

Youth Council Meeting Minutes

Zoom

07/17/2025

Attendees:

Ken Keeney
Larry McLean
Barb Cempura
Brianna Anderson
Amber Shields
Lisa Atkins

Staff:

Lee Reese
Brenda Boggs
Sandy Billhartz
Linda Vanderpluym
Cindy Layman

The meeting was called to order by Larry at 1:32 P.M. With no public comment on the agenda, a motion was requested to approve the March 27th, 2025, meeting minutes. Amber made the motion, and it was seconded by Ken. The minutes were unanimously approved.

Provider and Services Updates – Brenda began by reviewing the Local Workforce Development Area 24 fourth quarter report as of June 30, 2025. Brenda explained that the program has shifted its focus towards training and recruitment for high school graduates or those working towards their GED, resulting in lower in-school youth enrollment. Linda clarified that the program must spend a minimum of 75% on out-of-school youth but can spend up to 100%. Lee highlighted the program's success, noting that employment rates and median earnings have exceeded expectations. The group also discussed the recent renewal of the Midwest Career Source contract.

Brenda discussed Midwest Career Source, a training organization located in Belleville, which provides medical training programs like CNA and phlebotomy. She noted their success in placing graduates in jobs and offering wraparound services to support their students. Barbara mentioned that Midwest Career Source collaborates with BJC, Saint Elizabeth's, and Anderson in Maryville for internships and clinical training.

There was discussion focused on clarifying the differences between training, paid work experience, and work-based learning programs. Brenda explained that SWIC does not provide training for which they are paid, but work experience is still part of the service. Lee and Linda discussed how funding changes and higher wages at work sites have affected the numbers of participants in paid work experience, which decreased from 48 last year to 20 this year. They clarified that while paid work experience and on-the-job training come from the same funding pot, they are distinct programs with different payment structures.

The group discussed discrepancies in client and case management data reported by IWDS, which showed zero cases as of June 30, 2025. Lee explained that IWDS is retiring their old system and transitioning to IWDS 2.0, during which some data migration is occurring but many things are not being counted accurately. Cindy clarified that the service name for case management has changed to "career planning" in IWDS, which might explain why the numbers appear low in the current report. Brenda noted that the report is presented as it is in IWDS, with no instructions on where to find more accurate information.

Lee reviewed PY24 performance results, which showed successful achievement of all goals, with particularly notable improvements in youth program employment rates and median earnings. Brenda reported on paid work experience updates, noting that while summer recruitment is typically slow, they plan to focus on high school seniors to maintain engagement and prepare them for post-graduation opportunities.

Lee shared success stories about two program alumni, including one who progressed from dishwashing to a management role at Bennie's Pizza, and another who secured a full-time IT position with the county.

Ken made a motion that was seconded by Amber to adjourn the meeting. The meeting was adjourned by Larry at 1:58 pm.