



Capital Area Workforce Development Board Meeting

September 24, 2026

**Hybrid Meeting/Microsoft Teams
NCWorks Career Center-Raleigh**

Board Members Present:

Kenneth Angeli, NC Career Center, Raleigh
Doug Blizzard, Catapult
Michael Haley, Wake County Economic Development
Sue Holaday, Summit Design & Engineering
Courtney Holcomb, Bharat Forge
Brian Holland, Sectigo
Paul Kane, Home Builders Assoc. of Raleigh-Wake County
Vic McCormick, Johnston County Community College
Cameron McNeill, NC Dept. of Transportation
Shawnice Meador, Strategic Talent Management Consultant
Kristina Gates Nix, UNC Medical Center/Chatham
Jerry Pedley, Mertek Solutions
Dreama Pilson, CTI Systems
Danielle Sardo, Biogen
Seth Storey, IBEW 553
Melissa Short, Transitions Life Care
Jordan Thomas, NC Dept. of HHS
Zac West, Sanford Contractors
Tom White, North Carolina State University

Staff Present:

Pat E. Sturdivant, Executive Director
Barbara Brothers, Business Engagement Director
Sonja Godsey, One-Stop System Director
Malinda Todd, Assistant Director
Jasmin Volkel, Strategic Initiatives Manager
Crystal Waters, Executive Assistant
Brenda Wilkerson, Communications Director

Guests Present:

Adams Bailey, RTI
Kenneth Gathers, NCWorks Career Center
Courtland Gingles, NCWorks Career Center
Ivette Hughes, EDSI
Joseph Peacock, NC Commerce

Minutes Prepared by: Crystal Waters

Item	Discussion	Actions		
		What	When	Who
1. Call to Order	Chair Brian Holland called the meeting to order and welcomed members attending in person and virtually. Quorum was confirmed. He noted that this was CAWD's first regular hybrid Board meeting and the first regular Board meeting held at the Tillery location since before the pandemic. Brian informed the board that Tamika Walker Kelly has resigned from the Board following the conclusion of her role as President of the North Carolina Association of Educators. Brian welcomed a new Board member Seth Storey, Business Development Manager at IBEW Local 553. Seth shared his background in the electrical trades and apprenticeship and emphasized the importance of collaboration among labor, employers, educators, and workforce development partners. Seth serves on the Outreach & Advocacy Committee.			
2. Action on Meeting Minutes	The June 25, 2026, Board meeting minutes were presented for approval. No corrections or additions were offered, and the minutes were approved as written.			
3. Voting Item	Bylaws Amendment The Board considered a proposed amendment to remove the fixed number of 28 Board members from the bylaws. The change would allow CAWD to maintain compliance based on federally required Board composition rather than potentially being considered out of compliance solely because membership falls below the number stated in the bylaws. Discussion clarified that federal requirements establish minimum representation and required membership categories. Members also discussed whether a maximum number should be included. It was explained that leaving the number flexible would allow the			

	Board to adjust its size as circumstances change, including potential changes in regional representation, while continuing to meet required composition standards. Motion: The Capital Area Workforce Development Board approve the proposed amendments to Article II, Section 2 – Composition, of the CAWD Bylaws, as presented, with an effective date of October 1, 2026. Tom White made the motion to accept the recommendation. Melissa Short seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously. The following Board members provided a proxy vote of “yay” for the motion: • Mark Bertoncino • Rodney Carson • Scott Ferris • Ross Yeager			
4. Board Committee Updates	Customer Success Committee Sue Holaday, Committee Chair, provided an update on the Committee’s progress toward its 2028 goals. The committee has moved from regional gap analysis into implementation planning, with two immediate priorities: development of the Capital Area Workforce Collaborative and the McKinney-Vento School Bridge initiative. CAWD has served approximately 9,737 individuals toward its June 2028 target of 13,909. Progress varies among priority populations, with stronger outcomes occurring where established partnerships and referrals pathways are already in place. The Capital Area Workforce Collaborative will bring workforce, education, and community organizations together to strengthen referrals, identify service gaps, and develop coordinated strategies for priority populations. The October 20 Partnership Circle meeting will be used to introduce the Collaborative and			

