

MINUTES OF MEETING
WISCONSIN TECHNICAL COLLEGE SYSTEM (WTCS) BOARD
MAY 20, 2025
HILL FARMS STATE OFFICE BUILDING

Members Present: Lindsay Blumer, Janixa Franco Gonzalez, Douglas Holton, Sr., Dan Klecker, Amy Pechacek, Sara Rogers, Dan Sperberg, Leslie Svacina, S. Mark Tyler, Sharon Wendt for Jill Underly, Karen Walsh.

Members Absent: Quincey Daniels, Jr.

System Office Staff Present: Sarah Arneson, Hilary Barker, Chevon Bowen, Rachel Colla, Danielle Cook, Julie Drake, Paul Hammer, Mandy Johnson, Tou Ya Khang, Ben Konruff, Christina Lorge, Ward Lyon, Chris Martin, Joel Mathis, Mandy Mayek, Colleen McCabe, Layla Merrifield, Carolann Nelson, Jeremy Nichols, Katy Pettersen, Anna Richter, Dan Scanlon, Chrystal Seeley-Schreck, Brent Simmons, John Smigleski, Latisha Spence-Brookens, Megan Stritchko, Brandon Trujillo, Julie Tzunik, JP Villavicencio, Ann Westrich, Danika Woods.

District/Others Present: Tracy Pierner, Blackhawk Technical College; Sunem Beaton-Garcia, Chippewa Valley Technical College; Chuck Bolstad, Diane Handrick, District Boards Association; Chris Matheny, Fox Valley Technical College; Paul Carlsen, Dalia Samano, Lakeshore Technical College; Mark Thomas, Madison Area Technical College; Shelly Mondeik, Mid-State Technical College; Anthony Cruz, Milwaukee Area Technical College; Kate Ferrel, Nicolet Area Technical College; Robert Elliott, Jeannie Worden, Northcentral Technical College; Mark Hansel, Laura King, Kristen Raney, Northeast Wisconsin Technical College; John Will, Northwood Technical College; Caleb White, Southwest Wisconsin Technical College; Becky Jacobs, The Cap Times; Richard Barnhouse, Waukesha County Technical College; Roger Stanford, Western Technical College; Kendra Klein, Wisconsin Student Government; Sara Mackey, WTCS Marketing Consortium; Morna Foy.

Board President Tyler called the meeting to order at 9:01 am. Julie Drake read the open meeting statement and roll call indicated that a quorum was present.

ITEM A: Approval of March 11-12, 2025, Meeting Minutes

It was moved by Board Member Klecker, seconded by Board Member Pechacek, that the March 11-12, 2025, meeting minutes be approved. Motion carried unanimously.

ITEM B: Report of the Board President

The UW System Board of Regents report for the April meeting was shared with Board Members on May 16, 2025.

Board President Tyler welcomed and introduced Wisconsin Student Government (WSG) President Kendra Klein, enrolled in the paralegal program at Lakeshore Technical College. She started the program in August 2023 when she was 16 years old and a sophomore in high school and expects to graduate in May 2026. She is a legal assistant at a law firm in downtown Sheboygan where she works with estate planning, administration of estates and guardianship matters. Ms. Klein will attend the WTCS Board meetings on behalf of WSG.

Board President Tyler recognized and thanked Board Member Franco Gonzalez for her service on the WTCS Board for the past two years. As her term ends, this will be her last meeting.

Board President Tyler shared remarks on the recent Ambassador banquet, highlighting that all Ambassadors are high-achieving students who exemplify the various accomplishments possible. He noted it was, as always, an incredible and inspiring evening.

