



**Executive Leadership and Strategic Engagement Committee (EC)
of the West Michigan Works! (WMW) Workforce Development Board (WDB) Meeting**
Grand Rapids NW Service Center, 215 Straight Ave NW Grand Rapids, MI 49504
The public may attend in-person or by remote participation via Teams.
[Join the meeting now](#) Meeting ID: 240 852 326 639 Passcode: RM3Hf6Bi
Dial in by phone [+1 616-803-9815,,709658064#](#)
Monday, January 12, 2026 ▪ 11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

AGENDA

1. Call to Order
2. Public Comment – Agenda Items
3. Approval of September 15, 2025 Minutes **Action Required**
4. Customer Service Survey Update **Information Item**
Angie Barksdale, Chief Operating Officer
5. WDB Activities
 - a. 2026 Meetings Outlook: *Jacob Maas, Chief Executive Officer* **Discussion Item**
 - b. WDB Member Vacancies: *Jacob Maas* **Discussion Item**
 - c. Board Committees: *Angie Barksdale* **Discussion Item**
6. WDB Committee/Council Updates
 - a. Career Educational Advisory Council (CEAC): *Tonia Castillo, Committee Chairperson*
 - b. Legislative Committee: *Jim Fisher, Committee Chairperson*
 - c. Solutions Driven Committee: *Jordan Clark, Committee Chairperson*
 - i. Member Appointment: *Donata Kidd*
 - d. Bev Drake Essential Services Awards Committee: *Mark Bergsma, Committee Chairperson*
7. Other Business **Information Item**
 - a. National Skills Coalition (NSC): February 4-6 in Washington, D.C.
 - b. Michigan Works! Association (MWA) Advocacy Day: March 11-12 in Lansing, MI
 - c. National Association of Workforce Boards (NAWB) 2026 Forum: March 23-26 in Las Vegas, NV
 - d. MWA Impact Awards: April 8 in Lansing, MI
 - e. MiCareerQuest: May 20, 2026
8. Public Comment
9. Adjournment

Next Scheduled Executive Leadership and Strategic Engagement Committee Meeting: March 9, 2026

Remaining Meetings:

May 11, 2026

September 21, 2026

November 9, 2026 (if needed)



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Monday, September 15, 2025 • 11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

MINUTES

Members/Alternates Present: Heather Daniel (Chairperson), Mark Bergsma, Tonia Castillo, Jordan Clark, Jim Fisher, Jon Hofman

Members/Alternates Absent: Paul David, Shana Washington (Vice-Chairperson)

Staff Present: Jacob Maas, Angie Barksdale, Janette Monroe, Jeff Dornbos (virtual), Tawanna Wright (virtual), Amy Lebednick, Chad Patton (virtual), Tasha Evans (virtual), Malinda Powers (virtual)

Guests Present: None

1. Call to Order, Madam Chairperson Heather Daniel at 11:37 a.m.
2. Public Comment – Agenda Items – None.
3. Approval of the May 12, 2025 Minutes

Action Required

Motion – Jim Fisher

Second – Mark Bergsma

Item Approved – Motion approved

4. Report on Financial Activities: Notes to June 2025 Board Financials **Information Item**
Jacob Maas, Chief Executive Officer on behalf of Kirsti Jones, Chief Financial Officer reviewed ACSET's statement of revenue and expenditures for the twelve months ending June 30, 2025. Discussion took place and staff answered board members' questions.
5. WDB Term of Office
 - a. WDB Term of Office: November 1, 2024 – October 31, 2026 **Discussion Item**
Janette Monroe, Executive Assistant, reported that there are two vacant seats for the term of office through October 31, 2026. Janette reviewed the memo with committee members reviewing that the nomination committee would like to discuss filling these vacant seats with the EC. Discussion took place. The Executive Committee will work with staff in filling these seats prior to formal appointments by Governing Board at its October meeting.
 - b. WDB Term of Office: November 1, 2025 – October 31, 2027 **Action Required**
Janette Monroe, Executive Assistant, reported that there are currently seventeen (17) board member seats for the term of office expiring October 31, 2025. Three board members have notified staff that they will not be seeking reappointment for another term. These members include Lisa Marie Barkel-Williams, representing the Business/Private Sector (Cascade Engineering); Jennifer Heinzman, representing Community-Based Organization (Barry County Chamber of Commerce & Economic Development Alliance); and Michelle Seigo, representing Public Assistance Agencies (MI DHHS Montcalm/Ionia Counties). To fill the vacancies left by Jennifer Heinzman and Michelle Seigo, applications have been received from Emily Quiggle, who would continue representing the Barry County Chamber of Commerce & Economic Development Alliance in the Community-Based

category, and Donata Kidd, who would represent MI DHHS Muskegon County in the Public Assistance Agencies category. The Business/Private Sector seat remains open at this time. Additionally, the seat held by the President of Grand Rapids Community College (GRCC) remains vacant. The interim President of GRCC has recommended John VanElst, Dean of Workforce Development, to fill this position. Janette recommended further discussion on the board vacancies and further requested approval from the EC to support the listed slate of members with the term of office dates November 1, 2025 through October 31, 2027. Formal appointment by the Governing Board will be requested at its October meeting.

