adjourn at 10:16 a.m. by unanimous consent.

Respectfully submitted by Pam Lewis, Executive Director, SLCWDB