ITEM C: Report of the System President

- System President Merrifield encouraged those unable to attend the Ambassador Banquet to watch the [recording of the Ambassador speeches](#). It was an incredible evening listening to the paths our students took to get where they are today. Senator Jesse James (R – Thorp), a former WTCS Ambassador, Secretary Kathy Blumenfeld from the Wisconsin Department of Administration and John Leiber, Wisconsin’s State Treasurer, were in attendance. Baird has sponsored this event for 40 years. Thank you to Robert Sorensen, WTCS Foundation Board Member and former State Director of WTCS, for starting that relationship with Baird.
- System President Merrifield served as the opening keynote at this year’s Centergy conference on workforce solutions in Plover. The conference included many local economic and workforce development partners along with employers.
- The WTCS Jobs for the Future (JFF) Parent Two Gen Convening was held in April at Madison Area Technical College and brought more than 50 stakeholders from across the state to address systemic barriers that get in the way of success for students who are parents. The group is drafting a strategy as well as action items to break down these barriers, including subgroup meetings focusing on data, childcare, building a culture of support, and timely support and improved student experience.
- The Northcentral Technical College (NTC) Sawmill Ribbon Cutting took place on April 8 in Antigo. Made possible through NTC’s partnership with UW-Stevens Point, the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation and local community members, this state-of-the-art facility housed on a technical college campus is the only one of its kind, where sawyers from across the country will come for education and training that benefits the entire industry.
- System President Merrifield attended Wisconsin’s SkillsUSA event and welcomed this year’s competitors. There were 168 students registered, competing across 25 contests with ten WTCS colleges participating. Twenty-seven students will represent Wisconsin at the National Leadership and Skills Conference in Atlanta in June. Wisconsin’s SkillsUSA director will join us at the July Board meeting to share more about the competition.
- The American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) Conference took place in Nashville where they learned about trends and opportunities for two-year colleges around the country. They continue to work through national partners on shared federal advocacy priorities through meetings with colleagues leading community and technical colleges around the country.
- System President Merrifield attended the official inauguration for Dr. Kimo Ah Yun, Marquette University’s new president, along with higher education leaders from across the state and nation.
- Every year, the chief academic officers from all WTCS colleges select a recipient for their Eagle Award, given to individuals who have demonstrated outstanding leadership in producing significant positive results on behalf of the Wisconsin Technical College System. This year’s award was presented to Dr. Colleen McCabe in April for her work leading the conversation around student success. Her article titled, “The Time is Now for Equitable Grading in Higher Education” was published in the *American Conference of Academic Deans Leader* newsletter. This excerpt from her article was read to the Board: “Assuming control of our destiny through the adoption of more equitable grading practices offers institutions a pathway to innovation. This change has the potential to catalyze the transformation necessary to enhance student

retention and completion rates in higher education – a change that is both desired and urgently needed.”

- Not only did we celebrate National Apprenticeship Day at the end of April, we also celebrated Ascendium awarding Tools of the Trade scholarships to 801 construction and industrial trade WTCS apprentices for a total of \$1,602,000. Since its creation in 2013, the program has provided over \$6 million in scholarships to over 4,300 apprentices statewide.
- The [Aspen Prize for Community College Excellence was awarded to Southwest Wisconsin Technical College](#) and Northeast Wisconsin Technical College was in the top ten. This award is a testament to the incredible amount of work Southwest’s staff and college leadership have put into implementing systemic improvements that support student success at every level. It is also a testament to the strength of our System, the way we approach our work, the focus we maintain on student success and the recognition and respect our colleges have earned on a national level.
- System President Merrifield recognized Board President Tyler for his 18 years of dedicated service on the Board. She presented him with a United States flag that had been flown over the Wisconsin State Capitol, arranged by Representative Rob Kreibich (R-New Richmond), along with a Certificate of Commendation from Governor Tony Evers.

In his remarks, Board President Tyler reflected on the progress of the System during his tenure. He expressed pride in how far the System has come, noting that when he first joined the Board, WTCS was not the first choice for post-secondary education. Today, it is a respected and preferred option among students, parents and employers. He emphasized the importance of the unified voice of the System, which has contributed to its success and strong reputation. He credited this progress to years of hard work, collaboration and strong leadership and expressed hope that he has made a meaningful impact. He concluded by thanking everyone for their support throughout his journey and shared his excitement about spending more time with his grandchildren.

