



Meeting Minutes

Committee Name: Bergen County Workforce Development Board

Date: September 3, 2025

Time: 8:48 AM – [End Time Not Specified]

Location: Bergen Community College Moses Meeting Center, 400 Paramus Road, Paramus, NJ 07652 (virtual on Zoom)

Chair(s): Ryan Greff (Interim Chair), Anika Davis (Interim Vice Chair)

Attendees: See attached attendance sheet

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 8:48 AM. Chair Ryan Greff led the Pledge of Allegiance and confirmed compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act. The conflict of interest statement was read. Roll call was conducted and a quorum was confirmed. New guests Scott Demeter (Career Counselor, Bergen Adult Education) and Victor Lynch (Adult Education Principal) introduced themselves, followed by introductions from all board members.

II. Consent Agenda

Summary: The consent agenda included five resolutions: (1) AOR of BCTS Operator Reports & Resolutions; (2) Approval of June 4 & 26, 2025 Minutes; (3) AOR of Transition Committee & Treasurer Reports; (4) AOR & Acceptance of NOA for Adult/Dislocated Worker and Youth programs; and (5) Approval of Bylaws Amendment Resolution.

Motions: A motion was made by Commissioner Tracy Zur, seconded by Anika Davis, to approve the consent agenda as presented. Motion passed with one abstention by John Susino (see attached).

III. Special Election of Officers

Summary: Due to unexpected resignations of the previous chair and vice chair, the County Executive appointed interim officers. Resolution 2025-25, approving a temporary bylaws amendment allowing these interim appointments, was approved in the consent agenda. The following slate was presented for election to fill unexpired terms: Chair - Ryan Greff; First Vice Chair - Joanne Mitchell; Second Vice Chair - Anika Davis; Secretary-Treasurer - Lisa DiNozi.

Motions: A motion was made by Brian Fitzgibbons, seconded by Patricia Goldfarb, to approve the slate of officers as presented. The motion passed by roll call vote (see attached).

IV. Reports

A. Transition Committee Report (Joanne Mitchell)

JoAnn Mitchell reported on the successful transition to new vendor partner EQUUS. She thanked the 25+ committee members and partners who worked through unprecedented challenges with no template or precedent for the bid restructuring process. All services were successfully launched by the July 1st contract date. Full report in board packet.

B. EQUUS Program Report (Michael Dunne)

Regional Director Dunne provided a comprehensive update on the transition and startup operations. Key points included:

- Contract awarded May 5; services launched July 1, 2025
- 17 staff hired and onboarded by July 15 (10 on July 1, 7 by July 15); 4 positions still being sourced
- Only 3 incumbent staff from previous vendor transferred
- Major challenge: AOSOS system access delayed until August 14, preventing client service documentation for 6+ weeks
- Transition complications: unorganized case files, lack of transition plan from previous vendor, inconsistent client messaging
- Since gaining AOSOS access: 168 job seekers referred to WIOA; 12 intakes completed; 60 scheduled; 15 completed training; 9 received credentials; 7 obtained employment

- TANF/GA/SNAP: 40 referrals; 14 started services; 10 completed job readiness; 3 found employment
- Business Services: 32 new employer partners; 250 job orders; 3 OJT contracts; 10 Community Work Experience sites
- "Engaged by Cell" platform being implemented for client communication and scheduling
- Outreach strategy includes satellite "access points" in community locations

Full presentation in board packet.

C. One-Stop Operator Report (Patricia Silva)

Patricia Silva introduced herself as the new One-Stop Operator. She is focused on meeting partners, understanding processes, and identifying areas to simplify and streamline for client co-enrollment across programs. Goal is to ensure all clients access full menu of supports toward self-sufficiency. Will provide more operational results at next meeting.

D. Abilities Committee Report (Anika Davis & Robert Hans)

Committee met July 9, 2025. Key updates:

- Project SEARCH graduation held at Bergen County Administration Building; students left with employment
- Planning 7-11 new interns at new sites
- Project SEARCH Student Adult Financial Assistance Program established through DDD for tuition assistance
- Bergen County Inclusion Day held July 12, 2025 at County Zoo; well attended
- Committee developing structured reporting plan for board feedback

E. Youth Committee Report (Anita Rivers, Dwight Threepersons & Figen Tabakci)

Committee Updates: Threepersons thanked GBCA for hosting meetings and hard work. Rivers commended GBCA for navigating delays and producing strong results. Both encouraged board members to provide apprenticeship and employment opportunities for youth ages 16-24.

Threepersons highlighted opportunity to pursue PACE grant (Partnership to Advance Clean Energy) and other grants like GAINS that provide substantial funding for apprenticeable trades.

GBCA Program Report (Figen Tabakci):

- July-August: 22 new enrollments; multiple carryovers; now providing GED vouchers; 2 ITAs in progress
- Work experience placements developing with Boys and Girls Clubs and other partners
- Almost fully staffed at two locations (Hackensack and Cliffside Park); one job developer position being filled
- Tracking provision of 14 required youth elements across all participants
- AOSOS access challenges similar to EQUUS; requested statewide AOSOS training from state
- Moving to new GBCA-owned facility at 505 Main Street, Hackensack; board invited to visit
- Will share client success stories at future meetings

Full presentation in board packet.

