

**NORTHEAST OHIO CONSORTIUM (“NOC”)  
COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS  
MEETING MINUTES**

Wednesday, December 17, 2025  
11:00 a.m.

Geauga County Offices, Meeting Room A334  
12611 Ravenwood Drive,  
Chardon, Ohio 44024

MEMBERS PRESENT: Commissioner Casey Kozlowski  
Commissioner Jim Dvorak  
Commissioner Sabrina Christian-Bennett

MEMBERS ABSENT:

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE: Matthew Blevens (OMJ-Geauga), Karen Stephens (PCJFS), Lisa Milgate (GCJFS), Carly Spencer (OMJ-Portage), Alissa Drees (ACJFS), Hattie Grubke (OMJ-Ashtabula), John Kravetz (GCJFS), Alyssa Steinhoff (GCJFS), Craig A. Swenson (GCJFS Director), Craig Sernik (Area 19 Director), Denise Gehring (Area 19).

Mr. Kozlowski called the meeting to order at 11:34 a.m.

Approval of Past Business

*Approval of the Minutes from November 19, 2025.*

**Ms. Bennett moved to approve the minutes from November 19, 2025. Mr. Dvorak seconded the motion which was approved by all members present.**

Reports

*Administrative Report.* Mr. Sernik reported the unemployment numbers report for September and October will not be released until sometime in January. ODJFS submitted an application for the opioid grant and was unapproved again. ASPIRE in Geauga County has resolved their budget favorably and will come back and begin offering services as a partner of the MOU at the OMJ Geauga Center. The certification of all three OMJ Centers is still in process with Portage and Ashtabula Counties working on getting the submission acceptance letter of their ADA checklist. And the only other item that was conditioned by the NOC COG Board and Workforce Board was that all three counties at their next partner meeting will put before their partners an outreach plan for their partners and for businesses having it signed off. The OMJ Certification may not be ready to be submitted by end of this year and may need to request an extension from ODJFS. Ms. Grubke reported the unemployment rates: nationally 4.4%, Ohio 4.8%, Ashtabula 3.4%, Geauga 2.8%, and Portage 4.2%.

*Fiscal Report.* Mr. Sernik reported \$27.87 in adult money and \$14,021.02 in dislocated worker was returned to ODJFS. Ashtabula and Portage Counties are quickly expending their RESEA money. Received additional RESEA money from ODJFS but they only had half of the requested amount and do not know when they will get the remaining amount to give us what they said they would. ODJFS currently has applications in for supplemental and bonus RESEA dollars. The Area may need to loan Ashtabula County some RESEA money from Geauga and Portage Counties temporarily until ODJFS receives the supplemental funds.

### Reports of County OMJ Centers

*OMJ Geauga County.* Ms. Milgate reported they hope to have their first business partners meeting in March and working on getting the newsletter back out. In November the RESEA program provided 35 services to participants, established six partners in the community, CCMEP has 10 in school and 8 out of school youth, career center walk-ins 109 services, career center services provided 104, and ASPIRE will return to the OMJ Center on Monday's for four hours.

*OMJ Portage County.* Ms. Spencer reported put 4 individuals through training and \$18,500 spent so far this year for adult/dislocated worker. RESEA in September had 45 selections, October 22, November 36, and notified that in January all claimants put into the pool can be selected. CCMEP referrals keep coming in mainly homeless youth, December 23<sup>rd</sup> will have a CCMEP holiday party, and business services held a job fair with 40 job seekers 13 employers and 6 individuals hired by one company.

*OMJ Ashtabula County.* Ms. Grubke reported for the month of November the OMJ Center had 10 employers with 13 job orders, continue collecting applications for the City of Ashtabula, 81 individuals visited the Resource Room with 49 needing assistance with unemployment, held a hiring event for Jersey Mike's with 50 people attending, a hiring event for the local prison will be held in January, and the prison in Albion will also be coming in for a hiring event. The OMJ Center staff have been out doing mock interviews at the different high schools, was at the prison re-entry fair along with Child Support, RESEA had a total of 149 scheduled initial appointments January 2025 to end of November 2025 with 147 subsequent appointments and 285 face-to-face or phone appointments with only 11 no call no show appointments. In November one individual was sent to CDL driving school, and CCMEP youth program as of December 10<sup>th</sup> had 656 with 239 in follow-up. The hub was relocated so there will be no Christmas party but a movie day instead. An open house of the newly located hub will be held sometime in January or February for the public to view the new space.

### Old Business

*Discussion regarding technical assistance provided by ODJFS on CCMEP procurement of WIOA services.* Mr. Sernik stated he asked ODJFS for clarification of their policy regarding procurement in which ODJFS' response was you must procure together as an area not on a county by county basis. We responded back this is contrary to the advice given four years ago and asked if they could reconcile that. ODJFS responded we can absolutely procure on a center by center basis. The RFPs for Ashtabula and Portage will be issued either late this year or sometime in January

with new contacts in place on April 1<sup>st</sup>. Procurement for Geauga County will happen just unsure if it will occur in either the first or second quarter of 2026.