ITEM D: Wisconsin Technical College District Boards Association

Wisconsin Technical College District Boards Association (DBA) President and Southwest Wisconsin Technical College Trustee Chuck Bolstad and DBA Executive Director Diane Handrick updated the Board on recent activities.

Mr. Bolstad announced that this will be his final meeting serving as DBA President, as he will transition to the role of Past President. He expressed appreciation for the opportunity to learn from the WTCS Board and emphasized the shared commitment to student success across the colleges.

Mr. Bolstad extended special recognition to Southwest Wisconsin Technical College for receiving the prestigious Aspen Prize, commending the dedication of their faculty, staff, board, community and System. He also acknowledged Northeast Wisconsin Technical College for being named a top ten finalist, along with six additional Wisconsin technical colleges that were eligible for the award. He noted that out of 150 eligible institutions, Wisconsin’s strong representation is a testament to the state’s leadership in technical education, both regionally and nationally.

On April 11, the DBA held their spring meeting at Glacier Canyon Lodge, following the Ambassador banquet. Prior to their meeting, they hosted the 2025 WTCS Ambassadors for breakfast with the trustees. The meeting included annual officer elections. Starting in July, the new DBA Leadership will be:

- President: John Wyatt, Lakeshore College

- Vice President: Lori Laberee, Northwood Tech
- Secretary/Treasurer: Erin Greenawald, Chippewa Valley Technical College
- At-Large: Ram Bhatia, Gateway Technical College
- Past President (not elected): Chuck Bolstad, Southwest Tech

On behalf of the DBA, Mr. Bolstad recognized Board President Tyler for his 18 years of dedicated service and expressed gratitude for his contributions.

Executive Director Diane Handrick echoed Mr. Bolstad's remarks regarding the Aspen Prize and extended her congratulations to Board President Tyler. She commended him as a strong advocate for the people of Wisconsin, for education in all its forms and for the state's economy. She wished him well in his retirement.

Ms. Handrick noted that the Trustees and Ambassadors enjoyed their breakfast together during the spring meeting, emphasizing the importance of stewarding student leadership in support of the System's mission.

She also congratulated Northcentral Technical College for hosting one of the Joint Finance Committee's public hearings, which saw 337 registrants in attendance.

In her update on DBA operations, Ms. Handrick shared that, in addition to ongoing efforts in state and federal advocacy, trustee development and daily operations, the DBA is finalizing elements of its new operational structure. Effective at the end of June, the DBA will transition from a college-partnered model to an independent infrastructure. While the operational framework is evolving, the DBA's core mission and responsibilities will remain unchanged, with continued focus on a successful legislative session, budget advocacy and support for technical education across Wisconsin.

ITEM E: WTCS Presidents' Association

Dr. Rich Barnhouse, president of Waukesha County Technical College and chair of the Association, provided a brief update on recent activities of the Association.

Dr. Barnhouse thanked and congratulated Board President Tyler for his years of dedicated service.

He reflected on the colleges' extraordinarily successful academic year, noting the excitement surrounding recent accomplishments and the direction ahead. Dr. Barnhouse emphasized the System's long-standing success – spanning over a century – and highlighted the importance of focusing on the longer-term viability of both colleges and students in a rapidly evolving higher education landscape.

He shared that during a recent national podcast appearance, he was asked why there is growing attention on community and technical colleges. He responded that people are seeking more from education, and Wisconsin's technical colleges are leading by continuously evolving, anticipating workforce needs and staying focused on both present and future demands.

Dr. Barnhouse also addressed the Association's ongoing monitoring of federal mandates and the need to adapt to varying local government requirements. He stressed the importance of maintaining flexibility while speaking with a unified voice. He thanked System President Merrifield for her collaboration with the Universities of Wisconsin and WAICU on recent financial aid changes.

