



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

a division of the Wisconsin Business Innovation Corporation

BOARD OF DIRECTORS QUARTERLY MEETING MINUTES Wednesday, July 23rd, 2025 - 10AM

[Zoom Meeting Recording](#)

1. Call to Order

- Meeting called to order at 10:01 AM by Administrator Crystal Rohde
 - **Members Present:** Kathy Halbur – Representing Rusk County, Dale Heikkinen – Representing Price County, Geri Dresen – Representing Chambers of Commerce, Jeff Holte – Representing Bayfield County, Jim Caesar – Representing Douglas County, Donna Walker – Representing Private Industry (Dairyland Power Cooperative), Carver Harries – Representing Economic Development Organizations, Ilsa Hoeschen – Representing Education (UW-Superior), Nick Koverman – Representing Washburn County, Mari Kay-Nabozny – Representing NWWIB
 - **Others Present:** Steve Gershman – CEDA, BJ Raukman – CEDA, Jim Miller – Congressman Tiffany's Office, David Wierzba – Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation, Stacey Hessel – Senator Quinn's Office, Sheldon Johnson – NWRPC, Joy Melton – NWRPC, Lynn Hall – Xcel Energy, Jenice Meyer – Development Association, Crystal Rohde – Visions Northwest
 - **Members Absent:** Ken Disher – Representing Private Industry (Xcel Energy), Michelle Johnson – Representing Private Industry (Enbridge), Dick Hartmann – Representing Burnett County, John Will – Representing Education (Northwood Technical College), Brooke Gilbertson – Representing Iron County, Philomena Kebec - Bad River Band of Lake Superior Chippewa, John Righeimer – Representing Sawyer County

2. Welcome and Introductions

- Participants introduced themselves and their roles.

3. Approval of Draft April 9, 2025, Meeting Minutes

- Donna W. made a motion to approve the April 9, 2025, minutes, a second was made by Dale H. The motion carried unanimously.

4. Presentation: UW-Stout Manufacturing Outreach Center

- Aaron Bialzik - Director
 - [View the recording](#) – presentation begins at 5:08, see attached slides.

5. Presentation: The Development Association

- Jenice Meyer – Advancement and Outreach, Consultant
 - [View the recording](#) – presentation begins at 34:00, see attached slides.

6. Key Partner Update

- David Wierzba – Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation
 - David's update starts in the [recording](#) at 53:00. David's email is david.wierzba@wecd.org.
 - No current specifics on the programs yet for FY26. Information will be coming out in the next few weeks. Small Business Development Program will be coming back in this FY. Entrepreneur Partnership Program will be changing name to Small Business Technical

Assistance program. Vibrant Spaces will be converting to an ongoing application (first come-first served).

- Mari Kay-Nabozny – NWWIB
 - Mari's update starts in the [recording](#) at 55:55.
 - See the attached slides for Mari's written updates. Mari's email is mari@nwwib.com.

7. Visions Northwest Updates

- Crystal Rohde – Visions Northwest Administrator ([Recording](#) at 59:40) – see attached slides
 - Broadband, Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) Update
 - Learn more about BEAD program changes at:
<https://psc.wi.gov/Documents/broadband/BEADProgramChangesOnePager.pdf>
 - 2025-2026 Regional Career Pathways – Application for funding 25-26 submitted in partnership with NWWIB, CESAs 10-11-12, and Momentum West)
 - FY26 WEDC Key Strategic Partner Application – Application submitted.
 - Upcoming Draft of 2025-2030 CEDS – presentation at October meeting.
 - Upcoming Events

8. Around the Table/Other Business

- **Dale H.** – Prentice is still in housing mode – good possibility on the golf course – working with the Village Board and engineering – duplex across from the school – workforce is good in Prentice and manufacturing businesses are busy – new cell tower between Prentice and Tomahawk.
- **Nick K.** – Washburn County EDC is going to release housing study in mid-August. Working with CEDA to build inroads through towns and villages with Rural Entrepreneur Ventures Program funding from UW-Extension - formulating plan to focus on trades and how to build through mentorships for youth or other individuals. The HUD office in Milwaukee closed and now the small housing authorities are being directed to Chicago – bill proposed 43% cut to operational/capital side to housing authorities – changes in how the funds will come to these entities – could create concerns for low-to-moderate income housing.
- **Carver H.** – One day business clinic coming up on July 31st – partnered with several different agencies/consultants, etc. People can come and go throughout the day – Northland Corporation is now selling assets – hoping to sell the main campus as one real estate property – other assets along periphery of campus and throughout Northern Wisconsin have purchase agreements – has been a lack of communication coming out of the board of trustees over the past two years; however past two weeks consultants they are working with are opening up the conversation and exciting conversations are taking place between community leaders and the college – looking forward to continuing discussions about real possibilities for what comes next – 130-150 market rate units are going to be built in Ashland – breaking ground this Fall, construction next year – this will help along with what is happening in Washburn – will take a little pressure off of housing – lots of construction/road construction happening in Ashland – replacing water intake pipe – sewer systems, etc.
- **BJ R.** – New to position serving Rusk County (CEDA two days a week contract) – looking forward to meeting with everyone – trying to meet officials in the county and businesses and get the lay of the land.
- **Ilsa H.** – Having conversations at UW-Superior about training/retraining – thinking about how we are designing AI course work. How are we ensuring that every graduate is getting the necessary AI training that they need – please weigh in your thoughts in this survey:
https://uwsuperior.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_eW04UhfenX88JBY

9. Confirm Next Meeting – October 8th – 10AM-12PM (Lunch to Follow) – Location TBD

The meeting ended at 11:23 AM.