Motion – Jon Hofman

Second – Jim Fisher

Item Approved – Motion approved

- c. **Reminder: Call for Nomination of Officers** **Information Item**
 Janette Monroe reported that in accordance with the Bylaws of the WDB, it is time to select new board member officers who will serve from November 1, 2025 through October 31, 2027. There is a total of seventeen (17) members that meet the specified eligibility criteria. Current WDB Chairperson, Heather Daniel and, current Vice-Chairperson, Shana Washington's first term as Officers of the Board will expire October 2025. Both are eligible for another term. Both Heather and Shana have expressed their willingness to serve another term. Janette reviewed that the call for nominations will be due in September. Elections of officers are slated to take place at the October 2025 WDB meeting. The Executive Committee will serve as the nomination committee.

6. WDB Activities

- a. **October 13, 2025 Meeting Agenda** **Discussion Item**
 Janette Monroe reported that the election of WDB members and officers, board member spotlights, and the remaining ITC presentations are currently on the draft agenda. Brief discussion took place.
- b. **2026 Meeting Schedules** **Action Required**
 Janette Monroe reviewed the proposed 2026 meeting schedules and requested approval.

Motion – Mark Bergsma

Second – Jim Fisher

Item Approved – Motion approved

7. WMW WDB Subcommittees Updates

Discussion Item

- a. Career Educational Advisory Council (CEAC):
 Tonia Castillo, WDB Member and CEAC Chair, reported that the council met on May 30. Tonia shared that the council discussed updates on the following: regional grants, adult education, MiSTEM, CTE, Michigan Works!, and CEAC metrics. The next meeting is scheduled for September 26, 2025.
- b. Legislative Committee:
 Jim Fisher, WDB Member and Committee Chair, reported that the committee last met on July 15, 2025. The committee discussed State & Federal Advocacy updates, legislative visits and tours, and the member vacancy. The next meeting is scheduled for October 21, 2025.
- i. Member Appointment: Jim Fisher reported that Marcus Keech recently left the Grand Rapids Chamber. Andy Johnston, VP of Strategic Initiatives, has expressed interest in filling this seat for the foreseeable future. Jim requested approval from Chairperson Heather Daniel for Andy to join the committee.

Motion – Chairperson Heather Daniel supported Andy Johnston joining the Legislative Committee of West Michigan Works!

Item Approved – Motion approved

- c. Solutions Driven Committee:
Jordan Clark, WDB Member and Committee Chair, reported that the committee met July 11, 2025. Although Jordan was not present for the meeting, fellow WDB member Daniel TenHooen led the meeting on Jordan's behalf. The committee discussed customer service, assessments and ideas to gather more input from surveys and ways to expand awareness and service offerings. The next meeting is scheduled for October 3, 2025.
- d. Bev Drake Essential Service Awards (ESAs) Committee: Mark Bergsma reviewed the timeline provided in the board packet. He shared that the award nominations are open and asked committee members to keep an eye out for social media posts, etc. Mark reported that nominations will be accepted through September 30, 2025, with the formal award recognition taking place in late February 2026.

8. Other Business –**Information Item**

- a. Recap: Michigan Works! Association (MWA) Annual Conference: September 7-9, 2025
Jacob Maas thanked both Madam Chairperson Heather Daniel, Madam Vice-Chairperson Shana Washington, and WDB Member Tonia Castillo for attending the conference. WMW had approximately 12 staff members presenting this year. Jacob, Heather, and Tonia reviewed some of the topics discussed at various sessions during the conference which included aging workforce, AI and workforce development, immigration and employment just to name a few. A brief discussion took place on AI in the workplace. A recommendation was made to discuss and review the Strategic Plan going into 2026. Jordan provided an update on the organization called Mutually Human.
- b. 10-Year Anniversary of West Michigan Works!: October 1, 2025
Jacob Maas stated that invitations for the celebration have been sent. Brief remarks will begin at 4:30 p.m.
- c. State & Federal Budget Updates: Jacob discussed the implications of proposed state and federal budget cuts on workforce programs such as Going PRO Talent Fund (GPTF), Registered Apprenticeships, Jobs for Michigan's Graduates (JMG), and Barrier Removal Employment Success (BRES). At the federal level, the House budget is proposing to eliminate WIOA Youth and Adult programs to cut Job Corps funding by half, and to eliminate Adult Education funding. In addition, there was brief discussion on Medicaid implementations. Furthermore, some discussion took place on immigration-related employment and protected statuses of individuals. Jacob emphasized the importance of education and advocacy, mentioning a letter from the National Skills Coalition for business leaders to sign in support of workforce funding.
- d. Steepletown Neighborhood Services: Angie Barksdale, Chief Operating Officer, reported that Steepletown is a contracted service provider for WIOA Out-of-School Youth (OSY) in Kent County and has been a long-time partner with WMW. Upon recent monitoring reports, areas of improvement were identified. Key staff from both organizations met, and in response to these findings, Steepletown was offered a one-year contract extension with clear expectations for progress and a written improvement plan. Steepletown accepted the extension.