He informed the Board that the Chair Academy, which supports the Wisconsin Leadership Development Institute (WLDI), will be ending. This change will impact leadership training across the System. In response, the Association is committed to developing a new internal program to continue offering these valuable professional development opportunities.

Looking ahead, the Association will convene in June to assess its strategic direction, identify opportunities and discuss how to turn challenges and crises into opportunities.

This meeting marked Dr. Barnhouse's final report as the Association president with Northcentral Technical College President Dr. Jeannie Worden to assume the role in June. He encouraged the Board to consider the transformative potential of artificial intelligence (AI), describing it as a "species-changing technology" that will revolutionize all sectors. He congratulated Moraine Park Technical College for joining WCTC in offering AI programs.

Board President Tyler added that his company is actively using AI to improve efficiency. For example, by adding sensors to monitor gas usage in welding, they discovered that 50% of their gas was being lost to leaks. With AI, they can now track and reduce waste – an example of how AI can enhance workforce productivity and reduce costs.

ITEM F: Strategic Directions Development 2026-2030

WTCS Director of Strategic Advancement Katy Pettersen provided a brief update from the planning teams and reviewed the work conducted to-date.

Ms. Pettersen thanked Board members Daniels, Holton, Klecker, Rogers, Svacina and Tyler along with System President Merrifield for participating in the Board workgroup, and WTCS staff members Rachel Colla, Madeline Erce, Brandon Graf, Betsy Leonard, Sara Mackey, Layla Merrifield, Jeremy Nichols, Lenard Simpson and Brandon Trujillo along with co-facilitators Colleen McCabe, Hilary Barker and Megan Stritchko.

These teams have reviewed the current mission, vision and value statements; read through the summary of our colleges' strategic directions; and discussed the stakeholder survey and identified strengths for improvement.

Possible adjustments to the copy are minor.

The stakeholder survey will be in market April 22 through May 30. We have received responses from all groups but could use farther reach. If Board members and others could share with their constituencies, it would be appreciated.

So far, the results are in line with what the Board and staff groups have discussed. Open-ended questions show as word clouds in the survey tool with all four having 'STUDENT' or 'STUDENTS' at the center of the cloud.

The timeline is moving up by a few months with a draft of updated Strategic Directions to be shared with the Board in July and a vote on the new Strategic Directions at the September meeting.

ITEM G: District Board Appointment Process

WTCS Policy Advisor Brandon Trujillo provided a brief overview of the District Board Appointment process and shared a [District Board Association video](#).

Board Member Pechacek inquired about term limits and current vacancies on district boards. Mr. Trujillo responded that there are no term limits for district board members. While the WTCS Board approves appointments, the selection and vetting process is conducted locally by district appointment committees through a public process. He noted there are currently vacancies at the district level, and per state statutes, colleges have 60 days to fill them.

Board Member Pechacek also asked about the authority of district boards in comparison to the System Board. Mr. Trujillo explained that district boards are responsible for hiring their own staff and college

presidents, as well as developing programs and facilities for their respective colleges. System President Merrifield added that the district boards serve as fiduciaries for local government and bring proposed programs and facilities to the System Board for secondary review, ensuring a system of checks and balances.

ITEM H: Consent Agenda

It was moved by Board Member Wendt, seconded by Board Member Holton, that the Board approve the program and facilities development requests and annual district board appointments with the exception of the Waukesha County Technical College program and facilities development requests and annual district board appointments as presented. Board President Tyler recused himself. Motion passed.

It was moved by Board Member Rogers, seconded by Board Member Sperberg, that the Board approve the program and facilities development requests and annual district board appointments for Waukesha County Technical College. Board Member Blumer recused herself and Board Member Franco Gonzalez abstained. Motion passed.

