



Duluth Workforce Development Board
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402 West First Street | Duluth, Minnesota 55802
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Meeting Minutes

Monday, March 16, 2026

Duluth City Hall, Room 330, 411 West First Street, Duluth, MN 55802

Present:

Andrea Chartier, Workforce Development Specialist, Essentia Health
Kayla Dietzmann, Director of Administration, SCS Interiors
Chiamaka Enemuoh, President, Lifestone Health Care
Christie Erickson, Owner, Vitta Pizza
Claire Farmer-Lies, Marketing & Communications Specialist, Residential Services Inc.
Angie Frank, Manager, Duluth Adult Education
Susie Gilbertson, Sr. Recruiter, Maurices Corporation
Lindsey Growette Stingle, Human Resources Director, National Bank of Commerce
Duane Hill, District Engineer, Minnesota Department of Transportation
Jennifer Oakes, DEED Job Service Site Supervisor, Duluth CareerForce
Vance Okstad, Director of Outreach, Cirrus Aircraft
Paul Pedersen, Director of Outreach, MAC-V
Danette Seboe, Principal Career and Tech Education & Career Readiness, ISD 709
Faith Wickenhauser, Associate Human Resources Consultant, Terch & Associates
Amanda Yates, Assistant Director Economic Services and Supports, St. Louis County
Shayla Drake, Workforce Strategy Consultant, DEED
Elena Foshay, Director, Duluth Workforce Development
Carol Turner, Operations Manager, Duluth Workforce Development

Meeting called to order at 2:04 p.m.

Welcome to Superior High School student, job shadowing for the day

Public Comment:

- None

Board Actions:

- Elected officials meetings
 - Tri-fold brochure created
 - Hoping to get on agenda for Council Committee of the Whole

- Request for Subsequent Designation
 - Approved by all in attendance
 - Letter signed by Mayor and Board Chair submitted to DEED
- January 26, 2026 board meeting minutes were approved by all in attendance

Updates and Success Stories

- Success stories
 - CNA class, an accessible entry point to healthcare careers, has all ten spots filled. A waiting list has been created.
 - An MFIP participant completed CNA classes at LSC and is currently working. Their spouse took construction training and is currently working as well!
- Legislative and related updates
 - Shared MAWB legislative priorities and State Dislocated Worker program handout
 - Update on Legislative Task Force for Workforce System Reform
 - Governor's Workforce Development Board Service Delivery Innovation Committee has been meeting and developing policy recommendations
 - Additional DEED-led discussion on how we capture info on services to unenrolled clients, and on participant progress in overcoming barriers
 - Federal updates:
 - Waiting for next round of formula funding to arrive
 - WIOA reauthorization proposed in the House, unlikely to be taken up in the Senate in the near future
 - State working on rules for Workforce Pell rollout
- Job search experience results
 - 28 responses from job counselors in our region, based on their impressions of the current labor market
 - Themes:
 - Harder to find a job than it was a year ago
 - Housing still a barrier, including rising costs
 - What job seekers are looking for
 - Day care still a barrier, but housing is coming up more frequently
- Shared front desk and computer lab services numbers

Committee updates

*Reminder to all committees to re-elect chairs

Governance

- Working on recruiting to fill seat vacated by Brian Durand (Construction)
- Term renewal for existing members whose terms expire in October coming soon

Executive

- Working to schedule and plan for City Council meeting
- Applied for YouthBuild grant in partnership with Goodwill

Equity

- Chamber received Drive for Five grant, developing Equity Champions Certificate

Construction Working Group

- Construct Tomorrow taking place this week
- Summer hiring starting to ramp up

Healthcare Working Group

- Discover Healthcare will be held at Lake Superior College on October 6
- Adult Scrubs Camp at Lake Superior College on March 28th

Manufacturing Working Group

- Manufacturing Expo Nov 9-10
- Business retention tours taking place

Emerging Workforce

- Updating work plan and policies

Labor market updates

- Reviewed 2024-27 State Plan Vision and Goals
- Overview of 2026 State Plan Updates
- Reviewed proposed Statewide Workforce Development Strategy and Goals
- Labor market data updates:
 - Overlooked Workers (populations above MN's UI rate and below the labor force participation rate)
 - Unemployment and labor force trends in Duluth and NE MN
 - Duluth employment trends

- Question for Carson: How are remote workers not residing in Duluth, or residing in Duluth but working for a company outside Duluth, tracked?
- In Summary
 - Labor force growing
 - Employment is even more concentrated in top sectors
 - Duluth lost more than 1100 jobs in 2025
- Discussion: How do we serve employers?
 - Relationships, recruiting, training

Small Group Sessions-- Goals and strategies

Board worked in small groups to revise goals and strategies.

Meeting adjourned at 3:54 p.m.

Next meeting: Monday, May 18, 2026 from 2:00-4:00 p.m. at Duluth City Hall, Room 330, 411 West First Street, Duluth, MN 55802