F. Workforce Education and Literacy Committee Report (Cinzia D'Iorio)

Committee met August 13, 2025. Key updates:

- Analyzing local plan update and conducting environmental scan of county literacy programs
- Title II Adult Education grant was abruptly shut down but funding officially restored last week
- Bergen Community College and Bergen County Technical Schools had to lay off staff; both rehiring and will be operational by end of September
- Greater Bergen Community Action maintained operations throughout
- New requirements under consideration: proof of residency and Social Security numbers
- Will explore braiding Title II funding with WDB resources to serve more students and provide literacy baseline for One-Stop clients
- EQUUS transitioning from TABE to CASAS testing; consortium examining testing approaches

- Coordinating with library system for comprehensive approach
- Commissioner Zur suggested partnering with food pantries for outreach to immigrant populations

G. Treasurer's Report (Lisa DiNozi)

Final report for fiscal year ended June 30, 2025:

FY 2024-2025:

- Total budget: \$8,982,831 (decrease of ~\$1.8M from prior year)
- 58% obligated; \$1,960,335 of prior year funding unobligated and subject to rescission
- Carryover: \$3.1M (decrease of \$1.7M from prior year)

FY 2025-2026 Preliminary:

- Federal WIOA: \$5,871,575 (increase of ~\$1.7M)
- State funding: Not announced until October 1, 2025

Performance Highlights (June 30, 2025):

- Dislocated Worker: 238 trainings; 228 completed; 106 employed; 76 credentials
- Adult/Youth: 113 trainings; 99 completed; 40 employed; 30 credentials
- Out-of-School Youth HSE: 133 served; 161 enrolled; 56 obtained HSE/GED
- Bergen Job Center: 5,635 total sessions

Full report in board packet.

Discussion: Commissioner Zur expressed concern about returning unobligated funds to the state. Director Molinelli clarified that WIOA is two-year money and first-year 2023-2024 funds will be rescinded. She and fiscal staff Rani will complete draft budget by Friday. Discussion focused on strategies to maximize utilization of 2024-2025 carryover and 2025-2026 allocations through increased outreach and strategic investments.

H. Executive Director and Business Manager Report (Tammy Molinelli & Carol Polack)

Director Molinelli reported:

- Draft budget to be completed by Friday (with fiscal staff Rani)
- TANF Innovation Grant final report due end of September

- Contracts will be finalized once budget is complete

Business Manager Polack outlined priorities:

1. Partner MOU going out today for review
2. Local plan update (draft due to SETC October 15, 2025)
3. Policy updates
4. Annual report and board member survey
5. Board member guide development
6. Committee restructuring plan (developed with Rani and Claudia)

V. Recognition of George Charne

Director Molinelli recognized outgoing fiscal agent George Charne for 12 years of dedicated service. Deputy Chief of Staff Jared Lautz presented a commendation from the County Executive's Office. Commissioner Tracy Zur presented recognition from the Board of Commissioners, noting Charne's steady guidance through changing leadership and challenges. The board gave Charne a standing ovation.

VI. Old Business

No old business was raised.

VII. New Business

No new business was raised.

VIII. Board Member Comments, Announcements, and Other Business

Jared Lautz announced a county job fair in October; flyer will be distributed today.

IX. Public Comment

No public comments were made.

X. Adjournment

Motions: A motion to adjourn was made and seconded. The motion passed. The meeting was adjourned.

Action Items:

1. Michael Dunne (EQUUS) to email list of employer partners and candidate referral outcomes to board
2. Jared Lautz to distribute county job fair flyer
3. Fiscal staff Rani and Director Molinelli to complete final draft budget by Friday, September 6, 2025
4. Carol Polack to send Partner MOU to all partners today
5. Carol Polack to update local plan for October 15, 2025 SETC submission
6. Carol Polack to update required policies, complete annual report, and send board member survey
7. Carol Polack to develop board member guide
8. Fiscal agent to complete calculation of projected expenditures and provide carry-forward/rescission amounts
9. Figen Tabakci (GBCA) to provide adult mentoring implementation details at future meeting
10. Board to develop strategies for maximizing utilization of FY 2024-2025 carryover and FY 2025-2026 funds

These minutes were generated with AI assistance based on the meeting transcript.

Respectfully submitted by Carol Polack, November 18, 2025.

NAME	ATTENDANCE	ELECTION SLATE	CONSENT AGENDA
Anika Davis	X	X	X
Anita Rivers	X	X	X
Brian Fitzgibbons	X	X	X
Brigitte Johnson (Giesel Ussery)	L	X	
Chantelle Walker	Z	X	X
Dan Gumble (Victor Docherty)	X	X	X
Daniel Ortega			
David Hollenbeck			
Donnalee Corrieri (Ann Marie Stoebling)	X	X	X
Dwight Threepersons	Z	X	X
Eric Freidman (Cinzia D'Iorio)	X	X	X
Etta Denk	Z	X	X
Figen Tabakci	X	X	X
George Charne (Lisa DiNozzi)	X	X	X
Howard Lerner (John Susino)	Z	X	A
Jackie Lue Raia	X	X	X
James Tedesco (Jared Lautz)	X	X	X
JoAnn Mitchell	X	X	X
Joanne Cimiluca(Michael McPartland/Greer Galgano)	X	X	X
Jorge Delgado (Jess Cole)			
Kathy Walsh	Z	X	X
Lorraine Joewono	X	X	X
Lou Weiss			
Lynn Bartlett			
Michele Talamo	X	X	X
Nihat Guvercin	Z	X	X
Nina Nardone			
Patrice Goldfarb	Z	X	X
Patrick Fletcher	Z	X	
Robert Hans	X	X	X
Ryan Greff	X	X	X
Scott Modery	Z	X	X
Thomas Brizzolara			
Thomas Eastwick	Z	X	X
Tracy Zur	X	X	X
Vince Vicari			
Viviana Mastrobuoni (Natalie Dominguez)	Z	X	X
Walter Hecht	Z	X	X
Total	30	30	28
Board Quorum	20		
Meeting Quorum	16		
Legend: X (present/yea); L (present/late); Z (notified absence); A (abstain)			