ITEM I: Northeast Wisconsin Technical College – Project Concept Review – Remodeling at Two Locations on the Main Campus in Green Bay

WTCS Director of Facilities Development Dan Scanlon and Northeast Wisconsin Technical College Director of Facilities Mark Hansel provided an overview of the project to remodel two locations on the main campus in Green Bay.

The first remodel is approximately 14,000 square feet to be utilized by the Green Bay Area Public Schools (GBAPS) Northeast Wisconsin School of Innovation with a preliminary budget of \$2,000,000. The project will be funded by the GBAPS successful referendum. The second is expanding facilities for the Corporate Training & Economic Development Center, remodeling approximately 9,900 square feet to create large flexible conference/meeting rooms with existing classrooms and office space. The estimated construction cost is \$2,000,000 and will be funded by \$500,000 in operational funds and \$1,500,000 in district borrowing.

It was moved by Board Member Sperberg, seconded by Board Member Wendt, that a finding is made that the concepts for Northeast Wisconsin Technical College's proposed remodeling projects at the Main Campus in Green Bay are reasonable. The final scope of the projects are subject to review and approval by the Board as required by s. 38.04(10) Stats. Motion carried unanimously.

ITEM J: Madison Area Technical College District Board Appointment

WTCS Policy Advisor Brandon Trujillo provided an overview of the item.

State statutes require Employee members to work for employers located in the district they represent. Mr. Donald D. Dantzler, Jr., employed by UW-Milwaukee, listed his home address as his work address. While a field office where employees work on-site would be acceptable, UW-Milwaukee has no office in the Madison district.

Board Member Pechacek asked whether Mr. Dantzler had been notified. Mr. Trujillo confirmed that Mr. Dantzler was informed and chose not to withdraw his application.

Board Member Blumer inquired about the process for Mr. Dantzler. Mr. Trujillo explained that the Madison College District Board Appointment Committee approved Mr. Dantzler's selection and forwarded their recommendation to the WTCS Board for approval.

It was moved by Board Member Klecker, seconded by Board Member Sperberg, that the Board disapprove the appointment of Donald D. Dantzler, Jr. for the Employee position on the Madison Area Technical College Board. Motion carried unanimously.

ITEM K: Teaching and Learning – TCS 10

WTCS Provost and Vice President of Education Services Dr. Colleen McCabe and Associate Vice President for Student Success Dr. Christina Lorge provided the Board with an overview of Administrative Code TCS 10, as well as an update on the progress made by the WTCS workgroup since the project's launch in December 2023.

Board Member Pechacek inquired about the use of the DWD Fast Forward grant of \$700,000. It was noted that the funds were distributed to the colleges to provide various forms of student support.

Board Member Pechacek asked whether there was a pattern among programs with waitlists. Dr. McCabe noted that healthcare and dental hygiene programs consistently experience waitlists. Dr. Lorge added that cosmetology, criminal justice and aviation programs also commonly have waitlists.

Board Member Klecker asked whether program waitlists were primarily due to facility limitations or fluctuations in applicant numbers. Dr. McCabe responded that the causes vary by district and may be related to facility capacity or program or chair management.

Board Member Klecker further asked whether waitlists have ever led to program changes. It was noted that while waitlists have prompted adjustments, fiscal constraints and third-party accreditation requirements can limit flexibility. For example, nursing programs face challenges due to the need for clinical placements and requirements for number of patient contact hours. However, advancements in AI and strengthened partnerships with hospitals and clinics are helping to support program expansion and innovation.

Board Member Blumer inquired about the status of special circumstances policy discussions, asking what types of policies colleges are developing, whether they have been shared with each other and the current status of submissions. Dr. McCabe reported that the submission deadline is July 1, 2025, and all but two colleges have submitted their policies. Dr. Lorge added that colleges are using their policies through a community of practice, which fosters collaboration and allows institutions to learn from one another. She emphasized that this collaborative approach reflects the shared values of the System.

