

COUNTY OF ULSTER

Workforce Development Board

535 BOICES LANE
KINGSTON, NY 12401-1955

Jen Metzger,
Ulster County Executive



Phone: (845) 340-3170
Fax: (845) 340-3165
E-mail: oet@co.ulster.ny.us
Sharon Williams, Director

Ulster County Workforce Development Board Meeting May 21, 2025 Minutes

MEMBERS PRESENT – Jim Ferraro, John Eickman, Ashima Butler, Chris Marx, Sean Brix, Domenica Murray, Tiziana Rinaldi (remote from Detroit, MI), Keith Blair, Dan Whalen, Peter Harris, Jeanne Lipscomb

MEMBERS ABSENT –Michael Berg, Tina Buono, Jess Davis, Tamika Dunkley, Frank Falatyn, Mike Iapoce, Jana Kantor, LaQuesha Matthews-Reed, Joe McDole, Don Mapes, Angela Patella, Alejandro Cordova

ALSO PRESENT - Sharon Williams, OET Director/WDB Director, Faith Golden, OET Deputy Director, Renee Pugliese, OET

The meeting was called to order at 8:03 a.m. by Jim Ferraro, WDB Chair. There was no quorum.

1. OPENING – JIM FERRARO, BOARD CHAIR:

Jim welcomed everyone.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES - JIM

There was no quorum, therefore the Minutes from January 2025 and March 2025 were not voted on. If there is a quorum at the next meeting, then the January, March and May 2025 Minutes will be voted on.

3. WIOA REAUTHORIZATION UPDATE – SHARON WILLIAMS

WIOA has gone through a continuing resolution. WIOA is a federal authorization that filters down to the State. They are debating what will come down to the State not only fiscally but also what the responsibilities are for this workforce. We are hearing that they are looking to push the ready to work individuals and to connect those that receive benefits to ready to work. We have also heard, but have no verification on, that the emphasis will be mainly on adults and the focus on youth and workforce will be limited.

We finally received acknowledgement of what our allocation will be for funding. State budget was not approved until May 9th, 2025.

Donald Mapes will be leaving the Board effective immediately. That is our connection to trades/unions. We are in the process of vetting 2 potential members. When we officially start our new program year in July, there may be 2 new Board members.

4. DEMAND OCCUPATION LIST/LOCAL PLAN DEVELOPMENT UPDATE – SHARON WILLIAMS, DIRECTOR

One of our responsibilities as a Board is to identify those demand occupations within the County. This list is a beacon to training providers, as well as residents, as to what is available in terms of employment in the County. As part of a revision of our Local Plan, we have been tasked by Department of Labor to look at our demand occupation list. The Local Plan is a strategic, 5 year plan and we are at the end of the 5 years. We have been asked to review and update this plan. It will be presented to the Board for consideration. One of the main things they are focusing on this year is that demand occupation list. The last time this Board looked at and updated the list was Fall 2023. Sharon has already reached out to our labor market analyst, Johnny Nelson who is assigned to Ulster County. We are looking at what the trends tell us from the data, as well emerging industries and careers. It will be up to the Board to filter through the raw data that Johnny provides us.

One of the problems is that our workforce is shrinking. One of the ideas is to consider underutilized populations.

We don't always have a training provider for each demand occupation.

We will be sending out drafts for feedback. Please submit your suggestions asap as the plan must be submitted by July 11th. This year is a full revision.

The Technical Advisory handout was sent to everyone for your review.

5. WDB BYLAW UPDATE - SHARON

Bylaws need to be updated. They are still being worked on. Things have changed. They need a better flow. They are still being reviewed and re-created. County Attorney's Office has reached out to the State to ensure we are in line with our federal and local statutes.

6. FINANCIAL REPORT – FAITH GOLDEN, DEPUTY DIRECTOR

Report is as of the end of April 2025. We are doing pretty well. We are a little ahead on Adult spending and a little behind on Dislocated Worker. There is easy transfer of funds between the two. Faith plans to transfer money from DW to Adult. We are a little behind on Youth money. Federal allocations: all we know so far is how much money is going to the State; we don't have local area allocations yet.

Faith and Sharon are putting together the budget for the next County year.

7. UPDATES – SHARON WILLIAMS

SYEP: The SYEP application process is going on. The program is for 14-20 year olds. We have not had to extend our application deadline date. We've received over 190 applications. From that, we are hoping to employ about 120 youth. We have a few new worksites. This is the first year that we will only have 2 seasonal summer assistants in our department to work on SYEP program instead of the usual 3 people. Perhaps the money normally used for that 3rd position can fund the program to extend beyond 5 weeks or hiring a few more young people. We are still waiting for the State allocations for the program.

If anyone is interested in being a worksite, please submit the worksite request form to us at OET. Some of the YEP participants will roll over to the SYEP. We are waiting to see if YEP continues after SYEP.

Rural Welcoming Initiative Fellowship: Tiziana is at the Welcoming Interactive Conference right now in Detroit. The conference is part of the scholarship with the new grant we are receiving. The purpose of the conference is to meet other people who do this type of work. The Rural Welcoming Initiative Scholarship is a program that teaches the localities that work at the rural level how to create a receiving system for new arrivals. The Welcoming Week is a national campaign and is the social part of the framework during September 2025. It is an opportunity to create networks and get to know more people.

Submit any ideas or input on the flyers (one for employers, and one for residents-job seekers) and the questionnaire. Scan the QR code to look at the questions, then provide feedback to Sharon or Tiziana as soon as possible. Consider if multiple choice option would be helpful and what the options would be. A suggestion was made to simplify flyer to make it more understandable and to engage more people. Sharon would like to launch the result of survey in first week of June.

8. MOTION TO ADJOURN – JIM FERRARO

Jim asked for a motion to adjourn. Motion made by John Eickman, seconded by Peter Harris. All in favor, none opposed. Meeting adjourned at 9:03 a.m.

**ULSTER COUNTY WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD
NEXT MEETING:**

**Wednesday, July 16, 2025
8:00 AM**