9. Public Comment –None.

- 10. Adjournment at 12:59 p.m. by Madam Chairperson Heather Daniel. Next meeting is scheduled for November 10, 2025.

Recorded by: _____ Received by: _____

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE

Area Community Services
Employment & Training Council
215 Straight Ave NW
Grand Rapids, MI 49504
(616) 336-4100

SERVICE CENTERS

Allegan County
Allegan Service Center
3255 122nd Ave
Allegan, MI 49010
(269) 686-5079

Barry County
Hastings Service Center
130 E State St
Hastings, MI 49058
(616) 649-9850

Ionia County
Ionia Service Center
603 W Adams St
Ionia, MI 48846
(616) 389-8525

Kent County
Grand Rapids NW Service Center
215 Straight Ave NW
Grand Rapids, MI 49504
(616) 336-4460

Grand Rapids SE Service Center
121 Martin Luther King Jr St SE
Grand Rapids, MI 49507
(616) 336-4040

Rockford Service Center
10075 Northland Dr NE
Rockford, MI 49341
(616) 228-6724

Montcalm County
Greenville Service Center
114 S Greenville W Dr
Greenville, MI 48838
(616) 754-3611

Muskegon County
Muskegon Service Center
316 Morris Ave
Muskegon, MI 49440
(231) 724-6381

Ottawa County
Holland Service Center
12331 James St, Suite 130
Holland, MI 49424
(616) 396-2154

*West Michigan Works! is a division of ACSET,
an equal opportunity employer/program and
a proud partner of the American Job Center
network.*

*Auxiliary aids and services are available upon
request to individuals with disabilities. West
Michigan Works! is supported by state and
federal funds; more details at
westmiworks.org/about. TTY 711*

MEMORANDUM

TO: Executive Leadership and Strategic Engagement Committee
(Executive Committee or EC) of the West Michigan Works! (WMW)
Workforce Development Board (WDB)

FROM: WMW Staff

DATE: January 12, 2026

RE: Appointment of Solutions Driven Committee Member: Donata Kidd

Background

In accordance to the Bylaws of the West Michigan Works! Workforce Development Board, Article IV: Organization Section 6: Committees: "The WDB may appoint standing committees to assist the WDB in dealing with its responsibilities. Any such committee must be chaired by a member of the Local Board, may include other members of the Local Board, and may include other individuals appointed by the Local Board who are not members of the Local Board and who have demonstrated experience and expertise in accordance with WIOA regulations and as determined by the WDB."

At the end of 2025, Michelle Seigo, DHHS Director of Ionia/Montcalm Counties stepped down from her seat on the WDB. Donata Kidd, DHHS Director of Muskegon County has filled her seat on the WDB and has is interested in filling this seat on the committee.

The current roster is listed below:

1. Cathy Cronick, Michigan Rehabilitation Services: WDB Member
2. Dan Hall, Architectural Glass and Metal
3. Daniel TenHooen, Heart of West Michigan United Way: WDB Member
4. Daniel Rinsema-Sybenga, Muskegon Community College: WDB Member
5. Dave Smith, The Employers' Association
6. Jay Dunwell, Wolverine Coil Spring: WDB Member
7. Jordan Clark, Meijer: WDB Member
8. Kelly Kroll, Bradford White: WDB Member

Requested Action

For formality purposes staff are requesting formal appointment of Donata Kidd to serve as a member of the Solutions Driven Committee.



2025-26 Essential Service Awards Overview

The Bev Drake Essential Service Awards, established by the West Michigan Works! Workforce Development Board, recognize frontline employees whose work strengthens our communities and regional economy.

This year, 18 individuals from across West Michigan Works!' seven-county region were nominated by employers and community members, with six award recipients selected by West Michigan Works!' Executive Leadership and Strategic Engagement Committees.

Thank you to everyone who helped spread the word and submit nominations. We encourage you to explore our recent social media posts to congratulate this year's winners and follow along for a recap of the February awards event.

Awardees:

- Melissa Thatcher, Paraprofessional, Hackley Public Library, Muskegon County
- Dan Vandermarkt, Driver, Health Care Associates Transport (HCAT), Kent County
- Leemon Johncock, Lead Cook, Bay Pointe Inn, Barry County
- Grace Clark, Operations Specialist, STEM Greenhouse, Kent County
- Paula Holm, Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN), Optalis Health and Rehabilitation – Whitehall, Muskegon County
- Cole Marschall, Assistant Project Superintendent, Owen-Aimes-Kimball Co., Kent County

Timeline

- Nomination period ended September 30
- Awards Committee Scoring, October 3 - 17
- On-site celebrations, November 14-25
- Awards ceremony at The Economic Club of Grand Rapids, February 23, 2026

Subcommittee

Adam Russo, COM 616

Mark Bergsma, BHS Insurance

Jon Hofman, Holland Board of Public Works

Emily Babson, Plascore

Malinda Powers, West Michigan Works!

Brooke Thomas, West Michigan Works!