The Board reconvened at 11:00 am after a ten-minute break.

ITEM L: Integrated Education and Training (IET) Development and Expansion Grant Approvals

WTCS Grants Manager Tou Ya Khang provided an overview of the 2025-26 IET Development and Expansion grant programs. While the Board approved most of the 2025-26 grants at the March meeting, the applications for this grant category were not yet due. The purpose or goal of this grant category is to provide funds to support the development and expansion of IET. For FY25-26, \$1,500,000 was available for this grant category.

IET is a service approach that combines adult education and literacy activities concurrently and contextually with workforce preparation activities and workforce training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster for the purpose of educational and career advancement.

IET leads to many positive outcomes:

- connects students to a career pathway, saving students time;

- accelerates economic mobility;
- enhances student outcomes and beliefs for success;
- feeds into post-secondary programs; and
- acts as a lever to address Wisconsin's equity imperative.

Upon approval, the System Office will notify the colleges in the form of grant action notices. This will let them know which grants were approved. On July 1, grants that were approved can begin. Support will be provided by the System Office as needed throughout the grant period.

Board Member Rogers asked whether digital literacy support is included when targeting individuals with low literacy skills, particularly those unable to attend in person. Mr. Khang responded that the approach varies by project and is tailored to the specific needs of the target audience. System President Merrifield confirmed that digital literacy components are included as part of the support provided.

It was moved by Board Member Holton, seconded by Board Member Pechacek, that the Board approve funding awards for the Integrated Education & Training Development and Expansion grant programs for fiscal year 2025-26, with the exception of the Waukesha County Technical College grant as presented. Board Member Blumer recused herself. Motion carried.

It was moved by Board Member Pechacek, seconded by Board Member Holton, that the Board approve funding awards for the Integrated Education & Training Development and Expansion grant programs for fiscal year 2025-26 for the Waukesha County Technical College grant. Board Member Blumer recused herself and Board Member Franco Gonzalez abstained. Motion carried.

ITEM M: Outcomes for 2024 WTCS Graduates

WTCS Provost and Vice President for Educational Services Dr. Colleen McCabe and Associate Vice President for Instruction Chrystal Seeley-Schreck provided an overview of the outcomes for 2024 WTCS Graduates. WTCS surveyed all 25,253 graduates, with 56% responding. Of those who responded and were in the labor force, 92% indicated they were employed within six months of graduation, including 82% who reported they are employed in a job related to the training they received, and 93% are working in Wisconsin, with 68% staying in their college district.

The median salary for 2024 graduates six months after graduation is \$55,636, up from \$52,308 in 2023. The median salary for associate degree earners is \$60,003, up from \$56,156 in 2023.

The [2024 Graduate Outcomes report](#) will be distributed digitally to the WTCS Board; District Board Trustees; colleges; all K-12 school counselors to be shared with prospective students and influencers; and policy makers. Additionally, it will be shared in WTCS-in-Brief with a much broader audience.

Board Member Blumer asked whether students are satisfied with their technical education. Ms. Seeley-Schreck reported that 92% of students indicated satisfaction with their experience. Blumer also inquired about the number of students entering the military. While that specific data was not immediately available, it will be researched and provided at a later date.

ITEM N: Legislative Update

WTCS Executive Vice President Paul Hammer, along with Policy Advisors Megan Stritchko and Brandon Trujillo and DBA Executive Director Diane Handrick provided an overview of legislative items affecting the System.

Executive Vice President Paul Hammer provided a Biennial Budget update. The Joint Finance Committee held their first executive session a few weeks ago, but to date, no other sessions have been scheduled. They voted to strip 600 items from the Governor's budget. The core items that were in our budget request remained for consideration.

Policy Advisor Trujillo is tracking several bills affecting the System.