	identify potential participants. Staff are working with McKinney-Vento liaisons to explore an urban and rural pilot connecting students and families experiencing housing instability with workforce services. Board members were encouraged to provide introductions to organizations that could support these efforts. Next steps: • Share information on current partners and materials that Board members can use when making introductions to prospective partners. • Continue outreach to McKinney-Vento liaisons and identify potential urban and rural pilot opportunities. <u>Customer Success Committee Presentation</u> Employer Engagement Committee Shawnice Meador, Committee Vice-Chair, provided an update on the Committee's work to deepen employer engagement in high-demand sectors, with construction serving as the committee's initial sector focus. Following the Construction Roundtable, committee representatives conducted individual employer visits with DPR Construction, Rifenburg Construction, and BSC Fire & Security, with an additional visit to Bolton Construction being planned. Employer feedback identified challenges navigating workforce resources, recruiting and retaining workers, and meeting demand in the electrical trades. Employers also indicated a willingness in some cases to hire candidates with limited experience or credentials who demonstrate motivation and willingness to learn. The Committee is using this feedback to strengthen connections between employers and workforce resources and identify additional talent pipelines. A follow-up Construction Employer Roundtable			
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	is scheduled for November 19. It was recommended to include residential construction employers, noting that their workforce needs and talent pipelines can differ significantly from commercial construction. Next steps: • Complete the planned employer visit with Bolton Construction. • Identify residential construction employers for possible engagement and participation in the November 19 Construction Employer Roundtable. • Use employer feedback from the November roundtable to help determine the committee's next steps. <u>Employer Engagement Committee Presentation</u> Outreach & Advocacy & Committee Paul Kane, Committee Chair, provided an update on the committee's work to diversify CAWD's funding sources and advance development of the Capital Area Workforce Development Foundation. A strategic planning session was held July 14 with committee members, staff, Board leadership, and Viking Impact Advisors. The session resulted in development of the Foundation's name, mission and vision and further refinement of its funding strategy. The Foundation will focus on securing flexible funding to expand CAWD's reach and support workforce solutions responsive to changing employer and community needs. The Foundation will operate as a separate nonprofit entity while maintaining a strong connection with CAWD. The CAWD Board Chair and Executive Director are expected to have seats on the Foundation Board, while additional Foundation members will be recruited from business, philanthropic, and community leadership.			
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	Next steps: • Finalize the Foundation bylaws, CAWD/Foundation agreement, and required organizational documentation • Formalize financial management processes and internal controls. • Continue identifying and recruiting prospective Foundation leadership and Board members. <u>Advocacy & Outreach Committee Presentation</u>			
5. Regional Skills Analysis	Adams Bailey of RTI International presented preliminary findings from the 2026 Regional Skills Analysis. The survey received approximately 914 usable employer responses from across the Triangle region and represents the fourth iteration of the analysis. Highlights: • Employer Growth: 69% of employers anticipate growth over the next three years; only 2% expect contraction. • Workforce Pipeline: Overall perceptions remain stable, but workforce availability varies significantly by industry and education/credential level. • Industry Challenges: Construction anticipates strong growth but has one of the weakest talent pipelines; healthcare and manufacturing also report hiring challenges. • Education Gap: Employers seeking four-year degree candidates report a stronger talent pipeline than those seeking workers with high school, GED, apprenticeship, or other non-degree credentials. • Workforce Barriers: Housing costs, childcare access, and compensation remain significant challenges. • Recruitment: Personal networks remain the most common source of talent; larger employers use more formal recruitment channels. • NCWorks: Approximately 11% of responding employers reported using NCWorks as a source for talent.			

	• AI Adoption: Employers reported varying levels of AI use, primarily to improve productivity and automate tasks. • Workforce Impact: Employers remain uncertain about AI's long-term impact, while some anticipate greater demand for advanced skills. • Critical Thinking: Ranked as the highest-rated soft skill in 2026, reflecting the growing need to evaluate information and use emerging technologies effectively. Board discussed AI's workforce implications of workforce availability by education level, soft skills, and preparation of individuals pursuing non-four-year degrees. The full Regional Skills Analysis report is expected to provide additional county- and industry-level detail and will be distributed to Board members when available. <u>Regional Skills Analysis Presentation</u> Link to previous reports: <u>https://raleigh-wake.org/business-advantages/talent-workforce/regional-skills-analysis</u>	Distribute final Regional Analysis report	ASAP	Crystal
6. Director's Update	Pat E. Sturdivant, Executive Director, highlighted CAWD's program performance and funding outlook. CAWD achieved 100% of its federal performance measures for the program year. Pat provided an update on the impact of the significant WIOA funding reduction previously reported to the Board. The reduction resulted in staffing cuts affecting both Adult and Youth service delivery at a time when CAWD worked to expand outreach and access. Staff continue to pursue alternative funding opportunities. CAWD is awaiting a decision on a federal grant of approximately \$2 million and is also pursuing a United Way grant that could provide additional support for Adult and			

	Youth workforce programming. Business Services Highlight Barbara Brothers, Business Engagement Director and Courtland Gingles, Business Services Manager, provided an overview of CAWD’s employer-facing services. They described CAWD’s two-pronged approach: strategic business engagement at the regional level and direct Business Services support to individual employers. Highlights: • Business Services: CAWD served more than 3,400 businesses, delivered over 7,600 services, and supported 11 economic development projects. • Work-Based Learning: More than \$300,000 was reinvested in the region’s business community. • Apprenticeships: Continued expansion of apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship programs, with CAWD nearing its state-established investment target. • Employer Support: Services included Incumbent Worker Training, hiring events, and recruitment and workforce assistance. • Entrepreneurship: The Pathway to Entrepreneurship helped launch 43 new businesses. 100% of the businesses started remain operational one year later. • Challenges: Reduced funding, staffing transitions, limited awareness of NCWorks services, and changing job-seeker needs continue to affect service delivery. Board Members were encouraged to connect employers, particularly small businesses, with CAWD resources to support recruitment, capacity building, and growth. <u><i>Business Services Presentation</i></u>			
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7. Public Participation	There was no public participation.			
8. Other Business	There was no other business.			
9. Misc.	Board members were reminded that the next meeting will be the Annual Holiday Partners Meeting on December 3, 2026, at the NC State University Park Alumni Center.			
Meeting Adjourned: 10:30 am				