New Business

CCMEP Youth Agreement Extensions:

*Geauga JFS Program Year 2024 CCMEP Youth Agreement.*

**Ms. Christian-Bennett moved to Amend the PY2024 WIOA Youth Program Services Agreement with GCJFS to amend the conclusion of the term of the agreement from December 31, 2025, to that of March 31, 2026, unless terminated earlier; for a no cost extension. Mr. Dvorak seconded the motion which was approved by all members present.**

*Portage JFS Program Year 2024 CCMEP Youth Agreement.*

**Ms. Christian-Bennett moved to amend the PY2024 WIOA Youth Program Services Agreement with PCJFS to amend the conclusion of the term of the agreement from December 31, 2025, to that of March 31, 2026, unless terminated earlier; and amend the amount of compensation available during the amended term by adding an additional \$67,830.00:**

• Pre-enrollment Program Services, LMI, Job Club	\$54,080.00
• Occupational Skills Training	\$ 5,000.00
• <u>Supportive Services</u>	<u>\$ 8,750.00</u>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$67,830.00</b>

**Mr. Dvorak seconded the motion which was approved by all members present.**

*Ashtabula JFS Program Year 2025 CCMEP Youth Agreement.*

**Ms. Christian-Bennett moved to (1) allow ACJFS as the lead agency for Ashtabula County, for the remainder of PY25 and for all following PYs until a contrary motion is passed or a new competitive procurement of CCMEP services occurs, and (2) to allow the Area 19 WDB executive director to enter into a contract with ACJFS to provide the following identified WIOA CCMEP program elements and services for a period beginning January 1, 2026, and for a period to end September 30, 2026, in an amount not to exceed \$20,000.00. ACJFS shall deliver all of the following services to WIOA CCMEP eligible and enrolled participants, which it also delivers to all of the TANF CCMEP eligible and enrolled participants:**

- i. Outreach, intake, eligibility determinations.
- ii. Framework design including assessments; development of an individual service strategy as part of pre-enrollment planning, and post enrollment case-management for those that are mandated to be in the program (OhioWorksFirst) cash recipients;
- iii. Program Services Elements:
  - (4) Training: • Occupational skills training. • OJTs, customized, and all other trainings that may be provided as a career service.
  - (13) Labor Market Information for educational and career planning, and labor exchange activities, resume development and job placement. During the program and follow-up.

**Mr. Dvorak seconded the motion which was approved by all members present.**

Mr. Dvorak seconded the motion which was approved by all members present.

*A-Tech Program Year 2024 CCMEP Youth Agreement (Ashtabula County).*

Ms. Christian-Bennett moved to amend the PY24 WIOA Youth Program Services Agreement with A-Tech (Ashtabula County) to amend the conclusion of the term of the agreement from December 31, 2025, to that of March 31, 2026, unless terminated earlier; and amend the amount of compensation available during the amended term by adding an additional \$62,500.00 WIOA:

• Framework Design Including	
Case Management:	\$ 22,000.00
• Miscellaneous Programming:	\$ 26,000.00
• <u>Employment Work Experience:</u>	<u>\$ 14,500.00</u>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 62,500.00</b>

Mr. Dvorak seconds the motion which was approved by all members present.

*OhioGuidestone Program Year 2024 CCMEP Youth Agreement (Geauga County).*

Ms. Christian-Bennett moved to amend the PY24 WIOA Youth Program Services Agreement with OhioGuidestone (Geauga County) to amend the conclusion of the term of the agreement from December 31, 2025, to that of March 31, 2026, unless terminated earlier; and to amend the amount of compensation available during the amended term by adding an additional \$62,200.00 TANF and \$18,000.00 WIOA.

	WIOA	TANF
• Framework	\$ 7,500.00	\$22,200.00
• Work Experience	\$ 7,000.00	\$20,000.00
• <u>Pre-employment &amp; Life Skills</u>	<u>\$ 3,500.00</u>	<u>\$20,000.00</u>
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>\$18,000.00</b>	<b>\$62,200.00</b>

Mr. Dvorak seconds the motion which was approved by all members present.

Family & Community Services, Inc. Program Year 2024 CCMEP Youth Agreement (Portage County).

Motion to amend the PY24 WIOA Youth Program Services Agreement with Family & Community Services (Portage County) to amend the conclusion of the term of the agreement from December 31, 2025, to that of March 31, 2026, unless terminated earlier; and to amend the amount of compensation available during the amended term by adding an additional \$44,650.00 WIOA:

	WIOA	TANF
• Academic Programming Services	\$ 1,025.00	\$ 3,250.00
• Wage Processing Subsidy Services	\$26,500.00	\$ 75,125.00
• Mentoring	\$13,750.00	\$ 22,500.00
• Counseling & Treatment	\$ 62.50	\$ 62.50
• Re-Entry Program	\$ 62.50	\$ 62.50
• Financial Literacy	\$ 500.00	\$ 250.00
• <u>Life Skills</u>	<u>\$ 2,750.00</u>	<u>\$ 5,125.00</u>
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>\$44,650.00</b>	<b>\$106,375.00</b>

Mr. Dvorak seconded the motion which was approved by all members present.

*Discussion of The Craft Education System, LLC., technology products including Craft Connect, Craft's proprietary work-based learning ecosystem platform.*

Mr. Sernik reported Craft Education System, LLC is a group that has a grant to offer a software system they have at no cost to OMJ Centers. The OMJ-Ashtabula Center looked at it and is not sure if this will be a great fit. OMJ-Ashtabula does want to take smaller cohorts of their program and put the information into the system to see if it generates adequate information for them. Discussion commenced. Discussion concluded.

Public Comment

None.

Adjourn the Meeting

**Ms. Christian-Bennett moved to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Dvorak seconded the motion which was approved by all members present.**

Meeting Adjourned at 12:17 p.m.

Minutes prepared by Denise Gehring