DBA Executive Director Diane Handrick shared state legislation updates affecting the System and committee developments. Ms. Handrick and System President Merrifield continue to communicate with the Joint Finance and Education Committees, and they are often called upon to share more information as they continue extensive, ongoing advocacy. On April 17, the Assembly Committee on Colleges & Universities focused on the budget and general questions for Wisconsin Association of Independent Colleges and Universities (WAICU), Universities of Wisconsin and WTCS.

WTCS Policy Advisor Megan Stritchko provided federal updates affecting the System.

Board Member Pechacek inquired about gainful employment. Ms. Stritchko responded that the Gainful Employment Rule applied to proprietary institutions and public institution programs below the associate's degree and requires federal reporting on metrics, including wages. She noted that she would need to review the bill text in greater detail.

Board Member Klecker asked why they are proposing an increase in the number of credits from 12 credit hours per semester to 30 per year (15 per semester) to be eligible for Pell Grants. Ms. Stritchko explained that the intent behind increasing the credit requirement is to reduce the time needed to complete a program. System President Merrifield added that perspectives on this issue vary. She stated that the change appears to be part of a broader effort to reduce federal spending and, for some, to encourage full-time enrollment. She emphasized that while full-time students may complete their programs more quickly, 80% of our students attend part-time, often balancing work and parenting responsibilities, with the average age of our students being 29. She noted that while the Department of Education seemed receptive to these concerns, continued advocacy to Congress will be necessary to ensure students maintain access to education.

Ms. Stritchko shared that the President released his skinny budget a few weeks ago. What is unique is that it does not provide program amounts. What we do know, and what is most concerning, is that this budget proposes to eliminate the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA). This funding goes to all 16 colleges, which rely on these funds for Adult Education, which we cannot charge tuition for due to state statutes. At this point, the Perkins V funding is not explicitly addressed in the skinny budget. There are references to consolidate workforce programs, but it is unclear what this includes. A more comprehensive budget should be coming out in late May or early June with more details.

System President Merrifield had productive discussions in Washington, DC in early May for a meeting with Rebuilding America's Middle Class (RAMC). They met with members of the administration and members of Congress.

WTCS has partnered with Wisconsin Association of Independent Colleges and Universities (WAICU) and Universities of Wisconsin on a joint letter to the House congressional delegation regarding budget reconciliation concerns. We are also working on our own messaging to the delegation on items/concerns that are specific to WTCS.

Board Member Pechacek commented that as technical colleges are part of the overall workforce programs, the President's skinny budget has a 35% reduction. Currently DWD's total budget is \$700 million, and 70% comes from federal funds. The President asked for recommendations by July 22

as to which workforce programs can be consolidated or dismantled. This would impact people with disabilities and contribute to rising unemployment as well as continued economic uncertainty. Our markets are lower; tariffs will come into play; and consumer confidence will affect the economy. Layoffs have increased with federal program cuts of 35%. These funding cuts have the opportunity to be devastating to the state.

Board President Tyler commented that he knows WTCS received funds from DWD for grants for workforce training and programs for work centers. He asked Board Member Pechacek if there is any sense in what kind of dollars come to WTCS through DWD annually. Board Member Pechacek said it is significant funding from all programs, including apprenticeship, WRTP Big Step and labor partners, and Fast Forward general purpose grants. Only five workforce items remain in the Governor's budget. Board President Tyler commented that there are many segments to consider, and how this will impact WTCS.

ITEM O: Announcements/Adjourn

Several Board Members' terms expired on May 1. The Governor's appointment office has not provided recent updates, but Board member Pechacek reported they are aware of the vacancies and are working to fill them.

The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board will be July 8-9, 2025, at Nicolet Area Technical College in Rhinelander, which will include election of officers.

Ms. Drake will send information on the July meeting very soon with RSVP's needed by early June.

It was moved by Board Member Pechacek, seconded by Board Member Sperberg, to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 11:55 am.

Respectfully submitted,

Julie Drake